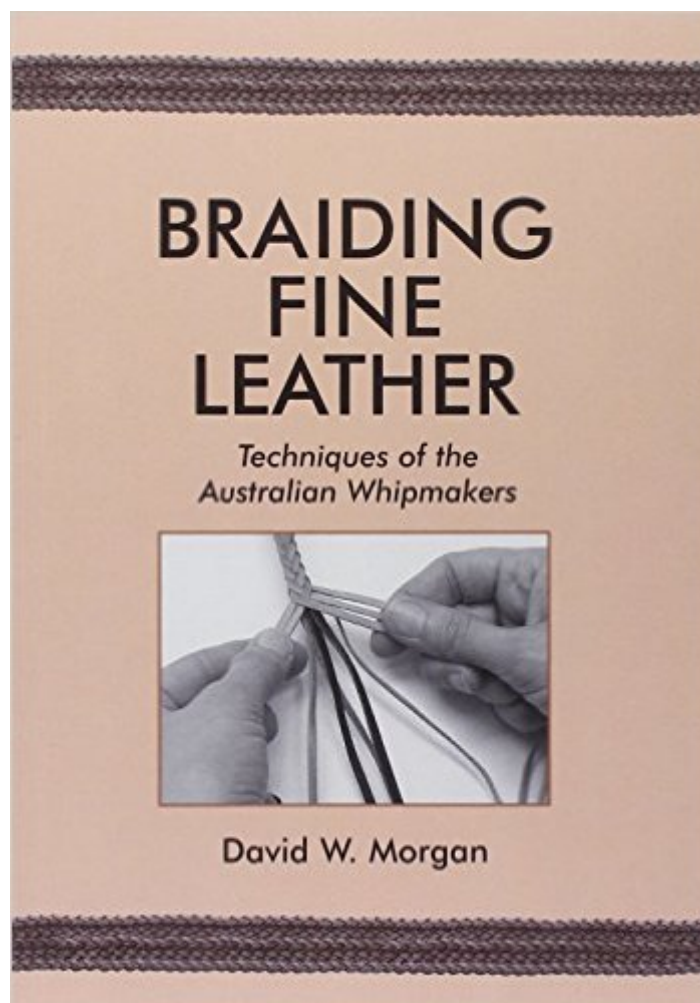


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# Braiding Fine Leather: Techniques Of The Australian Whipmakers



## Synopsis

Designed to help the beginning leather braider acquire basic skills in a straightforward manner, this book shows readers how to braid simple projects fairly quickly. With close attention to detail and a little practice using the methods described here, novices can produce attractive and enduring items from either precut lace or from a skin or side of leather. Leather braiding was developed in Australia in whipmaking shops. The craft had been carried to Australia by thongmakers from England, who were familiar with the thongs used on finely braided carriage whips. Kangaroo leather, one of the finest leathers available for braiding, provided the material for high-quality work, and a large and discriminating market in Australia led to improvements in techniques. Using these highly refined techniques and providing complete instructions and clear closeup photographs showing each step in the process, David Morgan has created an excellent book for those who want to learn to braid leather. A metallurgical engineer by training and occupation, in the 1960s Morgan became interested in Australian braided work made from kangaroo hide. With his wife he set up a part-time mail-order business selling a variety of Australian imports. In the 1980s he made the whips for the Indiana Jones movies, and he has been making them ever since. By 1990 he had abandoned metallurgy to run the mail-order business full time. He is now following an interest in the historical aspects of cattle-working whips.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've been making whips for 14 years and have every book in print on the subject of whips and plaiting. They all show braiding sequences and patterns, some better than others. However they all

lack one thing. That is showing proper process and technique. David Morgan's book fills this void and does it extremely well. It is written so that someone with little or no plaiting experience can understand it and has some simple projects that will help to develop proper technique. This book doesn't show how to make whips and is not intended to do so. If you are a beginner this book is essential. If you've been plaiting for a while, you may learn something and refine your technique.

Even if you are a beginner, this book will show you how to braid simple projects quite quickly. Practice the methods in this book paying close attention to detail and you will soon have a quality product made of either precut lace, a skin, or a side of leather! If you are looking for solid tutoring in crafting basic braided work, this is the book for you. You'll learn the fundamentals about materials, tools, cutting, and braiding upfront. The author then takes you through seven different projects with illustrations to go by. With this knowledge your skills will develop to create fancier work. Pay particular attention to where the hands are placed during the braiding techniques. This is crucial in order to produce quality craftsmanship. The book takes its information from the pros in Australian whipmaking shops. A must for anyone wanting to accomplish their own leather braiding.

I really want to like this book. It appears to aspire to teach advanced techniques, but only teaches the very basics of braiding leather. While it does offer some techniques not directly taught in other books, such as Ron Edward's excellent "How to Make Whips", those offerings are rather meager. I had expected more from the US's best known whipmaker. I imagined that he'd cover advanced topics such as pattern work in detail; sadly, such are rare and only mentioned. The one and only knot shown suffers from brief instructions and poor illustrations. Morgan uses a great deal of space explaining the basics, such as four strand round braid, illustrated with copious photographs. The photographs are poorly framed, so that the important details of which strand goes where are lost. These would be much improved by cropping most of the hands at work out, retaining only the process in progress. I needed a 5x magnifier to see the details; expect to need something similar if your eyes don't resolve small details well. The book is not without merit: it covers some areas only touched on elsewhere, such as back braiding, changing from round to flat braid, laying out a hide for stranding, and similar tidbits. His section on assessing a hide is excellent. It will help anyone with a knowledge of braiding basics to put a very fine edge on their work, but as a standalone primer, its deficits are glaring.

Well formatted paperback. Easy to follow instructions with black & white photos. I received book

March 2nd, read half way through it and started a project already. Best to Skip a beginners guide and start with this book. "Braiding Fine Leather" gets you started with first class projects right away as this reading brings everything to a view of simplicity.

This was written by a detail person, who will tell you how to hold each finger as you braid. Great if you are comfortable with that style. Includes a number of projects, as well as brief background on leather, tools and materials. Does NOT include a great many braid patterns.

It is a really fine book. It explains how to do the different braids but the pictures could be clearer. There is the reason for the 4 star mark. I would recommend this book for an intermediate to pro leather smith as some of it has to come from knowledge already gained in the trade.

The subtitle and cover photo suggest that the book is focused on whip-making, which is not the case. While much of the text deals with the techniques that are used in whip-making, it is by no means a "how to make a whip" instructional text. Very well written with clear instructions and photographs of works in progress. Definitely recommended for people interested in leather braiding.

If for nothing else, this book is a fantastic guide for how to cut a kangaroo hide for braiding. It is full of pictures of someone actually doing what the text is describing. The book is very well laid out, and makes the whip-making process intelligible for beginners.

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