

Beaverslayer's Hat Tutorial

Here's the way I make my Canadian "Kempi" style hat. Everything is the same to make a typical baseball style hat, you just use a different pattern for the pieces. If you are wanting to make a baseball cap using this tutorial and do not have a pattern, well, see that old ball cap up there on the shelf in the front hall closet???? Take it, and cut it apart at the seams. When you lay the pieces out, DO NOT include the extra they have for sewing machine stitching. This will just make a HUGE hat. Trace each piece out onto your poster board (you only have to do 3 pieces from one side) and there you have it, a hat pattern. I spent quite a bit of time making a hat, ball cap, then cutting it apart where I thought it would look just right, re-making patterns, and this is the way I came up with the **Kempi** style hat pattern you find in this tutorial.

Ken Clark
Beaverslayer Custom Leather
PO Box 53059
RPO Marlborough
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
T2A 7L9

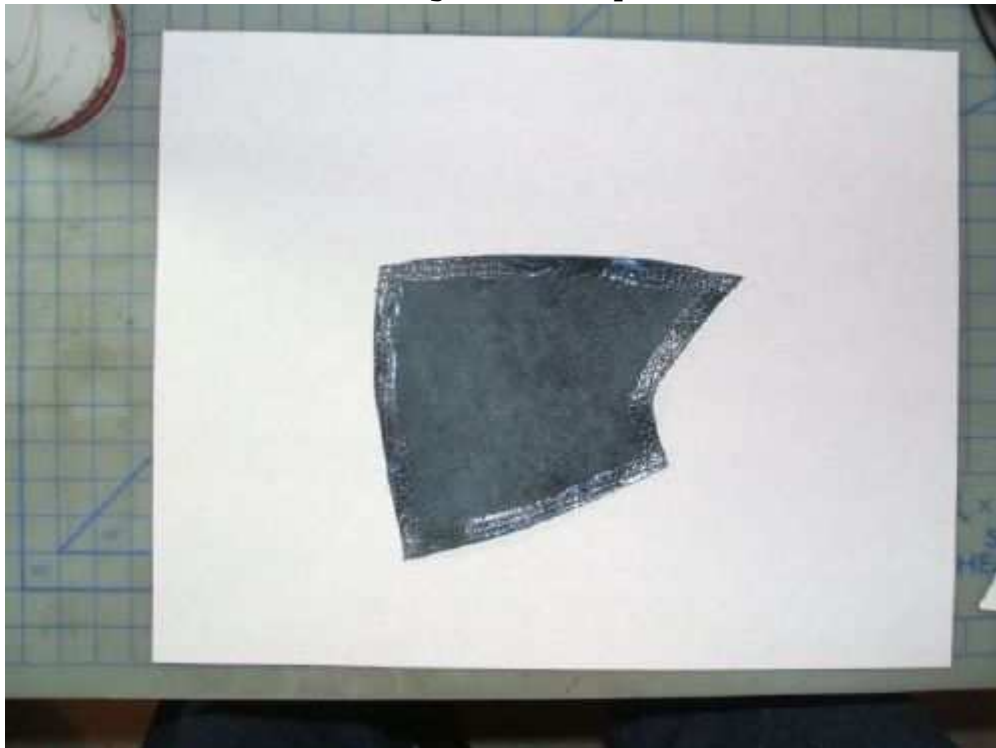
kenclark@beaverslayer.com

The Kempri Hat Tutorial

Once you have your pattern and all your pieces laid out, I kind of dry fit them just to make sure they all fit fairly good.



Now, just like we did with the back liner of the vest, we apply a bead of glue to the outer edge of each piece.



Then, laying it onto the nylon mesh, we press it in place being sure not to stretch it. Then using your roller, roll the edges real well to seal the bond.



What I do is to glue all the pieces to the mesh and then cut them out from there.



Here are all the pieces ready for assembly.



As we did with the edge gluing on the vest, here we do the same thing. Apply a small bead of glue to the "Edge" of the 2 front pieces. Then using your fingertips press the 2 pieces together starting at the top. As you join the 2 pieces, kind of curl them to help them conform to the shape they will end up as. Using your finger nails, press the seam together to make a good bond. Sorry I don't have a picture of this, as it takes at least one hand to run the camera and two hands to show you what I mean. Pretend you are pinching a zit, would be the best way I could describe this.



Now on the backside, apply a bead of glue a bit less than 1/2" wide down the middle of the seam. Also apply glue to a strip of pigskin suede that is precut 1/2" wide.



Once the glue has become tacky on the mesh (this takes a bit longer than the pigskin) press the strip onto the seam, and roll with your roller. If your glue hasn't had time to tack up, you will see the glue seeping out from the sides of the strip, and also from the front of the seam.



Continue on with the rest of the pieces until you are ready to attach the two backs together. Before we do this, we want to mark and punch the holes, as it is easier when it can lay out flat like his.



Here's the inside lined look.



To make the brim I use 7/8 oz veg tan leather. I will soak it in hot water until it is fairly saturated, then curl it and tie it with a piece of lace. Don't tie it tight, as we don't want to leave any marks, just enough to hold the shape. Once this is dried, naturally.....**DO NOT MICROWAVE**..... you will have a brim that will have a nice curve to it, and that will stay this way for many years.



You also want to cut the brim liner from pigskin suede. Cut the liner 1/2" wider as shown here in the picture.



Should you want the brim to be covered with another type of leather, once it is dried, just cut and glue a piece onto the top of the veg tan. This hat will have a dyed brim so no covering leather. I mark the holes, starting at the bottom of each seam. Measure up 1/8" and then 3/8" from then on. A closer distance will give you a tighter lace look, and a wider distance is not recommended.



Now punch all the holes 1/4" on either side of the seam, excluding the back seam. I punch holes 1 size smaller than the lace I am using.



Once you've punched all the holes, then you can glue the back seam together and punch those holes as well. Be careful that the rest of the hat is not being punched as you do the back seam. I know this can happen, then it's the scrap bin.



This next step is not necessary if making a typical ball cap. This is only done on this style, or if you want to do something like this. Cut a strip of pigskin suede that is 3/8" wider than the top piece, and cut the centre of it out 3/8" as well.



Apply a bead of glue to the edge of your top piece, and all around the inner edge of the hole in the top of the hat. Turn the hat inside out, and with the front facing you. Align the centre of the top piece with the centre of the front seam and press into place.



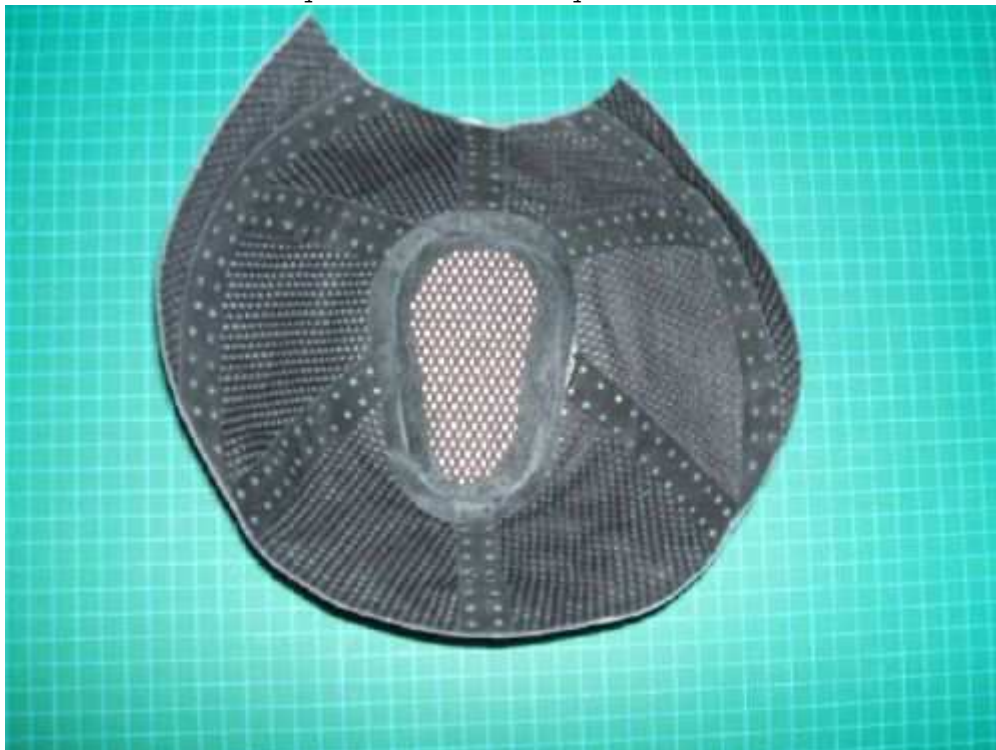
Then on the back, do the same by aligning the centre of the back of the top piece with the centre of the back seam and press into place.



Now carefully place and press the rest of the top piece into place, being careful not to pull or stretch it and distort the shape of the hat. Again using the zit squeeze technique, seal this seam.



Then like when you glued the strip to each side seam, apply glue to the inner hat around the top piece, and also on the oval shaped pigskin strip. Carefully set this strip in place, and press down. You want to roll this one REAL good with your roller in as many directions as you can think of.



Here's the top piece in place.



Okay, before I forget, cause I just realized I did, if your doing a hat like this, mark and punch the holes in your top piece at 1/4" spacing's BEFORE you glue it into the hat. Now that the top piece is glued in, we can use the holes that are already in it as our guide to punch the other holes. You will also have to re-punch the top piece holes as they were covered up when we put the pigskin strip on to seal the seam.



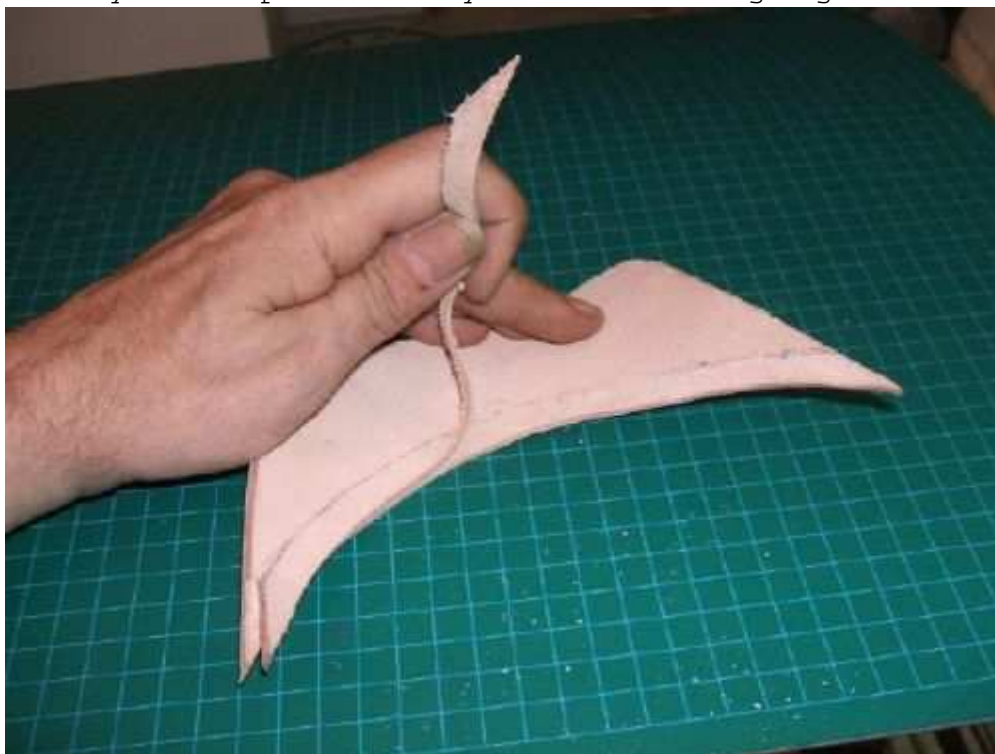
Lace the seam up doing just a simple crossover style lacing. Again only use about an arms length of lace, as you don't want it to get all tangled and worn before you finish the seam. Splicing the new lace in is a simple thing to do, it's shown in the vest tutorial so I won't repost those pics.



If you are going to cover the brim with another leather rather than dye it like I am, now is the time to do this. On the inner edge of the brim, mark 1/2' from the edge all the way around the inner edge.



Using a sharp knife, skive this marked area out so that it is 1/2 the thickness of the rest of the brim. We do this so that when we lace the brim to the hat it's not all big and bulky at the point where your forehead is going to be all day long.



Now apply a bead of glue to this inner edge of the brim, and also along the front of the hat from the centre to the first seam on the sides. Starting in the middle of the brim *(yes I forgot to tell you to mark the middle and the holes. The holes are 1/4" spacing, starting in the MIDDLE and working your way out to the edge...SORRY)*

Starting in the middle of the brim, press the brim together at the centre of the front of the hat. Work your way from one side to the other, try to make it so that the brim and the hat leather are even on the outside not the inside.



Now apply a bead of glue to the inner seam on the brim and the hat, also apply glue to a strip of pigskin long enough to go from one side to the other. Extra is good, just trim later.



Press the strip onto the seam, and roll this one REAL good.



Now, you can punch those holes I forgot to tell you to mark before. Punch both the hat side and the brim side, with about 1/8" space from the centre of the seam or as close as you can to the edge of the hat and brim.



Start to lace the seams of the hat on the front seam at the bottom closest to the brim. Cut your lace 6 times the length of these seams, this will give you enough for the seam and to hide the tail in the top piece lacing.



Making note of which hole you start your lace in (I usually start on the backside of the seam, second hole up) as we want to do the same on all the seams to keep them all looking the same.



Carry on with each seam, again starting in the same hole as you did the last one. The front and back seams do not matter if they match, but the sides do.



This bottom seam is only going to be on this style of hat, it will not be on a typical ball cap. But if you do something like this, again make note of the starting hole so both sides will look the same.



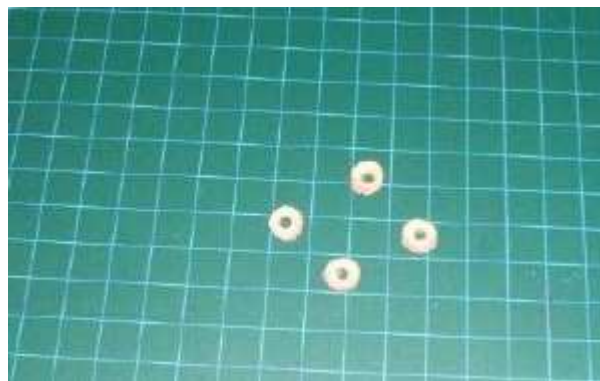
You can see that the seams and lace direction are the same on both sides. They tend to slant towards the back of the hat.



I make straps out of 1 to 2 oz veg tan. Cut the belt one 5" long, and the buckle one 3" long. Using a 1/2" buckle (Tandy item number 1537-00 I've found these to be the best). Make a small hole in the centre of the buckle strap for the pin. Fold the strap in half and rivet it together just behind the buckle. Also make 2 holes to attach the strap to the hat. For the belt part of the strap, punch 2 holes to attach to the hat, and also 5 or six holes 3/8" apart for adjusting. I've never really made these holes in any particular spot. I've searched high and low for any info on what 7 7/8 hat size actually means and what this would do to the hole spacing and have not found anything that tells me. I did find that 3/8" spacing works best though.



Now make 4 small grommets from the same leather you've made the straps, just like the ones shown here.



Using rivets, getting fancy ones if you so desire, attach the straps to the back of the hat, placing the grommets on the inside as shown. Again, I have not used any real measurement for this, just what looks right to my eye. I do leave enough room for the edge lace that we will be doing a bit later on though.



Here's the strap attached.



Cut a strip of pigskin suede 2 1/4" wide by about 24" long. Apply glue to the entire underside (not the suede side) Fold in half and press together. Then roll this folded strip with your roller.



Here's the sweat band ready to go.



Now apply a bead of glue to the INSIDE half of the brim strip as shown in the picture. DO NOT apply glue to the area with the holes punched on the actual brim.



Apply a bead of glue about 1/2" wide to the inside edge of the brim liner. Make sure you are applying it to the underside of the suede.



Fold the liner in half, and press the middle of the liner to the middle of the hat. Work your way to the outer edge, then do the same on the other side. You only want to glue the liner to the hat, NOT the brim itself.



Now take your modeling tool, and press the entire seam. You want to be able to see the skived area of the brim on the inside of the hat as shown here.



Now, apply a bead of glue to this pressed down area as shown in the picture. Make the bead go just past the first row of lacing.



Apply a bead of glue to the "cut" edge of the sweat band the same length as the bead you just put on the hat. I fold the sweat band and mark the middle, then apply glue outwards from there.



Fold the sweat band in half, and press it unto the hat at the centre of the hat. Make sure that it lies right up against the indented area from the modeling spoon. Work your way outwards pressing the sweat band into place. Now roll this seam with your roller.



Here's what it should look like when properly in place.



You now have to re-punch the holes that are on the hat, NOT the brim. Just punch the holes as shown by the needle in this picture. YOU DO NOT PUNCH THE BRIM HOLES. Be careful that the brim liner is tucked out of the way. Sometimes if you're not doing this right, the brim liner will be under the holes you are punching, then you have to redo the liner.



Here's what the inside edge of the hat should look like with the holes punched.



And here's what the brim looks like under the liner.



Start by running your lace under about 4 or 5 stitches up from the bottom on the centre seam as shown here.



Then, cross over to the brim side and into the second hole from centre, and run your lace through. This lace should be 7 times the length of this seam.



On the inside, run your needle into the centre hole as shown here, pull through and tight.



Then across to the second hole on the hat side.
This hole already has the lace from the front seam in it, pull through and tight.



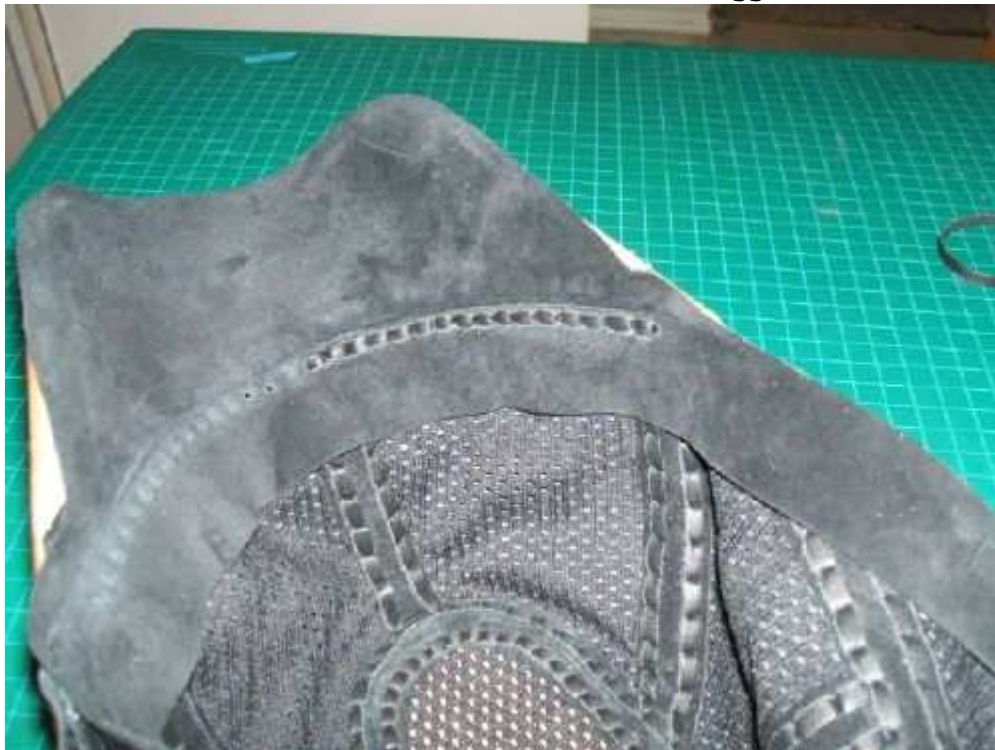
On the inside, run your needle back into the centre hole; pull the lace through and tight. The lacing on the brim we want to do as tightly as we can to give it as much strength and sturdiness as possible.



To finish the seam off and hide the tail, just run your needle up under the side lace as far as you can and pull tight and then snip it off. Tuck any overhang under the lace.



You can see here that we only have one row of the lace seam showing on the inside of the hat. This will not be a bother to the old noggin while wearing it.



The other side of the seam is going to be hidden under the brim liner.



Here's what the brim lacing should look like once completed.



Apply glue to the brim and also the liner let this get tacky before moving on.



Giving the liner a bit of a tug, just a bit, pull it towards the front of the brim and press it to the brim at the centre only. Next, again with a bit of a tug, pull each side of the liner to the outer edge and press to the brim. Once you've done the above two steps, then you can slowly work the rest of the liner and press and roll it to the brim. Be careful not to get any wrinkles in it, as you will not get them out, and replacing the liner at this stage is going to take a lot of work.



Now cut the extra liner off.



Here's what you should have at this stage.



If you want, this is when you put the hat band on. You can be as imaginative as you want, snake skins, shark, bone beads, what ever you desire. I attach mine with the same rivets as I use to attach the adjustment strap.



Now we want to finish gluing in the sweat band. Run a bead of glue all along the remaining edge of the inside of the hat, and also all the way along the edge of the sweat band as shown, Then press and roll together and trim off the extra at the back of the hat.



Start marking your holes for the edge lacing at the start of the extra side lace seam. On a typical ball cap, I start my hole marking 1" from the centre of the back at the top of the curved area. The first set of holes will be punched using a four pronged chisel punch, as we only do a real simple loop through for the first bit. This helps the hat bend right when adjusting to smaller heads.



Mark your holes 1/4" apart all the way around the edge of the hat, including the brim as well. You'll notice in this picture, the last hole before the brim is kind of in a precarious place. When it comes time to punch this hole, just move it up a bit, then punch 1 hole right in the centre of the brim and hat seam.



Here's all the holes punched. If you look closely, you can see what I mean by the hole punched precariously and in the middle of the seam. You also want to punch these holes a bit under 1/4" from the edge, about 3/16".



Starting in the back, run your lace down under the back seam. Then using the slotted holes just loop it through until you reach your round holes. From here carry on doing the Mexican Round braid. Again, only an arms length of lace. If you notice your lace wearing out before your ready to splice, splice it anyway. This will make sure the lace looks uniform all the way around.



When you get to the corners just behind the straps, nip a bit of the corner off, this will help you to make a clean and good looking corner.



This is what the lacing should look like on the back with the looping lace at the beginning and end of the run. Once you reach the end, just run your lace tail back up under the back seam and cut off.



And here you have it, the finished hat, especially made for my good friend Wolvenstien. Hope you all like it and that the tutorial helps you. If you have any questions, please ask, I'll be more than happy to answer.



Ken
(Beaverslayer)