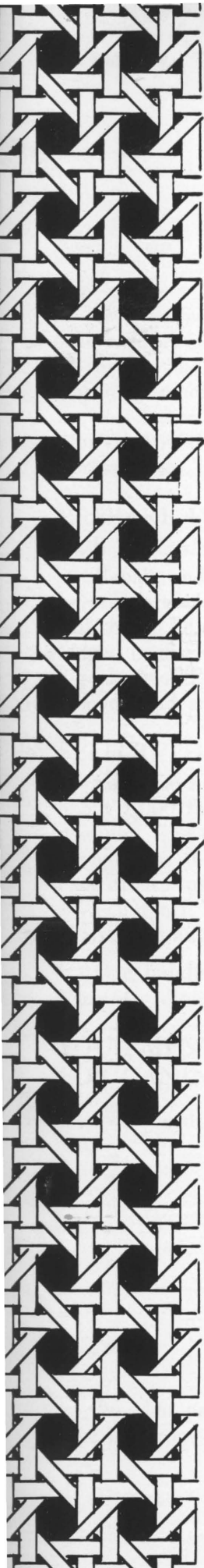


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Recaning Chairs

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
G. G. GIBSON, DIRECTOR, COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Instructions in Methods of Seat Weaving.....H. H. Perkins
Seat Weaving.....L. Day Perry
Weaving Seats and Panels in Furniture.....Ann Biebricher
Extension Service, State University, Columbus, Ohio

The instructions in this publication were pretested by Mrs. J. C. Merka, Mrs. Martin Riley, Mrs. Verna Batson, members of the Reliance Home Demonstration Club, Brazos county, and Emily Ritter, home demonstration agent. The finished chair is shown on page 7.

Recaning Chairs

BERNICE CLAYTOR
EXTENSION SPECIALIST IN HOME MANAGEMENT
TEXAS A. & M. COLLEGE SYSTEM

Two distinct types of cane seats are those with cane woven through holes in the seat rail to form a "hand woven" pattern, and those woven by machine, pressed into a groove in the seat frame, glued and then fastened with a piece of reed called spline. The latter is the "pressed seat."

PREPARE FURNITURE FOR RECANING

Repair and refinish the chair as needed before starting to recane. All holes in the seat rail should be entirely open. Bits of old cane lodged in the holes can be removed by using a pick or awl. Any broken holes should be mended and any missing ones added.

SELECT THE CANE

Cane can be bought in bundles containing about 1,000 feet. Select the width — coarse, medium, fine or superfine — to fit the size of holes in the chair frame. Medium-sized cane often is used for $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch holes which are $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch apart. The fine is used more often in chairs than any other size.

One bundle recanes three or four chair seats of ordinary size.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR CANING

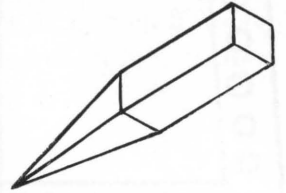
You will need:

- pan for water
- cloth
- towel
- screwdriver
- hammer
- ice pick
- awl
- scissors
- sharp knife
- pliers

Wooden pegs, about 3 inches long, and tapering from $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch in diameter to a blunt

point can be whittled from soft wood to fit the holes. About 24 of these will help hold the ends of the cane while weaving.

A square-pointed wedge is used to push strands into place.



PREPARE CANE FOR WEAVING

Cane should be damp and pliable, not wet, while weaving. Soak one strand in warm water 2 or 3 minutes before using. The cane may split or become discolored if left in the water too long. If cane dries during weaving process, dampen it with a cloth.

DIRECTIONS FOR WEAVING

Always weave so the glossy side of the cane is upmost.

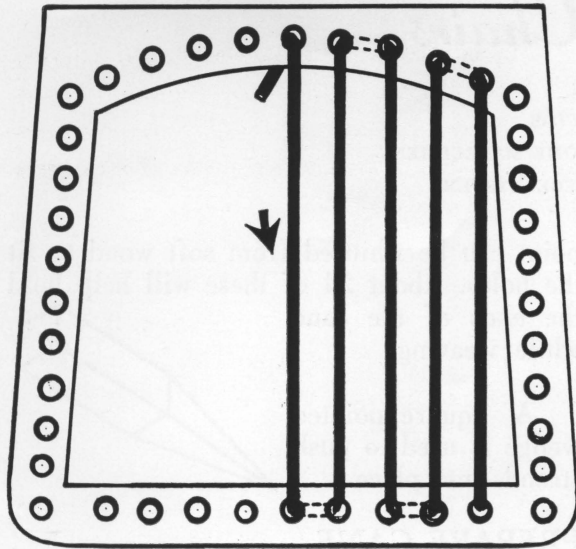
Keep strands straight since twisted cane breaks easily. Pass cane through thumb and forefinger before the end is placed through the hole.

Hold each strand tight when carrying it across from one rail to the other. It is better to hold the strands of cane tight than to pull hard at the end. Cane tightens as it dries during weaving.

Weave no more than 2 or 3 inches before pulling strands through.

Since seat frames vary in shape, no hard and fast rules for weaving patterns can be made. Keep strands of cane running straight, and strands running in same direction parallel. Corner holes are used only with the diagonal steps.

There are seven steps in the weaving process:



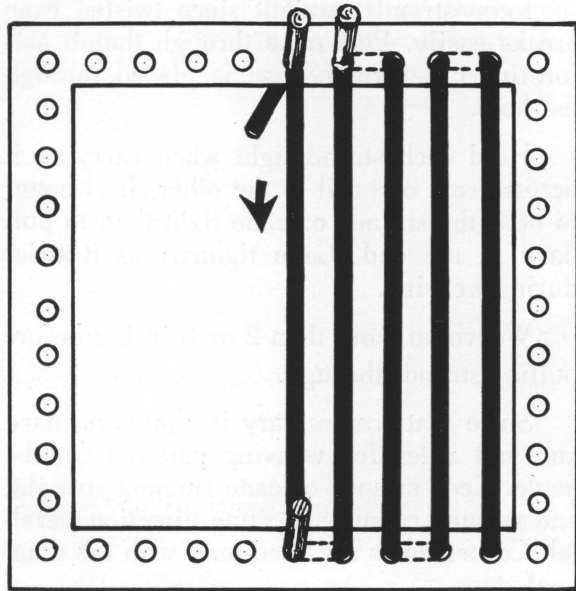
Weaving Step 1 on an irregular shaped seat

STEP 1

Begin at center hole of the back rail. Leave 4 inches of end of cane for tying; bring strand up through center hole and use wooden peg to hold it in place.

Bring strand of cane across to front rail and down through opposite hole, draw tightly and insert peg.

Pass the cane up through the adjoining hole to either right or left, across to the back



Weaving Step 1 where the chair seat is a square with the same number of holes in both back and front rails.

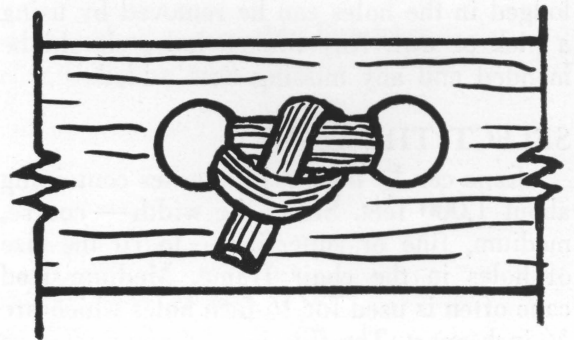
rail and down through the opposite hole and insert a peg.

Repeat until all holes in the back rail are used.

Any unused holes at each end of front rail are filled by weaving to holes in the side rails.

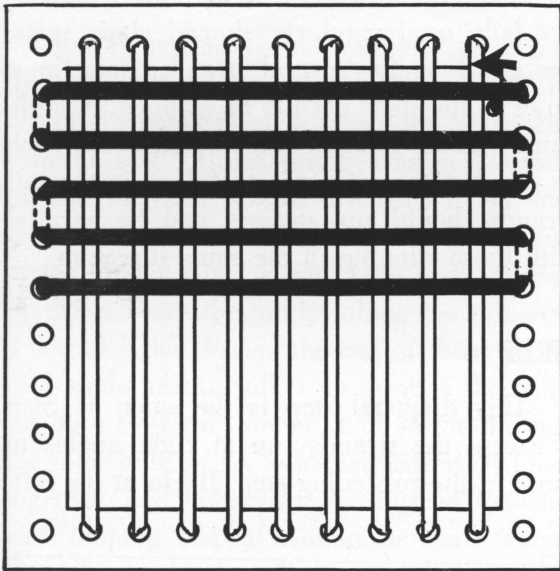
If the seat is a perfect square or rectangle, the weaving may be started from the first hole at one side of the back rail.

Loose ends may be tied together in a flat knot, or fastened to the loop next to the hole, on the underside of the frame as in a "half hitch." The cane must be damp to be pliable enough to tie.



Half Hitch

When the end of the strand is reached, peg the last hole through which the cane has passed and the next one through which a new strand is started. The loose ends may be tied together in a flat knot if they do not block passage through the hole or they may be fastened to the loop next to the hole, on the underside of the frame, as follows: push the end under the nearest strand without crossing any holes; then push the end over the strand and under again; cut the strand $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch from the loop. This is the same as a half hitch. The cane must be damp in order to be pliable enough to tie. Tie as you go unless it blocks the hole.

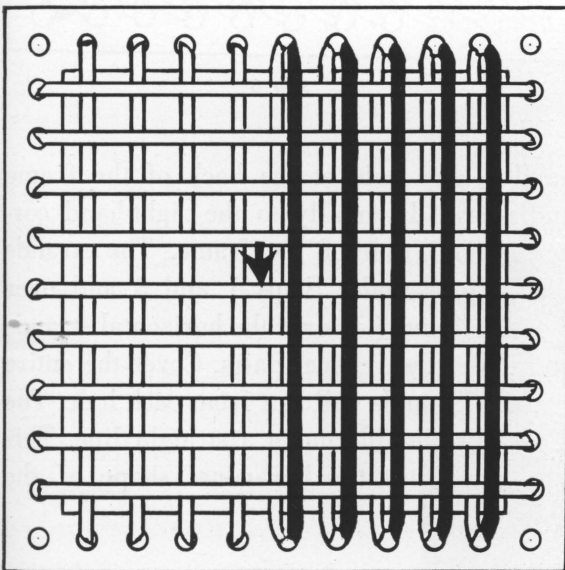


Step 1

STEP 2

Start at the hole next to the corner hole on the side rail in the rear. Pass the strands across the seat from side to side passing the strands over the weaving already done. Corner holes in front are used only if the front rail is curved.

If weaving in a round seat frame, start at center side holes, weaving to the back, then to the front.



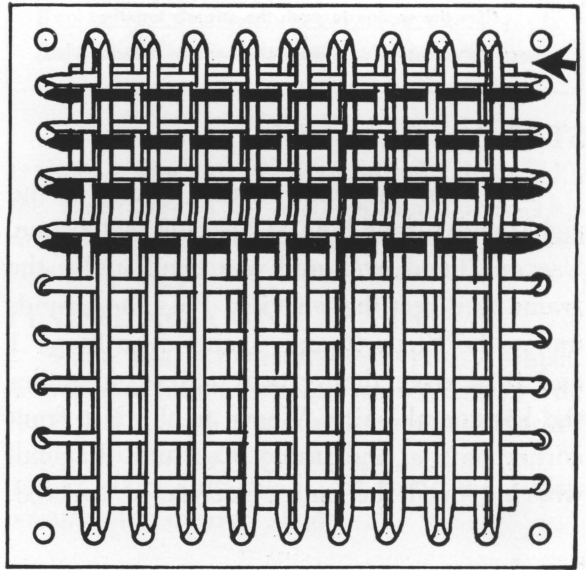
Step 3

STEP 3

Repeat Step 1 exactly, passing cane across the frame in the same direction and in the same holes. Strands of Step 2 lie between those of Step 1 and 3. Keep No. 3 strands a little to the left of those in Step 1.

STEP 4

Using the same holes as in Step 2, weave canes parallel to those woven in Step 2. Real weaving begins with Step 4.



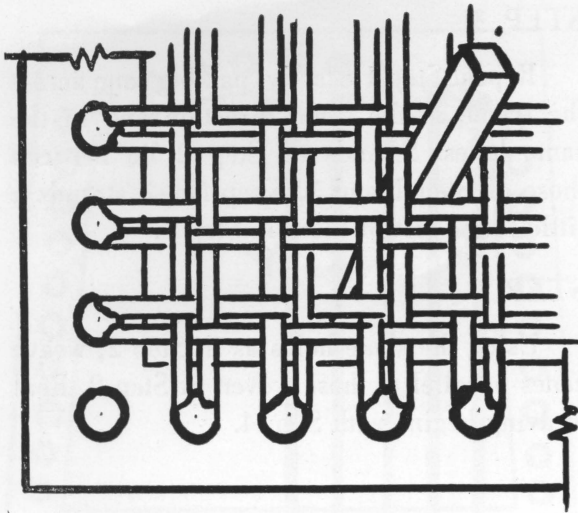
Step 4

Start weaving at hole next to the one in the right back corner. Carry the strand in front of Step 2—over the strands of Step 3—and under the strands of Step 1—pushing strands of Step 3 to the right each time.

Weave a few strands and pull the cane through straight and without breaking. Peg cane in place the same as in Step 1.

Weaving back, the strands are under Step 1 and over Step 3 again.

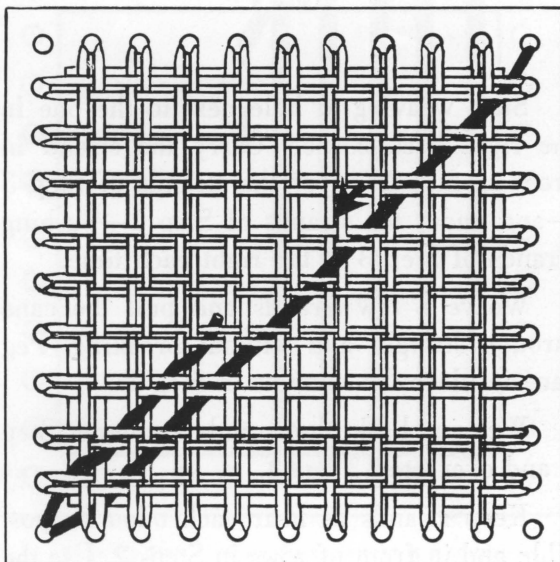
Keep strands as near each other as possible and in front of rows in Steps 2. Use the wedge to push strands together.



Use the wedge to push the strands together

STEP 5

The first diagonal strand begins at the right-hand corner hole at back of seat frame. Use one hand over and one hand under the frame to direct the weaving. Pass the strands under the Steps 2 and 4 and over Steps 1 and 3 or over the vertical pairs and under the horizontal pairs. Weave to the left front corner hole of the frame. Continue diagonal weaving until the entire surface is covered.

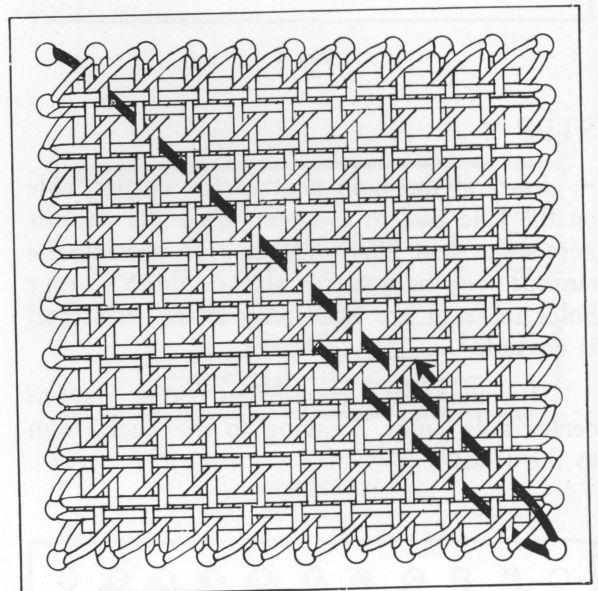


Step 5

If the strand fails to come out of the corner hole on irregularly shaped chair seats, use one hole for several strands. Sometimes holes in the sides need to be skipped. No rule can be given to take care of situations such as this but the safe rule to follow is that all strands should run straight and be parallel with those running in the same direction.

STEP 6

This diagonal step is the same as Step 5 except the strands run at right angles to those in the preceding step. Begin at the left-



Step 6

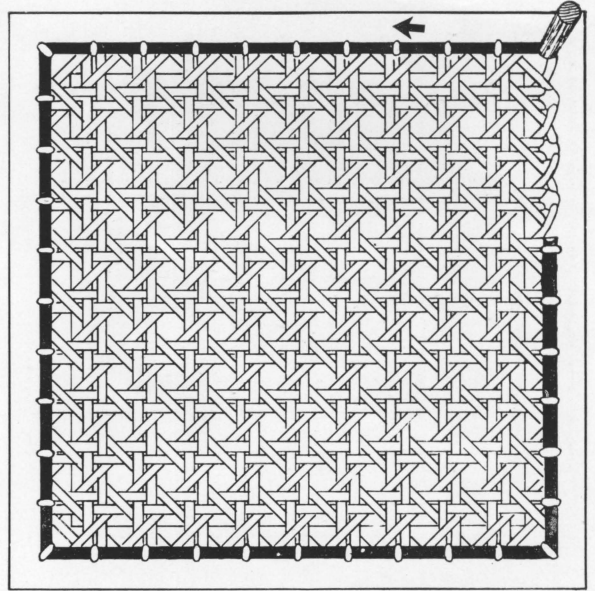
hand corner hole at the back of the frame and weave diagonally to the right-hand corner in the front of the frame. The strands should pass under Steps 1 and 3 and over Steps 2, 4 and 5 or over the horizontal strands and under the vertical pairs. Cover the entire surface. Strands will run from each hole. The diagonals should run in a straight line. This step completes the hexagonal shape of the hole.

STEP 7

Before beginning the binding, be certain that all ends of the cane are fastened. The binding cane is used to cover the holes and give the seat a finished appearance. A strand of cane the same size as that used in the seat is used to tie the binding cane. Insert the end of the binder into a corner hole and peg temporarily. Place the binder along the rail over a row of holes. Fasten the end of the weaving cane underneath. Pull it up through the nearest hole over the binder, and down through the same hole. If the holes are extremely close together, one hole may be skipped between each looping. Repeat around the chair frame, keeping the binder flat, and the cane tied tightly.

When the hole is reached at which binding started, raise the next loop in the tying cane and slip the binding cane through. Fasten securely. Clip the end of the binding cane at the edge of the loop.

Square-cornered chairs may be finished by carrying the ends of the binding down through and driving in a soft wooden peg which can be cut off even with the chair



Step 7

frame; or the corners may be held down with the tying strand as at the other holes. This cane should be very damp to be pliable enough to loop, turn corners and tie.

FINISHING CANE SEATS

Cane has a natural, hard, glossy finish. Additional finish is really unnecessary. The cane will darken some with age. If a darker shade is desired, apply a light coat or two of umber stain and rub it off until the finish becomes the desired shade.

