

What do I need?

Embroidery hoop

Scissors

Coloured embroidery threads

Beads

Natural materials such feathers
and dried flowers*

*Try to find materials which are important to
you, such as your favourite garden flowers.



nature dreamcatcher



What do I do?

Look at page 2 to learn about the history and
significance of dreamcatchers to Native
American and First Nation cultures.

Wind your embroidery thread around the
rim of the embroidery hoop until it is
completely covered. Try changing the thread
colour every few centimetres to make it
really colourful.

To begin making the inner web, attach a
length of embroidery thread to your hoop by
tying it in a double knot.

Stretch the thread to a spot a few
centimetres along the hoop and loop it
around twice. Continue making evenly
spaced loops until you are back at the
beginning. Now do the same by making a
second round of loops in the centre of the
first lengths of thread.

Keep the thread tight and it will start to form
a web as you continue to add loops.

As you continue, thread beads into your web
to make your dreamcatcher even more
decorative.

Once you've finished weaving your web, tie
the end of your embroidery thread into the
design and trim the end neatly away.

Tie lengths of embroidery thread to the
bottom of your embroidery hoop, then tie
your chosen natural materials to the ends so
they hang down.

Once you're happy with your design, attach a
length of thread to the top so that you can
hang your dreamcatcher beside your bed, by
a window or out in the garden.

dreamcatcher history

Many people view dreamcatchers as pretty home decorations that carry a romantic story about filtering out bad dreams. Yet, dreamcatchers have a long history in Native American and First Nation cultures.

The dreamcatchers we know today are believed to have originated in the *Ojibwe* Nation - part of the *Anishinaabe* people who are indigenous to Canada and the United States.

Ojibwe legends tell stories of protective “spiderweb charms” linked to the goddess *Asibikaashi* - a ‘Spider Woman’ who protected the children of the land in ancient times. As the Ojibwe Nation dispersed across North America, *Asibikaashi* could no longer visit all the children. Instead, she encouraged mothers, sisters and grandmothers to weave magical webs from willow and sinew. These ‘spiderweb charms’ were then hung from babies’ cradles to catch any harm (see picture, top right). Often, the dreamcatchers have small circular openings in the middle of the web to let good dreams through to filter into the minds of the sleeping children.

Dreamcatchers became popular ‘Native American craft items’ in the West when they were adopted by the Pan-Indian Movement in the 1960s and 70s. These decorative items usually consist of a willow hoop containing a woven web or net, often with special items like feathers and beads attached (see picture, bottom right).

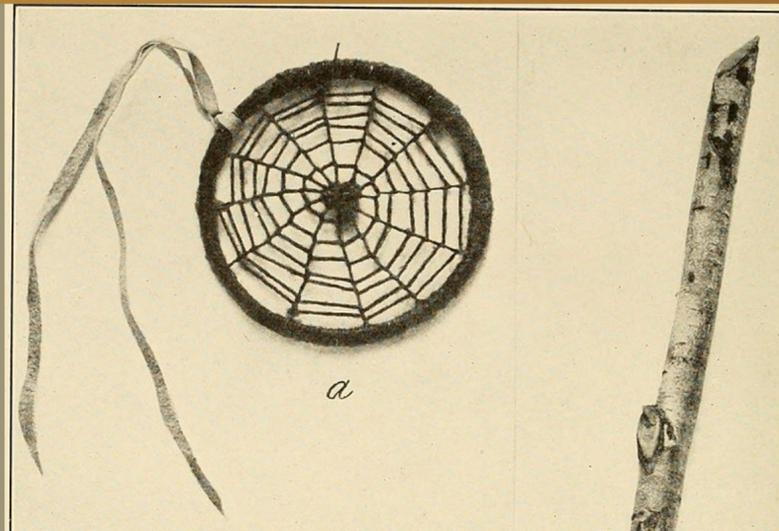


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