

Tassel rucksack

Customise a leather rucksack with beads and feathers for a Native American look. **By Jemima Schlee**

You will need

Leather rucksack kit
Scraps of cream and turquoise suede (see step 1 for amounts)
Beads (x 18 each of silver, blue and red)
Feathers (x 9 mounted on a silver plated crimp)
3m x 2mm turquoise leather 'cord'
1.25m leather thong
Leather punch (3mm)
Threads to match your leather and suede

1. Cut two pieces of cream suede, 11cm x 6cm and 20cm x 6cm. Cut five diamonds measuring 5.5cm across and 3.5cm from top to bottom (see page 87 for template). Centre and anchor them with some dots of textile glue (**image 1**). Using turquoise thread, stitch three diamonds onto the longer piece of cream suede, 2cm from the bottom edge and 5mm apart. On the shorter piece sew the remaining two down using the same measurements. Cut a 'V' shape at the bottom of the smaller piece, following the angle of the bottom diamond and 7mm below it.

2. Take the front flap piece from the rucksack kit. Thread your machine with cream thread and load your bobbin with brown thread (**image 2**). Stitch the longer cream suede piece vertically and centred onto the front of the pocket piece – anchor it in position with small bits of masking tape or some dots of textile glue rather than pins. Sandwich the leather and

suede between pieces of tracing paper to prevent it sticking on your sewing machine bed and the machine foot. Trim the top and bottom edges of the suede flush with the top and bottom of the flap piece.

3. In the same way, stitch the shorter piece on to the front pocket piece, positioning it so that the bottom point of the suede is 1cm from the bottom edge of the pocket piece. Again, trim the top edge flush with the top of the pocket.

4. Use a 2mm hole punch to punch holes 1cm apart and 1cm in from the edge all around the curve of the flap. Work out from the centre at the bottom in each direction to attain symmetry (the nine central holes will be the ones used for your tassels).

5. Starting at the top left, 'whip' the edges with the fine turquoise leather – knot it at the back when you start and thread it through each hole from back to front, over the edge and through from the back to the front again.

6. On reaching the first of your nine central holes, push your leather through from the back, pass it back from the front to the back through the same hole, and then thread it forwards through the loop created. Pull tight and thread the beads on in order (**image 3**), and tie off at the back of the feather, cut the leather leaving a 1cm tail. Continue in the same way with the next eight holes (**image 4**). After the first tassel, I worked up from the bottom of one tassel,

up to the flap edge and back down to the bottom of the third tassel – this way you have fewer knots at the back of your work (**image 5**).

7. Now, following the kit instructions, construct your rucksack omitting the clip which connects the flap to the front

pocket – the weight of the tassels keeps the flap in position. And finally – thread the top of the rucksack with the leather thong rather than the one provided in the kit (**image 6**).

Resources

Leather rucksack kit:
www.simpleway.co.uk



STEP-BY-STEP PHOTOGRAPHS: JEMIMA SCHLEE

