

## **Making Your Military Belt**

by Gene Hickman

Illustrated by Susan Hickman

Materials: A 1 ½” black leather belt blank long enough to go around you with enough left over to add a fold to sew buckle & to fit over several layers of clothes. Square 1 ½” brass belt buckle to fit above blank. The procedures given below can be used to make any common belt with various widths of belt blanks & a variety of buckles.

Procedure: Review the Leather working procedures on the Honor Guard Website.

1. Fold back end of belt blank about 1½” – 2”. This will be where the buckle will be sewn on. Mark the center for the tongue hole & make sure you have allowed enough leather to sew behind the buckle.
2. In the center of the folded leather punch or cut a hole for the “tongue” of the buckle to fit. You will have to enlarge this hole to a long oval to accommodate the tongue & allow it to move to open & close the belt. Wrap it over center post of buckle & insert tongue to check operation & fit.  
Continue to cut oval hole until the tongue moves freely.
3. Now with the leather folded over & the tongue inserted in the oval hole, punch sewing holes through both layers of leather.
4. Sew with a glover’s or harness needle & with waxed linen thread using a saddle stitch or double running stitch. For most belts a single line of stitching is sufficient, but a double row or “X” may be used to sew buckle on belt.
5. Cut the belt to length. Be sure to leave extra so that belt is long enough to fit over several layers of clothes. Measure the fit from the middle hole to be made in belt.
6. The running end of the belt needs to be rounded or pointed now. Use an existing belt for a pattern.
7. Now punch holes in the belt. These are usually spaced about 1” apart & start back about 1” – 1 ½” from the end (look at one of your other belts). Belts will have from 5-7 holes.
8. The edges of the belt may be rounded or smoothed with sandpaper or a skiving tool. The edges of the belt may be touched up, if needed, with black leather dye or liquid shoe polish.