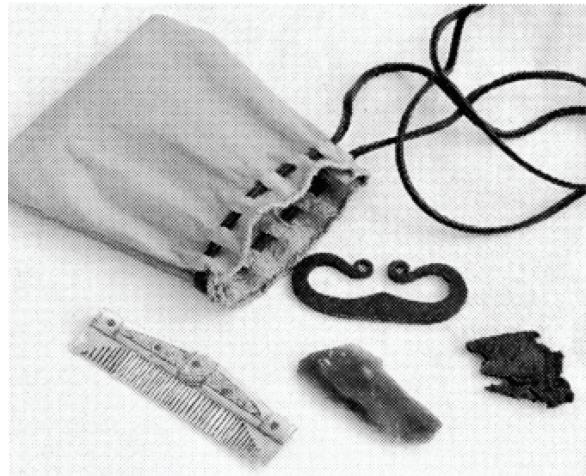




## Make a leather pouch

In days long ago leather was used for many everyday articles: shoes, clothes, knife sheaths, pouches, and much else. The leather normally came from cows, sheep and goats. When an animal had been slaughtered, the hair was scraped off the skin which was then tanned with a mixture of water and bark, especially oak bark. The tanning was a process that prevented the material from rotting. In the Viking Period there were professional leather workers. They took care of difficult things like shoes, but knife sheaths, pouches and other small accoutrements were almost certainly made by people themselves. The leather pouches often contained a tinderbox, a comb, toothpicks and coins. They were worn on belts. Archaeologists have found several types of leather pouches from the Viking Period. Here you can see how to make two types.



### Materials

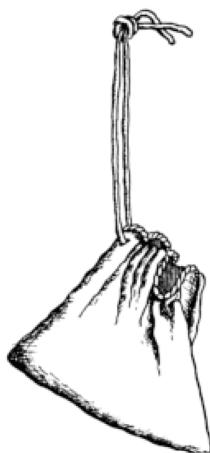
Leather (about 1 mm thick). Strong, waxed sewing thread.

### Tools

An awl, a knife, one or two needles without points, a 10 mm chisel and a good eye.

Instead of a knife, you can use scissors - and if you have no eye for measurement, a ruler will be handy.



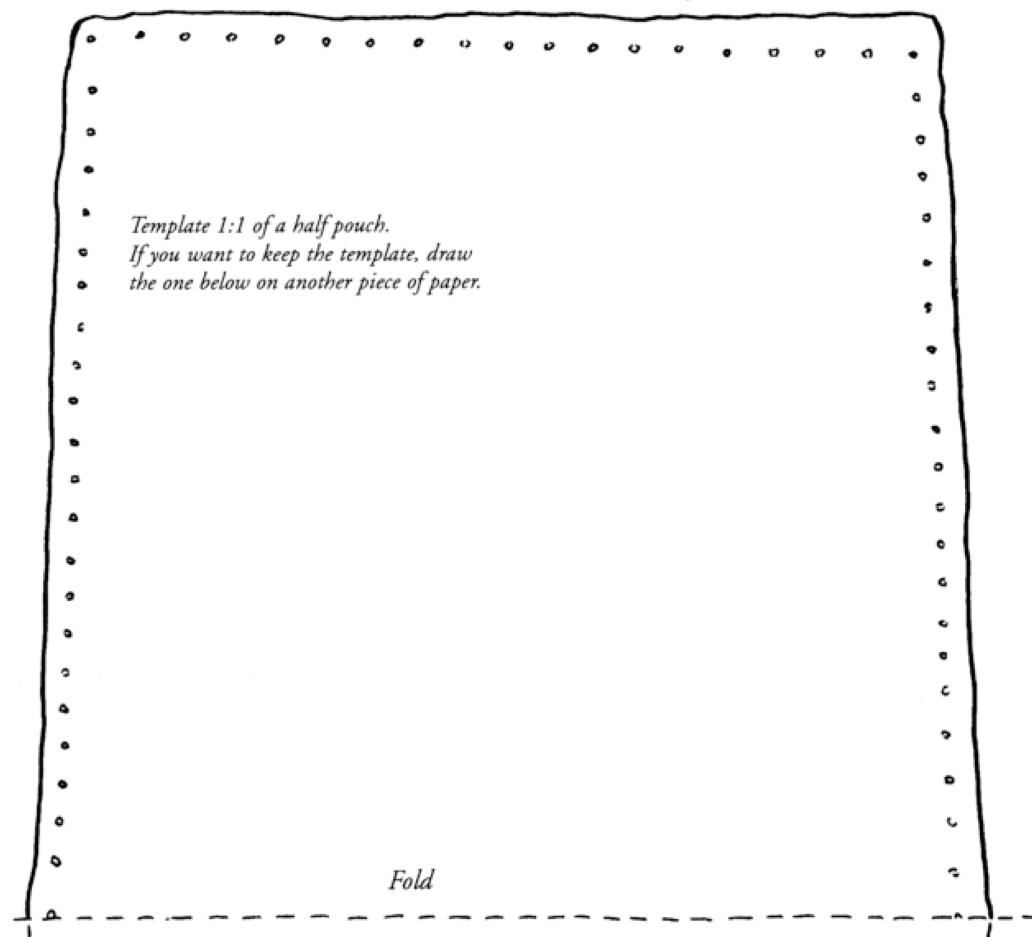
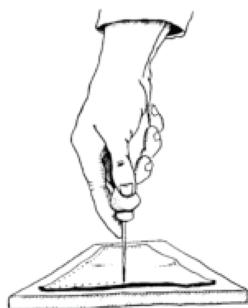


## Making the pouch

Lay the template on the leather and score or draw the form of the pouch on the leather. It is best to use an awl, but a pencil can also be used. Avoid using a felt pen; it can leave stains. Remember to score/draw on the reverse side of the leather so that marks cannot be seen when the pouch is finished.

When the form has been transferred from template to leather, cut the leather to shape.

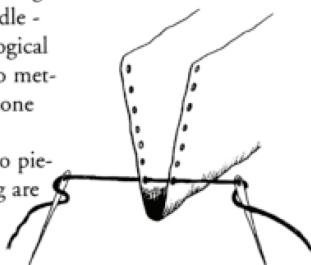
Even though the leather might feel thin and soft, it is difficult to sew without first making holes with an awl. The leather workers of the Viking Period had a trained eye and were almost certainly able to make holes without using a ruler or gauge. But here is a useful tip for beginners: First score a line on the reverse side of the leather about 1/2 cm from the edge all the way round. Then prick holes along the line with an awl. The distance between holes should also be about 1/2 cm. On the long sides it is a good idea to start in the middle and work outwards.



*Template 1:1 of a half pouch.  
If you want to keep the template, draw  
the one below on another piece of paper.*

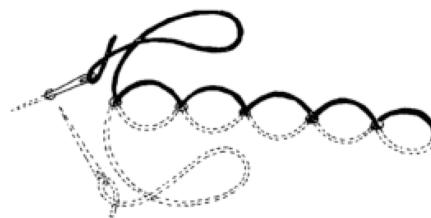
The pouch is now ready for sewing. Fold the leather along the middle - with smooth side in. Archaeological finds reveal that there were two methods of sewing the sides: with one needle or two.

Whichever method is used, two pieces of thread about 60 cm long are required.



### *Sewing method with two needles:*

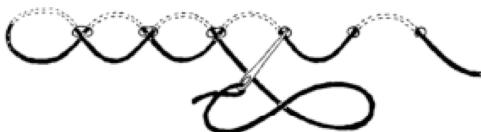
Thread two needles - one at each end of the thread. Pull the thread through the two bottom holes in the pouch. It is best to work from bottom to top. Each seam hole must be used twice, first with a needle from one side and then with the second needle from the other side. Close by sewing two or more stitches back with each needle. Sew the other side in the same way.



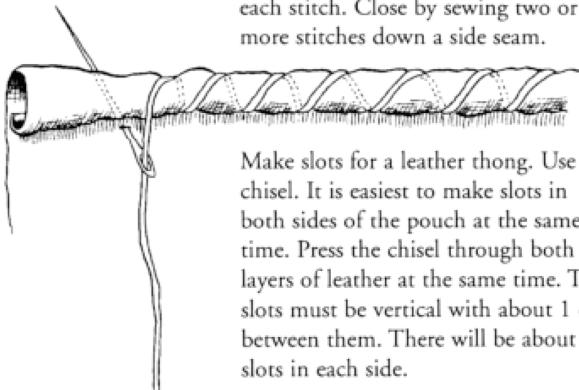


*Sewing method with one needle:*

Thread the needle and knot the end of the thread. Sew from bottom to top, then from top to bottom. Each seam hole must be used twice - once on the way up and once on the way down. Close by sewing two or more stitches back. Sew the seam at the other side in the same way.

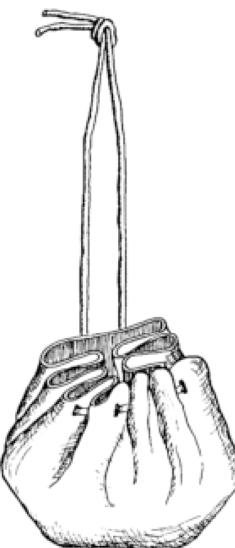


When the leather pouch has been sewn together, turn it inside out. Now sew the top edge with a piece of thread about 50 cm long, knotted at one end (see below). Start at one side and sew the seam from the inside of the pouch. Tighten the thread after each stitch. Close by sewing two or more stitches down a side seam.



Make slots for a leather thong. Use a chisel. It is easiest to make slots in both sides of the pouch at the same time. Press the chisel through both layers of leather at the same time. The slots must be vertical with about 1 cm between them. There will be about 11 slots in each side.

Finally, cut a leather thong - 1 cm wide and 30 cm long. Thread the thong through the slots, and the pouch is finished!



**Another pouch**

Archaeologists have also found another type of Viking pouch. It is easy to make:

Cut a circle from a piece of leather. We suggest a diameter of 20 cm. Then, using a chisel, make slots for a thong. The slots should be about 1 cm from the edge in a sun-ray pattern around the circle, the distance between slots being about 1.5 cm. After making all the slots, thread a thong through them, and the pouch is finished.

These pouches can be made in different sizes. To make sure the pouch folds nicely, the number of slots should be divisible by 4.

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