

Oval Basketmaking with John Cowan



Weave traditional oval baskets with John Cowan. We will focus on the English underfoot oval base and how to make two traditional oval basketry forms, the shopping basket and the vegetable picker, both made using British basketmaking techniques. We will weave with a variety of brown willows. These classic styles are enjoyable to make and reliable sellers. These designs are also typical of the products from the old basketry workshops of Britain, that is to say, eminently fit for purpose but nonetheless carefully designed to be speedy to make (although, this after much practice!) If time allows, John will demonstrate some of the variations on the English underfoot oval base – this base can be made to almost any size, and to accommodate any number of stakes. The variety of techniques in oval bases would have been essential learning for any Journeyman basketmakers taking part in the old basketmaker's apprenticeship. John will explain the funny traditional terminology — lays, long lays and slath rods and how to set up their different arrangements. This will allow you to understand the entries on oval baskets in *The Journeyman's List of Basket Sizes and Prices in the Basket Industry*, the book which details the specifications of many of the traditional and classic British oval baskets.

Techniques covered:

English underfoot oval base, slewing, laying a good 5-rod border which accommodates the cross-over handle, handle wrapping.

Suitable for beginners and improvers

Please bring basic basketmaking tools and a lap board

Material cost £10 - £15