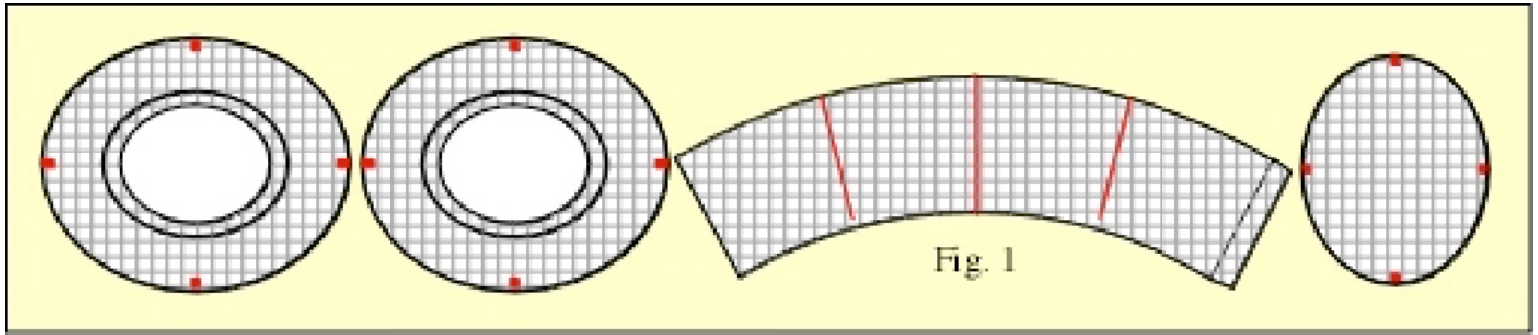


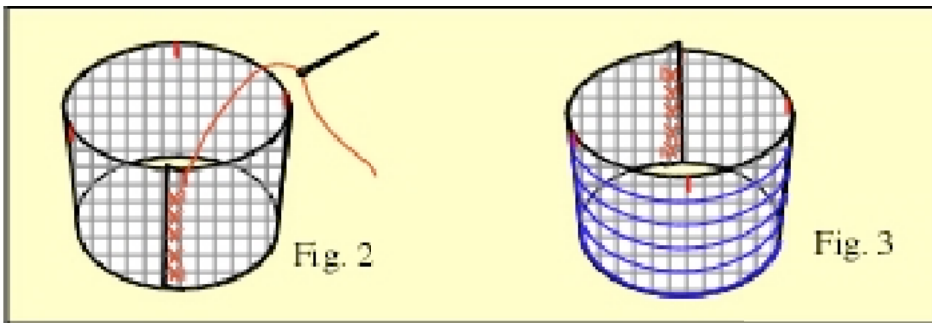
Covering buckram with straw braid instead of fabric:

These instructions are for a three part hat; brim, crown sides and crown tip but, constructing a two part (crown and brim or crown and crown tip) or one part (just brim) hat is very similar. The yardage you will need will depend on the width of your straw braid. as an example, I used about 1/2 a 100 meter hank, of a 3/8" wide braid for a small Wellington style top hat. If you are using a braid that was twice as wide you would need 1/2 as much or about 25 meters. If you are making a hat from salvaged braid you might want to take apart two hats.

Step 1: Cut one each of the crown tip and the crown sides and two of the brim buckram pieces. See figure 1.

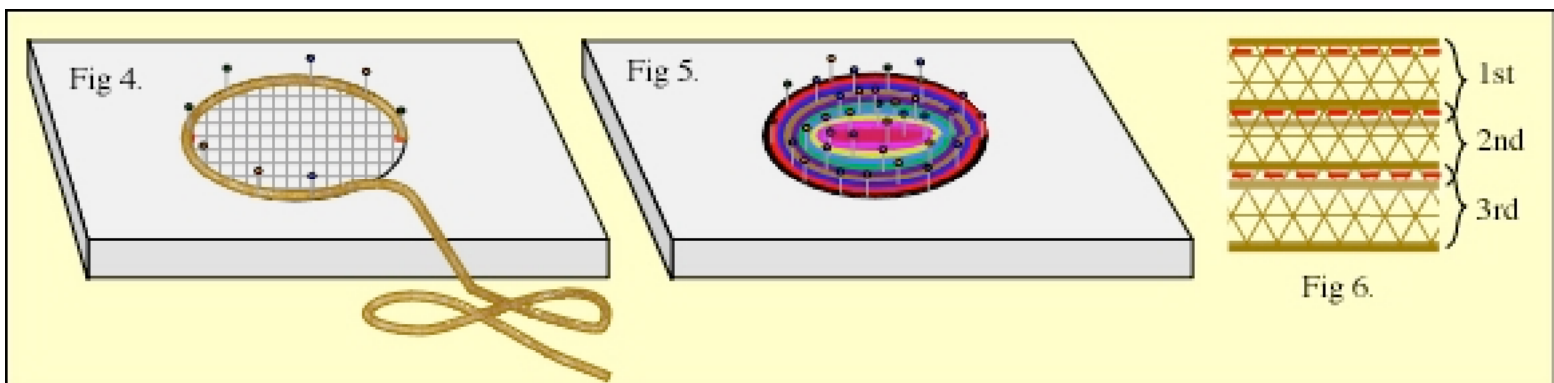


Step 2: Sewing the straw: Sew the crown side center back seam together as shown in figure 2. If you are going to do this on a sewing machine you will need a machine with a freearm. If you don't have one then you will need to baste the rows of straw in place and then sew the bands together by hand with needle and thread. You will want to use strong thread that matches well but if you are using the sewing machine method you can use clear nylon thread, I used the dark tinted clear thread for my black straw hat. If you plan to dye your hat after you make it then use a natural fiber thread and it might be best to test dye some of the thread and your straw before you start. Starting at the top edge and at the center back, sew the straw braid to the buckram even with the top edge until you reach the back then, slowly edge the braid over until it is still overlapping the first row but only by about 1/3 to 1/4. This should take until the crown side mark, 1/4 of a turn.

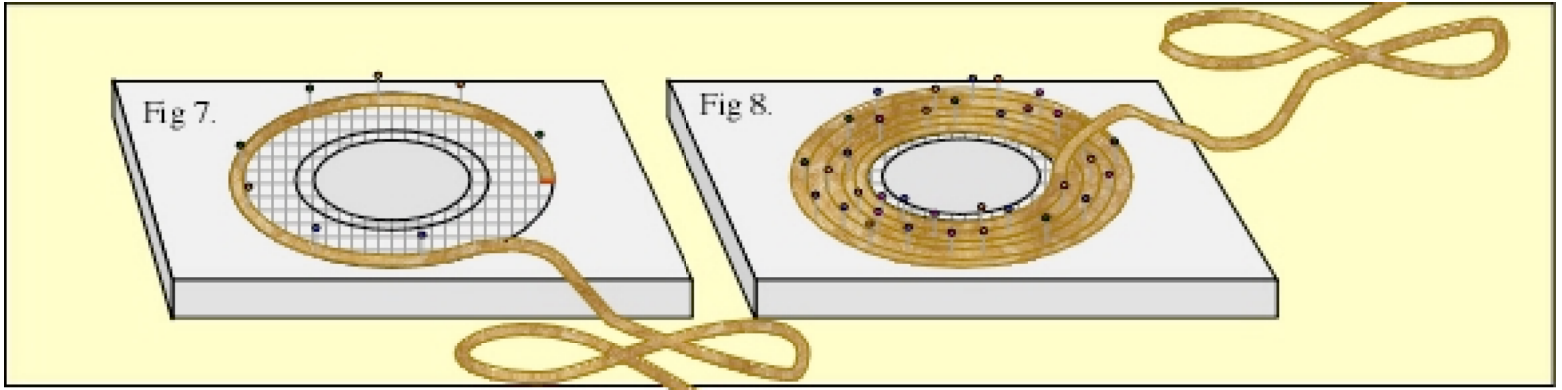


Continue down the side of the hat in this manner until it is completely covered with rows of straw. Leave a two or three inch tail, this will get tucked into the hat when you sew it together. If you don't think you will be able to do this evenly down the hat sewing freehand, you can draw guide lines on your buckram with a compass set to 3/4 or 2/3 the width of your straw. Figure 3.

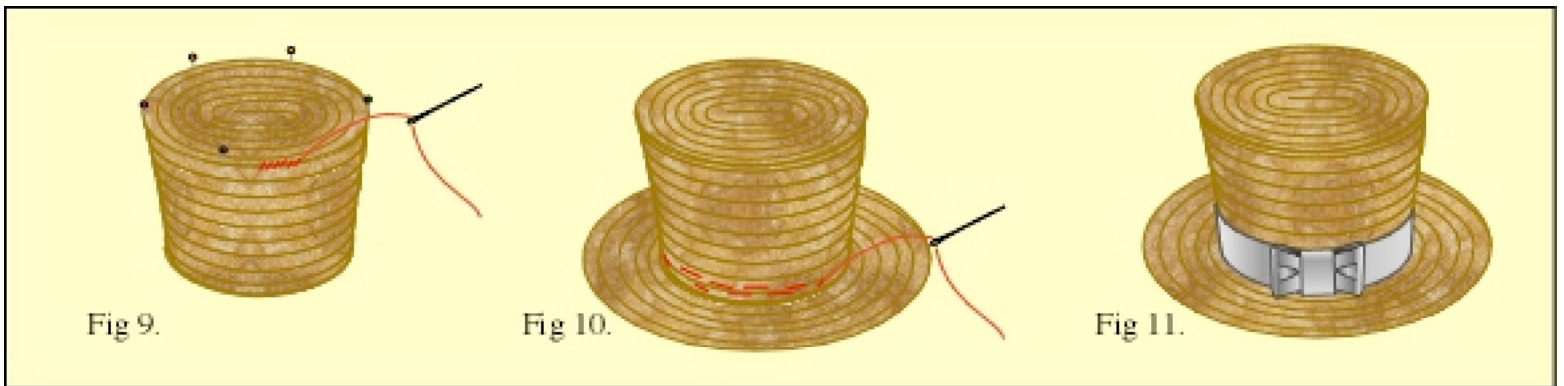
Step 3: Sewing the straw on the crown tip: Cover a one inch thick sheet of styrofoam with aluminum foil. Pin one of the buckram pieces onto the sheet. Starting along the outside edge pin the straw braid in place, figure 4. Follow the outside edge for the first turn then, gradually move inwards until it is still overlapping the first row but only by about 1/3 to 1/4. This should take until the crown side mark, 1/4 of a turn. Continue in this manner until you reach the center, cut the braid with enough extra to tuck under at the center. Figure 5 shows each row as another color, the # of rows you have will depend on the side of your crown tip and the width of your braid. Push your pins in as far as possible and steam the straw do not touch the hat. Note; you can use regular pins but "T" pins work very well for this. You can put a damp pressing cloth over the straw and steam press that. When the straw is dry remove the pins it should stay in a coil. Sew it onto the buckram from the edge to the center. Sew very close to the outside edge of the braid in the area of overlap in the rows, see figure 6. If you are having trouble getting the straw to stay in place so that you can sew it down you can either bast it in place or use fabric glue stick to tack it down to the buckram.



Step 4: Sewing the straw on the two brim layer: Repeat the same steps with the two brims as with the crown tip in step 3 above, figure 7. Cover the buckram only until the head opening line. Try to end even with the head opening you may need to do an extra half a row or so, figure 8. Leave a couple inches extra braid on one of the brims and a few extra feet on the second. This will be the under brim and you will sew that inside the head opening to cover the buckram tabs. Glue the two brims together matching the CF,S,CB marks. You might want to sew millinery wire around the brim or not. If you are not going to turn the sides of the brim up and you plan to leave it flat (un-shaped) then you will not need to add wire. Clip the seam allowances of the buckram as instructed in your pattern. You can by hand sew the outside edges of the brims together or cover them with petersham or another row of straw braid steam pressed in half long ways. Follow the instructions in your pattern.



Step 5: Sewing the sections together: With a needle and some strong matching thread sew the crown tip and the sides together along the edge make sure to match the center front, sides and center back marks. Make the stitches fairly close together and do your best to hide them in the straw plaits, figure 9 With the same thread sew the brim on to the crown as per your pattern instructions and figure 10. If the hat is just a little to small then you might not want to sew the extra two feet of straw braid into the inside of the hat and sew a petersham sweatband instead. If it is small then by hand sew the extra braid into the inside of the head opening to cover the buckram tabs. You can sew a sweatband over this, if you choose.



Step 6: Lining the hat: Follow the instructions in your pattern.

Step 7: Sizing the hat (optional): If your hat is not as stiff as you might want you can spray it with clear Shellac. You will want to test it first as it can leave the hat a little shiny. Test it on some of your scrap straw.

Step 8: Adding a sweat band and hat band: Follow the instructions in your pattern. Figure 32.