

Design Resource

Jute Bag Making, Bengaluru - Karnataka

Craft of the Golden Fiber

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Hariharasudan T.
NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/jute-bag-making-bengaluru-karnataka>



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2. Tools and Raw Materials
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Introduction

Jute, known as The Golden Fiber is a natural fiber with a golden and silky shine. As a plant jute (*Corchorus Capsularis* and *Corchorus Olitorius*) was believed to have been cultivated around 800 B.C. It is the cheapest vegetable fiber procured from the bark or skin of the plant's stem. It has high tensile strength, and low extensibility, and ensures better breathability of fabrics. Jute fiber is 100% bio-degradable and recyclable and thus environmentally friendly. Its luster determines quality; the more it shines, the better the quality. Jute has good insulating and antistatic properties, as well as low thermal conductivity and moderate moisture regain. It includes acoustic insulating properties and manufactures with no skin irritations.

Jute has been used in India on family farms for centuries. It was twisted into cordage and made into twine and ropes to be used on the farm. The jute, left after the fiber is extracted, was used as firewood. There are even several historical recordings of jute in earlier days. Mughal king Akbar encouraged the villagers of India to wear clothes made of jute during his period 1542-1605. In Bengal, ropes and twines were made of white jute for household and other uses. Parts of the Jute plant have been used since ancient times in Africa and Asia. The stem is used in weaving and leaves for food.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, jute was indispensable. It was used in making sacks, ropes, boot linings, aprons, carpets, tents, roofing felts, satchels, linoleum backing, tarpaulins, sandbags, electric cable, and even parachutes. Jute appealed to the people because of its strength, low cost, durability and versatility. Jute started to be exported in the 1880s when a system for spinning and weaving was developed in Dundee (Scotland), where there is now a jute museum. Margaret Donnelly, a jute mill owner in Dundee, set up the first jute mill in Bengal. In the years the 1950s and 1960s, when nylon and polythene were rarely used, one of the primary sources of foreign exchange earnings was the jute products. It was also used in the military during the British regime.

Jute is an annual crop taking approximately about 120 days to grow. It thrives in a tropical climate with humidity of 60% to 90%. Jute is a rain-fed crop with little need for fertilizer or pesticides. Yields are about 2 tons of dry jute fiber per hectare. Jute is one of the most affordable natural fibers and is considered second only to cotton in the amount produced and variety of uses of vegetable fibers. Jute is planted close together so that the plants grow tall and straight.

Jute has a low carbon footprint, it is biodegradable, feeds the soil and all parts of the plant can be used. Jute plants help to clean the air; during growth they assimilate three times more CO₂ than the average tree, converting the CO₂ into oxygen. As well as having little need for fertilizers and pesticides, jute plants enrich the soil. As these plants grow fast, they are often used in crop rotation. The leaves and roots left after harvest enrich the soil with micronutrients, maintaining soil fertility. When used as a geotextile, it puts nutrients back in the soil when it decomposes.

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Multiple color used in screen-printing process.

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Artisan and supervisor sheikh Mahmudin who is working for the past twenty years on jute bag craft.



Supervisor marking the measurement.



For stitching motorized sewing machine is used.



Bright colors are used to make jute bag.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Tools and raw materials used for Jute Bag Making are as follows:

- **Jute Cloth:** It is used as a basic material in making of any product.
- **Sewing Machine:** It is used to stitch the cut jute pieces together.
- **Scissors:** It is used to cut the material to required length.
- **Measuring Tape:** It is used to measure the jute material.
- **Thread:** It is used to stitch the jute cloth together.
- **Marking Chalk:** It is used to mark the measurements on the jute for cutting.
- **Zipper:** It is used for opening and closing for the compartments in the bag.
- **Thread:** It is used to sew two parts together.
- **Fabric Cutting Machine:** It is used to cut the stacked jute sheets to required lengths.



Jute fabric cut to size.



Color pigment used for screen printing on the jute fabric.

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Place for mixing color.



Zipper used in the jute bag making process.



Jute strip used for making of the bag.



Roles of jute fabric.

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Making Process

The cultivation of jute begins by tilling the land (without using any fertilizers and pesticides)

After heavy shower of rain, seeds are sown, in 4 months' time, they attain maturity (15 – 20 cm long) and are ready for harvesting. The plant stems are then about 2.5 to 3.5 meters tall and as thick as a finger. The stalks are cut-off, tied into bundles and retted (soaked) in water for about 20 days. The process of retting softens the tissues and permits the fibers to be separated. The fibers are then peeled off from the stalks in long strands and washed in low running water. The fibers lie beneath the bark around the woody core or 'hull'. Then they are spread on thatched roofs to dry under the sun. Jute fiber is thus ready. Once the jute is woven, it is sent for dyeing, after dyeing it is sent for lamination. The entire jute roll is laminated with a Lower Density Polyethylene (LDPE) lining. After lamination is done, it goes to cutting department.

Fabric is arranged in layers and cut as per the product pattern. Cut fabric is marked according to product made and is sent to screen printing. Screen printing is done on cut fabric by arranging the fabrics on a large printing table. After the printing is done fabric is left to dry. Then it goes for stitching.

All the body parts such as body, gusset, zipper and handle of a bag are stitched together using stitching machine.

Finished bags are quality checked for any kind of errors. If any error is found then it is mended and rectified.

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Artisan measuring the jute fabric for the required size.



The cut fabric arranged on the large printing table.



Fabric is arranged in layers and cut according to the product pattern.

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The ink is forced through the mesh using the rubber squeegee.



Outside of the design area is a non-exposed emulsion which allows ink to pass through to the fabric.

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After the printing is done fabric is left to dry.



Zipper attached onto the lining of the jute bag.

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Embroidery design stitched onto the jute bag.



Bag handles are being stitched by artisan.

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Border of the bag is getting stitched by the artisan.



The final product of jute bag.



Stitched edges of the jute bag.

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Products

Jute is used in various fields, it is used largely to make cloth for wrapping bales of raw cotton, and to make sacks and coarse cloth. The fibers are also woven into curtains, chair coverings, carpets, area rugs, hessian cloth, and backing for linoleum. The fibers are used alone or blended with other types of fibers to make twine and rope. Jute fibers are used to make ropes. Jute butts, the coarse ends of the plants, are used to make cheap clothes. Jute mats and matting are commonly woven in Southern parts of India. Jute Mats and Rugs are made both through Power loom and Handloom, in large volumes in Kerala.

Jute bag is the most common product made from jute. Jute has an advantage over polythene and paper bags as it is 100% bio-degradable case of poly bags and no trees are required to be cut if compared to paper bags. It can carry a lot more weight than polythene and paper bags. Various kinds of bags like college bags, fashion bags, travel bags, wallets, belts, carpets, rugs, textiles etc. are some of the commonly produced jute products.



Pencil pouch for kids made by jute fabric.

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Fully finished jute bag.



Embroidery design stitched to the jute bag.

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Ladies handbag made from jute and printed fabric.



Creative design on jute bags.

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Video



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You can write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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