

Marshallese handicrafts have come to be known as perhaps the finest in the Pacific. Unique in style, intricate in design and made of all natural material, our handicrafts are of the finest quality. Each piece has a high quality of workmanship, with an enormous amount of time and care being put into each item.

The making of Marshallese handicrafts is a highly specialized art form. The men and women who make the handicrafts possess detailed and specific knowledge on such things as the raw material preparation methods, the different crafting and weaving processes, and many style and design variations. Such expertise comes only after many years of practice and experience. Indeed, many are introduced to crafting during early childhood.



### Handbags

Handbags and carrying bags are made of *maan* (prepared pandanus) and are decorated in the traditional colors of brown

or black. The finer worked handbags are made of the durable *kimej* – coconut-shoot membrane. Some handbags now mix the two styles together with a *maan* outside and a *kimej* interior. The handles are woven of pandanus (*maan*) or coconut-shoot membrane (*kimej*).

### Hats

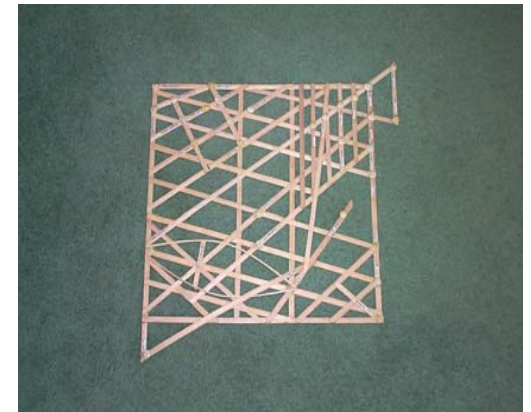
The very best hats of the islands are made entirely from the white immature coconut shoot, and are costly- for good reason, considering the great amount of work demanded to produce the *kimej* and then for the ‘extracting’ weaving (crown downwards) on a block.

### Wall Decorations

The size of circular wall hangings commonly range from 15 to 18 inches diameter. All materials and techniques are brought into use but the base is made from *malwe* (stiffening strips of coconut frond) wrapped with pandanus or *kimej*.

### Fans

Fans continue to be an important accessory to life in the heat of the islands. They vary in sophistication, from the simplest to the most refined. All materials are used to make the fans, including *kimej* for detail on the best quality fans with the being made from *maan* (pandanus).



### Navigation

The stick charts were used to teach and record the swells of the sea itself. There are two basic kinds: the *mattang* and the *rebbelib*. The first is for instruction only in swell-patterns, the second shows the place of islands in the group or one of the island chains.

### Work Baskets

Work baskets are one of the most delightful handicrafts of the Pacific region. Made by women for women, much imagination and delicacy goes into their creation, yet they are sturdy enough for a lifetime’s service. The baskets are made from *malwe* – wrapped coconut-membrane (*kimej*) which is dyed. Small shells are often included.



### Marshallese Canoes

The precisely made models of Marshalls canoes are popular with visitors and come equipped with pandanus sail, which the original full-sized canoes used, steering oar and bailer.

### Mats

The pandanus mats of the Pacific are a feature of Oceania. The mats have many different uses. The simplest, which goes on the ground under other mats, is woven directly from the leaves of a divided coconut frond. Another simple type- the *talao*, is made from broad, unsplit pandanus leaves sewn together. It has a join in the middle; as do the fine sleeping mats, where the two halves make them convenient for folding and providing warmth.



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# MIVA

## Visitor Leaflets

# Handicrafts of the Marshall Islands

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