

## Pumpkin Mat

Pumpkins were one of the garden vegetables grown along river banks by Indians like the Pawnee and Wichita. These people wove strips of pumpkin into mats for storage. Pieces of the mats were torn off as needed to flavor soups and other dishes. The Kiowa and Comanche traded buffalo meat to the Pawnee and Wichita Indians for pumpkin mats.

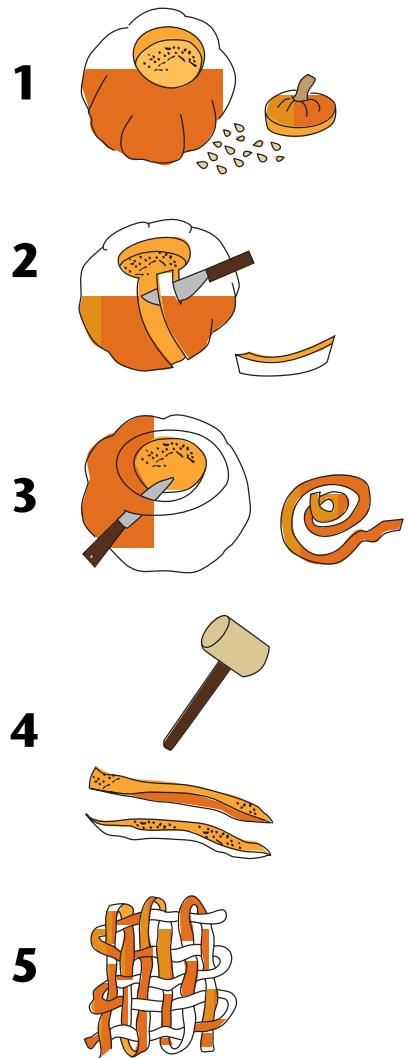
### Pumpkin Mat

#### You need:

3-4 medium sized pumpkins

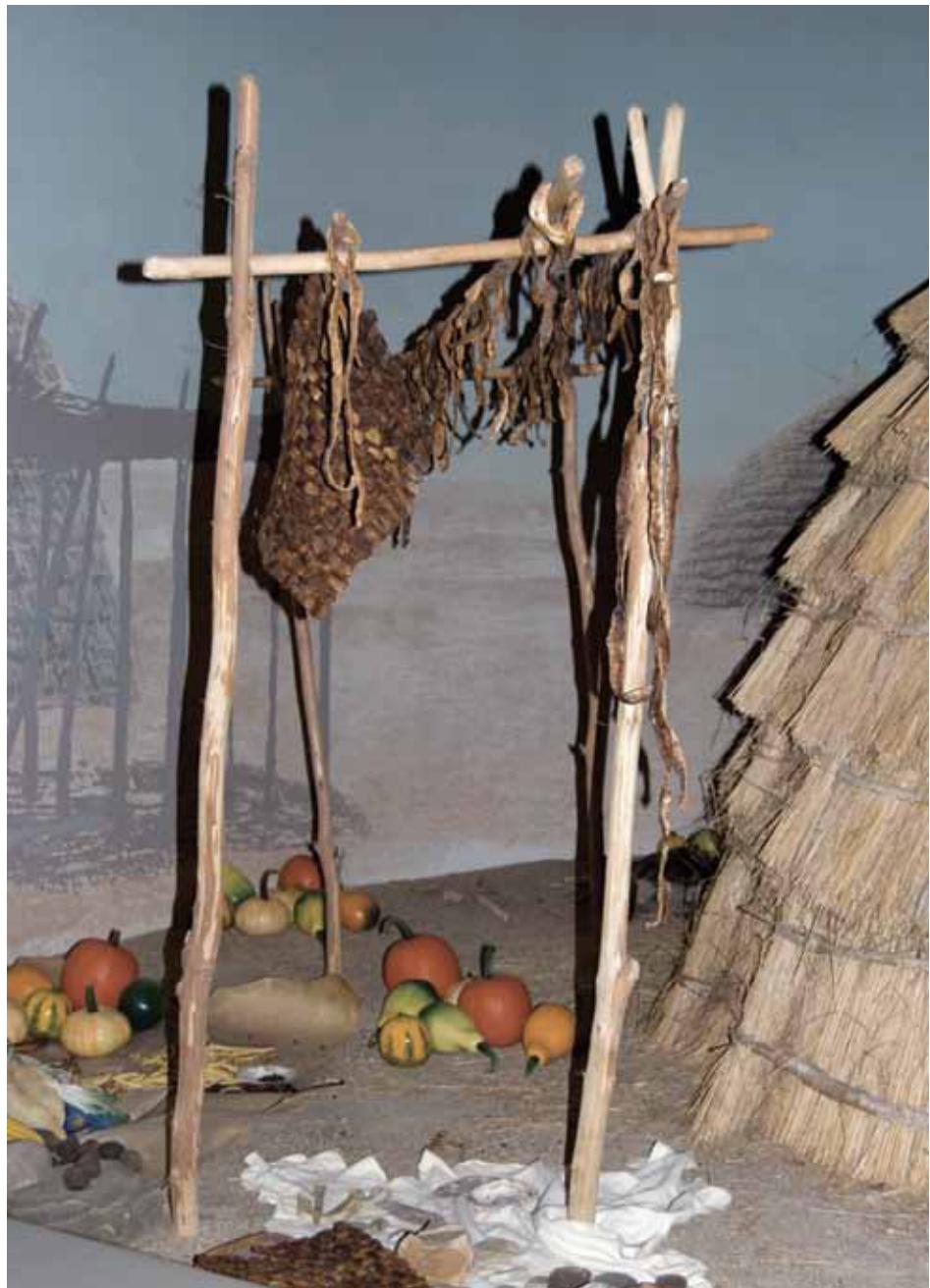
#### Do this:

1. Cut off pumpkin at both ends so you can get seeds out.  
SAVE THE SEEDS AND PLANT IN YOUR SPRING GARDEN.
2. Peel the pumpkin, using a sharp knife. (Make a sawing motion starting at the top of the pumpkin and ending at the bottom.)  
Repeat until entire pumpkin is peeled.
3. Make a long spiral strip approximately 1 inch wide (don't worry if it breaks) or slice pumpkin crosswise and slit rings to hang.  
Hang strips to dry for one to two days (longer indoors).
4. Place dried strips on hard surface and pound flat with smooth side of wooden mallet. Place half of strips in a row, close together.
5. Weave, using remaining strips, by lifting every other strip. To start another piece, simply overlap and continue to weave.  
When the mat is completed, secure by tucking ends under to conceal. When the mat is woven, pound it lightly. It will dry in a week. When dry, your mat will measure about 14 by 16 inches.



**Food Choice Guidelines: Pumpkin is an "anytime" food.  
(Nutritional information is based on canned pumpkin.)**

Iron	Protein	Vitamin A	Vitamin C	Vitamin B	Calcium	Fiber
yes	yes	yes*	yes*	yes/T	yes	yes



*Woven pumpkin mats hang on a wood drying rack in the Wichita Indian exhibit at the Kansas Museum of History.*