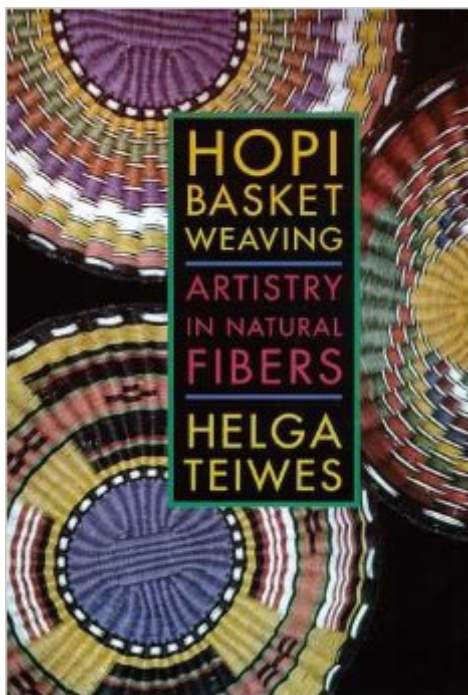


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# Hopi Basket Weaving: Artistry In Natural Fibers



## Synopsis

"With the inborn wisdom that has guided them for so long through so many obstacles, Hopi men and women perpetuate their proven rituals, strongly encouraging those who attempt to neglect or disrespect their obligations to uphold them. One of these obligations is to respect the flora and fauna of our planet. The Hopi closeness to the Earth is represented in all the arts of all three mesas, whether in clay or natural fibers. What clay is to a potter's hands, natural fibers are to a basket weaver." —from the Introduction

Rising dramatically from the desert floor, Arizona's windswept mesas have been home to the Hopis for hundreds of years. A people known for protecting their privacy, these Native Americans also have a long and less known tradition of weaving baskets and plaques. Generations of Hopi weavers have passed down knowledge of techniques and materials from the plant world around them, from mother to daughter, granddaughter, or niece. This book is filled with photographs and detailed descriptions of their beautiful baskets--the one art, above all others, that creates the strongest social bonds in Hopi life. In these pages, weavers open their lives to the outside world as a means of sharing an art form especially demanding of time and talent. The reader learns how plant materials are gathered in canyons and creek bottoms, close to home and far away. The long, painstaking process of preparation and dying is followed step by step. Then, using techniques of coiled, plaited, or wicker basketry, the weaving begins. Underlying the stories of baskets and their weavers is a rare glimpse of what is called "the Hopi Way," a life philosophy that has strengthened and sustained the Hopi people through centuries of change. Many other glimpses of the Hopi world are also shared by author and photographer Helga Teiwes, who was warmly invited into the homes of her collaborators. Their permission and the permission of the Cultural Preservation Office of the Hopi Tribe gave her access to people and information seldom available to outsiders. Teiwes was also granted access to some of the ceremonial observances where baskets are preeminent. Woven in brilliant reds, greens, and yellows as well as black and white, Hopi weavings, then, not only are an arresting art form but also are highly symbolic of what is most important in Hopi life. In the women's basket dance, for example, woven plaques commemorate and honor the Earth and the perpetuation of life. Other plaques play a role in the complicated web of Hopi social obligation and reciprocity. Living in a landscape of almost surreal form and color, Hopi weavers are carrying on one of the oldest arts traditions in the world. Their stories in *Hopi Basket Weaving* will appeal to collectors, artists and craftspeople, and anyone with an interest in Native American studies, especially Native American arts. For the traveler or general reader, the book is an invitation to enter a little-known world and to learn more about an art form steeped in meaning and stunning in its

beauty.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you are looking for a great history book on Hopi baskets, this is the book. If you are looking for a "how to" book, this is not what you are looking for. It does state the technique used for various types of baskets, however doesn't tell you "how to" do those techniques. Beautiful photos, wonderful text, but not a "how to" book.

This book has beautiful pictures taken by the artist of Hopi basketry and the women who create it. It's a good source of information on the women of the Hopi tribe and their basketry. Before writing the book she spent a lot of time observing and interviewing these women, which makes her book more credible than if she had just researched or observed. The way she talks about the women feels personal, and her friendship and respect for them shows in the writing. I'd recommend this book to anyone interested in the Hopi tribe or basket weaving in general. I also think that anyone who wishes to learn how to weave should read this to learn more about the cultural background of the art. However, even though Teiwes does talk about technique, it's not a how-to book.

This is not for the person who wants to learn how to do Hopi style baskets. This is a book for the intermediate to advanced basketweaver who wants to STUDY Hopi basket weaving. History of the traditions and the basketweavers abound and there is a plethora of photos. You can study this book

for a long time before you need to move on to get more info. It's fascinating as well as a bit sad for the ancient art that is struggling to stay alive. (One example is that apparently no one grows the Hopi sunflowers anymore which was the source of natural black dye so now synthetic black dye has to be used.) I wish there were more color photos but I have no problem with the number of photos -- nice job there! If you've admired, bought or want to work in the Hopi style (with a basketweaving background already in place) then this book will be a valuable addition to your artist library.

This is a very informative book on Hopi basket weavers, starting with discussion of types of Hopi basket weaving. It contains many photographs of the weavers of the Second and Third Mesas and their works. Good addition to any American Indian basketry library.

This is my favorite reference on Hopi baskets and basketmakers. Helga Teiwes is well acquainted with the subject and her clear, concise writing style and beautiful photographs are a pleasure to see!

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