

PREPARATION OF COCONUT FIBER AND COCONUT FRONDS

Coconut Fiber:

This is the leather-like wrapping that surrounds the base of each branch of the coconut tree. It may be used to make purses, hats, scrap books, hot dish mats, calendar and picture frames and many other articles. The best fiber comes from young trees and from the younger branches that are developing. It may be cut from the tree without doing any harm if care is used. After it is cut from the tree, it should be washed with soap and water if it is dirty, and then ironed with a warm iron while the fiber is still damp.

In combining the fiber with material, a coarse cotton material will harmonize best with the texture of the fiber. The best colors are brown and tan, soft shades of yellow and orange, soft, dull greens and clear or rosy reds. Avoid blue, purple and harsh shades of blue and pink. Crayons, textile paints or dye may be used to color the fiber.

Coconut Fronds (or Leaves)

Select branches that have long fronds that are free from black or mildew spots. The fronds should be dried to a soft brown, but should not be brittle. A branch may be taken from the tree and dried in a breezy, semi-shady place. The fronds should be cut from the large center rib. The center rib of each frond and the stiff edges should then be removed. These strips may be woven into place mats, book covers, etc. Woven frond mats should not be shellaced, as this makes them brittle. A dampening now and then will help to keep the woven articles from drying out too much. They may be lightly waxed, if desired.