

# Leather Pouch

Native Americans made small pouches from pieces of soft buckskin or small animal skins. The pouches carried personal valuables, such as small quantities of dry mineral paints, tobacco, or magical objects like pebbles.

Most warriors carried bags containing good luck charms to protect them from harm. In the Woodlands, warriors' pouches held tokens of victories in battle. In the Southeast, a group going off to war carried a decorated pouch holding a sacred rock crystal, used to predict their success or failure.

Other pouches contained rattles from a rattlesnake's tail, buffalo horns, claws, or animal effigies. The Blackfoot believed that a spirit helper, an animal or bird, told each person what sacred objects to gather to carry in a pouch. The Pawnee believed that a star guided people searching for such objects. If the contents of a pouch had powerful magic, they could give a person great status and success in fighting or healing.

The healers of the Winnebago carried an otter skin pouch filled with herbs, bark, feathers, and stones. According to myth, spirits carrying otters had brought a dead boy back to life; so the otter medicine bags had great power.

Sacred pouches were not always worn around the neck or on a belt. Sometimes they were hung in the dwelling or on a horse to keep them at hand.

## MATERIALS

Square of chamois or other soft leather  
(Chamois cloths can be purchased in the housewares or the auto maintenance department of most supermarkets and hardware and department stores.)

Pencil

Scissors

Hole punch

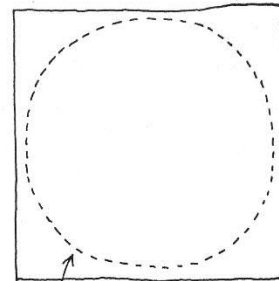
Leather thong about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times as long as the chamois

Small beads (optional)

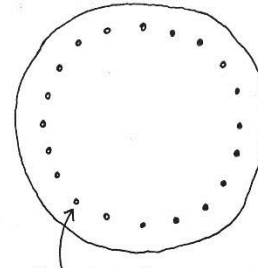
Needle (narrow enough to string beads) and thread (optional)

Acrylic or oil paints and brushes (optional)

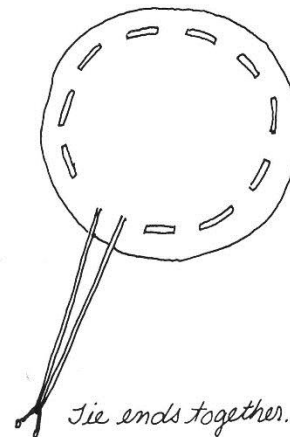
Feathers (optional)



*Cut out circle.*



*Punch holes 1" apart and 1" from the edge.*



*Tie ends together.*