

Woven paper basket, table placemat or ball

The placemats made by the children could decorate the table for your local World Day of Prayer service. Make these colourful woven mats in the colours of the Vanuatu flag - red, green, black and yellow. You may use any combination of card, paper, fabric, or recycled material like magazine pages or junk mail for this activity.

Placemats can be made by weaving flat A4 sheets, continuing the technique for the basket base, below. Balls can be made by scrunched up a newspaper sheet, adding new sheets one at a time by wrapping around the already-balled shape and taping around the outside when your ball is big enough. Finally, add coloured paper as the last layer if you wish.

Vanuatu children are very resourceful when it comes to filling their days with adventure and games. Their favourite game is to make their own balls to kick and throw to each other. Traditionally the balls are made from the leaves of the Pandanus Palm. They like to play football with this ball, even though it is smaller than the official football.

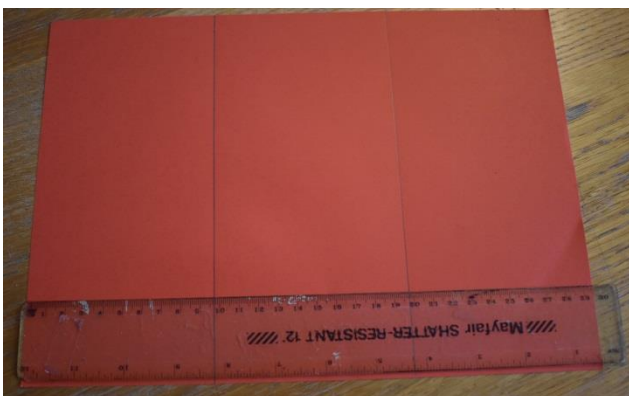
It is important for Vanuatu children to learn how to weave. As they grow older, they use this skill to make baskets, mats and even their homes. This simple project teaches the foundational skills for weaving.

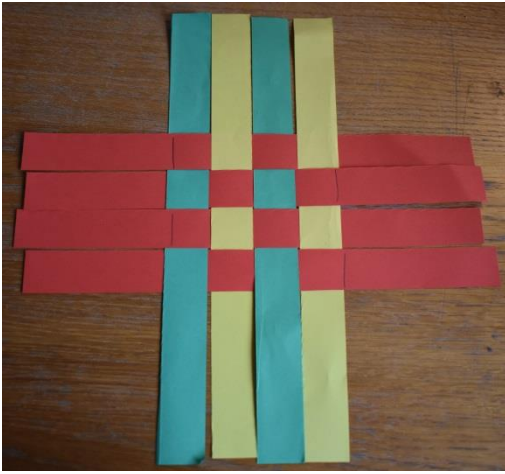
Simple Paper Basket

1. **Prepare strips of paper to weave your basket.** Choose three sheets of A4 paper in any of the flag colours - red, yellow, green, black.



On one of the sheets of paper to become the base of your basket, draw a horizontal pencil line 9.7 cm from the top and another one 9.7cm from the bottom. These lines will help when laying out the base. Then cut the paper lengthwise into 8 strips of equal width.



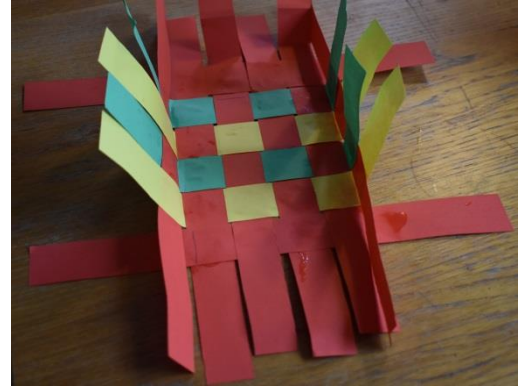


2. **Weave the base of your basket.** Lay out two lines of 4 strips of paper (including the one marked in pencil) next to each other so that the lines on each strip are face up and form one continuous line. Starting at the top line, weave another strip of the same colour through the strips you've laid out, over one strip and under the next.

You should now have a 4x4 woven square that fits just inside the lines you marked. (*For placemats, keep adding woven strips from here on, into a full flat square.*)

3. **Fold up the strips sticking out the sides of the basket.**

It can be helpful to put a touch of glue to hold the strips in place. This will make the next steps easier.

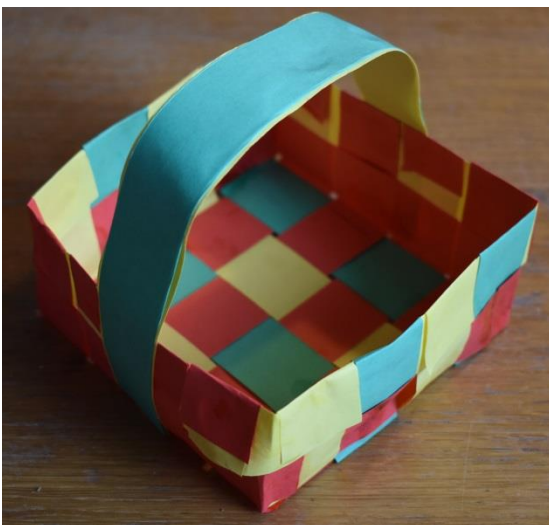
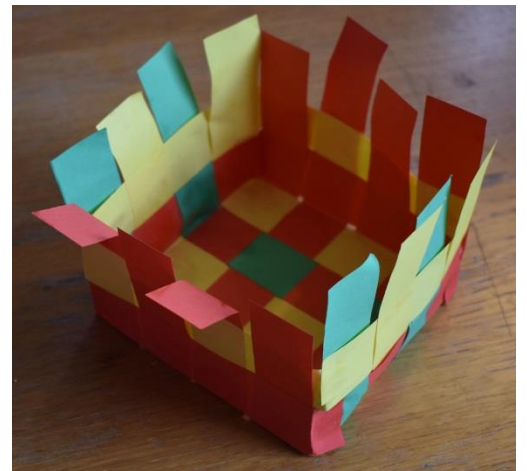


Cut off the pieces that extend beyond the corners after the four sides are folded up. Hold in place with a dot of glue.

4. **Next, weave new strips of coloured paper between the now vertical strips of the base, folding it to fit around the corner of the basket.**

You will need to use almost two strips to make it all the way around the basket. You can simply tape or glue the two pieces together. Weave the strip all the way around the basket. When the two ends meet, tape or glue them together.

If you wish, repeat the above step, weaving with another strip of the same colour, making the sides higher.



5. **Finishing your basket.**

Fold over any remaining loose strip ends, gluing or taping them down to make the top rim firm.

If you wish to add a handle, simply tape or glue each end of two differently coloured strips of paper to opposite sides of the basket.