

WOODLAND NATIVE AME. BASKETS

Woodland Native Americans

Indigenous woodland people lived and moved in the Northeastern part of the country down the Atlantic coast, over to the Mississippi and down to the Gulf of Mexico.

The tribes in this area who constructed the basket on this page and in the related blog post, include the MicMac, Passamaquody, and Penobscot of Maine, the Abenecki of Canada, and the Mohawk of Upstate New York, among others.

Basket-Making Materials

- Black or brown ash splint
- Locally harvested sweet grass
- Imported Hong Kong cord

Birch Bark Boxes

In addition to baskets, woodland people made and used birch bark boxes for storage purposes. In fact, in many locales, boxes would be more plentiful than baskets.



This birch bark box is trimmed with sweet grass that has been sewn to the rim with black cotton thread.



Woodland Native Americans made their "plain plaited" baskets primarily out of ash splint and sweet grass, while later baskets occasionally incorporated Hong Kong cord (an imported, twisted sea grass).

A unique method of decoration adopted by many woodland tribes is known as "porcupine twist" or "curly-que," like you see on the basket above. The flexibility of ash and the thinness of the splints allows the wood to be curved to create this unusual surface.

Distinguishing Features of Woodland Indian Baskets

- Sweet grass or spruce root edging
- Braided sweet grass decoration
- Painted splints
- Porcupine twist decoration
- Reinforced rims
- Block-printed and swabbed decoration

Related blog post: [Vintage Native American Baskets](#)