

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING A BELT

These instructions were copied, in part, from Belts Galore No. 42 by Al Stohlman. Also, they are written with acknowledgment and full understanding that some people do not proceed according to these instructions and many times produce excellent belts.

1. Decide on the belt width.
2. Select the buckle to be used.
3. Determine the waist size.

Until the above three decisions are made it is not possible to proceed with assurance that the finished belt will be satisfactory.

4. Mark and cut the belt blank.

Do all marking with a pencil and on the flesh side of the belt. Illustrations of these following instructions are shown on pages 2 & 3 of Belts Galore No. 42.

- A. Start at the buckle end and mark off the snap locations and buckle tongue slot, if required: 5/8" to 1st hole, 1" to 1 3/8" to 2nd hole, 1" to 1 1/4" to center of buckle tongue slot and fold line. Reverse dimensions for snap locations on belt side of fold line. Also, mark any tapering of buckle end if required.
- B. Punch smallest hole possible, at snap locations and punch out buckle tongue slot.
- C. Locate and mark center hole corresponding to waist length, do not punch this hole, making proper allowance for buckle length.
- D. Mark from center hole to end of belt, normally 5" to 6". Buckle length will have some influence on this length and on buckles of 2 3/4" length or longer this dimension may need to be 7" to 7 1/2". Also, mark any tapering of billet-end and shape of end of belt to fit metal end, if required.
- E. Cut belt off and trim for any tapering required.
- F. Skive buckle end of belt as desired to allow for better bending around buckle.

Now the belt should be at the stage where it is of proper length, tapered ends cut if required, buckle and tongue slot cut, snap locations located by small punched holes and buckle end skived to proper thickness.

- G. On face or hair side of belt mark lightly with a pencil only any center lines, spacing, etc. That may be necessary for marking your pattern or stamping on the belt.

Wet or "case" the leather.

Completely wet the leather by immersing it in a basin of water or by some other means get the leather completely wet. Then put the belt in a plastic bag that can be sealed and store in a refrigerator for a minimum of 24 hours. After this the belt can be laid out in the air until it dries to proper moisture content for applying design and tooling.

The belt will grow in length as it is wet abut will shrink back to very near the original length when dry.

Carve and Tool the belt. Carving and tooling will not be detailed here but these are a few suggestions:

- 1st. Mark pattern on the belt starting at the billet end.
- 2nd Cut and bevel the border lines.
- 3rd Cut pattern.
- 4th Finish tooling.
- 5th Bevel edges.

Let belt dry completely before going any further:

1. Erase any pencil marks.
2. Do any dyeing or coloring of belt.
3. Apply finish.
4. Burnish edges.
5. Apply edge coat if desired.

Punch proper holes in buckle end and install snaps.

Install buckle, and billet end if there is one, and then re-measure waist size and locate and punch holes in billet end.

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