



## Make your own mission wallet..

I was browsing the net a while back and came across these Mission Wallets being sold at BladeArt.com, and I instantly knew this was the wallet for me.. Not only have I been making knives, but I have also been making some hand made pens as well.. the instant I saw this wallet, I saw the potential for a nice matching knife/pen/wallet combo. I figured that with a bit of patients, and yelling and screaming at the sewing machine, that I should be able to make one of the wallets fairly easily, and cheap as well (Approx cost about \$5)

BladeArt.com's Mission Wallet <a href="http://www.bladeart.com">http://www.bladeart.com</a>	My "Mission Like" Wallet <a href="http://www.customknifecreations.com">http://www.customknifecreations.com</a>
	
\$27 USD	\$5.00 CAD

### Materials Needed:

- **Leather**
- **Thread**
- **Sewing Machine**
- **Leather Sewing Machine Needles**
- **Sharp Scissors**
- **Two blocks of wood, and two C-Clamps**
- **Metal zipper**

## Leather

The right thickness of leather is critical for making a nice Mission Wallet, the leather has to be thin enough to be able to be sewn, when folded many times, as well as it has to be thick enough to be durable, and to hold the stitches well.

After checking out several places, and sizes, the best match I have found was some scrap leather from leather wrapped car steer wheels. It's cheap, and the sizes of scrap a perfect for a single wallet. (~\$5.00 per pound). There is also some nice book binding leather, but I find it a bit too thin for my liking

The best way to judge the thickness is fold the leather in 5 layers; this will be the maximum width that you will have to stitch through at one time. To gauge the maximum width of the wallet, take 10 layers, and this will be approx the width of the wallet (in the seams) when it's done.

A good source of leather (where I got mine from...) is

**Heritan Leather & Crafts Ltd 416-757-1392**  
1654 Victoria Park Avenue,  
North York, ON  
M1R 1P7

## Thread

I tried using standard thick thread, but I found that it was not very durable, and wasn't coated. I found some leather sewing thread at Heritan the works great, it's thick, and has a bit of a coating to it. It's also very durable.. You have to play around with the sewing machine settings (Tension) to get it just right in the machine, when you are sewing.

## Sewing Machine

A standard sewing machine will do, I found that in certain parts, when the leather is thicker, I'd turn the wheel by hand..

Also one note.. when you are doing the small "fold over" lips on the pockets, the teeth used on the bottom of the sewing machine (to move the material ) where very picky, and would not grab the material good ( on the first ½ of each sewing).. I found that if you made the fold bigger, and then cut off the extra after, it was easier.

## **Leather Sewing Machine Needles**

Sewing through 5 layers of leather can be tough, I found that using the thicker/heaver leather sewing needles helped. (about \$6 for a 5 pack) at Heritan

## **Sharp Scissors**

Get a good pair of sharp scissors, ones that can cut through about 5-6 layers of leather at one time (for a nice clean edge on the leather)

## **Two blocks of wood, and two C-Clamps**

For creating nice folds, I used two C-Clamps, and two blocks of wood. I just wet the leather, folded it, and put it in the clamps..

I found the using a nice piece of hardwood, worked better, and it's easier to put more pressure on the wood without indenting it. (Make sure the wood surfaces are flat, it will leave an impression on the leather if you don't)

## The Wallet:

My first wallet I made was cut from 4 , 3"x"4 pieces of leather.. I found the once it was together, it was a bit small.. My second attempt was 4 ½ X 5 ½ , the length was good, but the width was to long. I'm currently using a 3 ¾ x 5 1/2. This size gives me enough leather around the edges to trim and line things up, and still have a nice wallet size

I tried playing around with a few different patterns of cutting/sewing the leather, but I found the cutting each layer into a separate piece was the easiest

Steps:

- Cut out the pieces of leather.
- Take two of the best pieces, and mark then for the top pocket, and underside of the wallet (the other two pieces can have minor blemishes as they will be covered).
- Layout the wallet with 3 pieces lacing up, and one down.
- Decide on your pocket lengths (Remember to add the extra length for the folded over edge
- Take the top two pockets and cut them.
- Take the first pocket (straight edge) and fold it back about ½ inch (this will be trimmed shorter later)
- Wet the leather, fold the edge, and place it in the clamp..
- Leave it in the clamp for 5 mins.
- Cut, wet and fold the other pocket (cut at an angle)
- Undo the clamp, place the second folded pocket edge in the clamp with the first one (side by side)
- Leave the leather for about 20-30 mins

Go for a smoke/drink/washroom break..

- Take the pieces out of the clamps, and go back to the three/one so you can see what it will generally look like.
- Sew each folded edge, about 1/8 or 1/4 from the edge
- Trim off any extra folded edge.
- Take the top two pockets, and line them up
- Sew the top pocket divider, starting at the folded edge (go back and forth a few times over the folded edge, so the thread/stitch is strong, (I find moving the leather back and forth by hand is the best way to do it)

Note: I found that it's easier/looks better, if you do the metal zipper first. Once the wallet is put together, it's hard to get the zipper put on after (do to the small opening of the mouth of the wallet, and the sewing machine positioning.

- Start with the single back side, and sew the zipper on. I find the putting the “zipper tab” (closed position) on the end opposite the pocket, is easier to open it, once the wallet is filled with a knife/pen.
- Sew it on with the leather side up, so you get a nice stitch on the out side.
- Sew on the other side, you will be again sewing from the leather side up, and through several layers of leather (and zipper)
- Turn the wallet inside out.
- And now sew down one side, across the bottom , and up the other side.
- When you do the corners, do them round. (square creates too much folded leather and a “bump” under the corners of wallet)
- Clean up and trim all the edges,
- Get a hand needle and thread, and add some stitching to the corners (pocket corners, where the zipper meets the leather, and where the zipper ends.
- Turn the wallet inside out...and viola.... :D

End to End takes about an hour to do. (45 mins of yelling at the sewing machine, for the first few times you try it..)

#### Tips:

- Play around with sewing some scrap leather before you start the wallet, get the tension, set right, and make sure you get a good looking stitch on both sides.
- When you start or stop each stitch, leave about 1 ½ of thread, and tie a knot in the end, by hand.
- When stitching the outer edge, keep an eye on the “smallest” piece of leather (it may be hidden between the multiple layers) and use the one as a guide on where to stitch.
- When doing the zipper, stitch it with the zipper closed, start at the “attached” edge, and go across to the other end (across the other piece of leather, long end to long end)
- Go Slow on the machine, if it gets tough, turn the wheel by hands. On the thick sections, the needle will stick some times.



**Sample piece of leather**



**Wet Leather in the press**



**Four pieces of the wallet**



**Sewn edge of the knife pocket**



**Larger card pocket**



**Both Pockets Together**





**All the layers together**



**Cutting inside edges of the pockets**



**Clean up the edges and align**



**first side of zipper is done**



**Sewing around the edges/round corners**



**Almost done.**