



Making a Tues: This is best done with spring wood. In Interior Alaska, wood cut in June works well. Here are the tools you need: a Bear saw and a box cutter.



Find a birch, alder, or willow green wood stick about one and half inches in diameter or less.



Select a section that is clear of any branch scars.



Score the bark with your box cutter. Score through the cambium layer.



Image shows the score line just below the branch scar.



Take a discarded branch and beat on the bark below where you scored.



After beating all around the stick, try to see if the bark is loosening by twisting the bark on the stick to see if it moves. This can take a while.



Shows the twisting motion. If it is not moving, then beat some more.



The bark is beginning to move!



Here is the intact bark tube with cambium attached to the bark. Note the branch wood: very smooth and white with no cambium attached.



To make the bottom and the top: Find a dry piece of wood that is of a similar diameter of your stick. This image shows checking an alder stick to see if it matches the diameter of the birch stick just de-barked.



With your box knife, trim the piece selected for the bottom to fit.



While trimming, keep checking to see if the bottom piece fits snugly in the bark tube.



When you are satisfied that you have a snug fit, cut the bottom piece off of the dry stick.



Fit the bottom into the birch bark tube.

(Not shown here: It is a good idea to use small wooden pegs to secure the bottom to bark tube. Drill 3-4 holes through the bark and into the wood of the bottom. Make small wooden pegs and gently hammer into the drill holes. Trim flush.) Make the top in a similar fashion but you may want to create a lip for the bark tube to seat against so that it is easy to take the top off the tubes. See images below.



Rounding the edge of the base of the top.



Cut to the size you want the lid to be. (Not recommended: We used the upper part of the stick that we worked the bark tube off of. It seemed like a good idea at the time but ultimately the wood shrunk to a point where the lid no longer fit snugly.)



Trim the newly cut edge with your box knife to round the top.



The lid fits.