

Even though the Eastern Woodlands Indians did not weave fabrics, they used many weaving techniques for straps and belts. Here is a modern take on making a belt using items you might have in your house.

### **Soda straw weaving**

Get enough drinking straws that when they are laid side by side they make up the width you want. Next, cut lengths of yarn to make the belt. Note: The length of each piece of yarn should be the length of the belt plus a good foot and a half on each end for finishing up the ends. Tie all of the yarn at one end into a knot. This will be the end of the belt.

Then thread each piece of yarn through a straw (piece of yarn per straw). I make a "needle" out of wire to thread the straw. To do this, cut a piece of floral wire longer than the length of the straw. Next, make an "eye" at the base of the wire to hold the yarn. Now, put the yarn end (opposite of the tied end) into the eye and thread it through the straw. Tape the end of the yarn to the outside of the straw to hold it in place.

You will need more yarn to do the actual weaving. Cut a good length of yarn. I usually start with about three yards. You want a length that is easy to work with and not so long that it gets tangled easily. When you run out of yarn you simply tie a new piece onto the end and continue weaving.

Begin weaving by tying the end of the weaving yarn onto the straw on the outside left. Bring the yarn over and under each of the straws just like weaving a paper mat. When you get the end you will reverse the order of your over/under so that you are going over and under each straw towards the left.

You will continue this until you run out of straw space. When the straw fills up, carefully move the woven part down off of the straws remembering to keep about one inch on the straws to keep your "loom" stable.

Keep weaving, pushing down, and adding yarn as needed until you cannot weave any more. To finish you will undo the tape at the end of the straws leaving enough room so that you can tie off the ends as with the opposite side. This will be the fringe at each end.

Have fun!









