

## How to Recover a Baren

**Before starting, carefully remove old *takenokawa* (bamboo sheath) from the baren to use as a reference & model.**

Roll the *takenokawa* in very damp newsprint or a towel for two to three hours. Wrap this bundle in plastic to ensure even dampness and to prevent the newsprint or towel from drying out. The *takenokawa* should be kept quite damp in order to be able to stretch it and work it properly. (There appear to be two schools of thought on dampening. One recommends dampening as described above. The other school recommends running warm water over the *takenokawa* just until it is wet, then immediately continuing with the next step. The theory is that if the *takenokawa* is dampened for too long, it is weakened and will split more easily when it is twisted in Steps 5 and 6.)

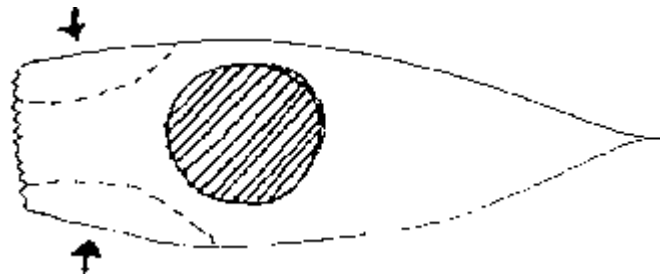
1. Stretch the sheath from the inside, using both hands. Press down firmly, starting in the middle of the bamboo sheath and working toward the edges. Twist hands, pushing in the opposing directions, in order to stretch the width of the *takenokawa*. Add water as needed.

2. Next, on the inside of the sheath, use the edge of a smallish, smooth, flat, black pebble (or the handle on a pair of scissors) to go back and forth across the grain of the sheath. This softens the sheath and makes it pliable and workable. Then use the edge of the pebble to go up and down the length of the *takenokawa* (with the grain) to continue the softening process. Use firm pressure. Wipe the *takenokawa* with a damp rag if needed during this process to keep it from drying out.

Turn the *takenokawa* over and repeat on the top surface of the sheath. (At this point, some people like to roll the *takenokawa* lengthwise and blow down into it, adding warm moisture and making it suppler for the twisting step to come.)

3. With a pair of sharp scissors, trim about ¼" off from each side along the length of the *takenokawa* to remove the tough, coarse edge.

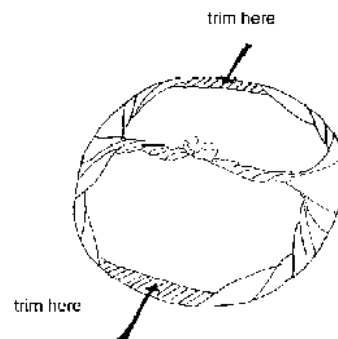
4. Place the *ategawa* (disk) and *shin* (coil) near the widest end of the sheath. Trim as shown below:



5. Fold and pleat the edges of the *takenokawa* around the *ategawa/shin*, beginning at one side and working toward the end. Then fold and pleat the edges beginning at the opposite side and working toward the same end. Twist and twist until that end is tightly drawn together.

6. Repeat the folding and pleating and twisting, twisting with the other two sides, working toward the other end. It is important that both ends be twisted in the same direction: that is, either both clockwise or both counter-clockwise.

7. Bring the two twisted ends together and tie off with a length of string. Trim off the excess ends. (Optional) Trim any excess from around the edges of the *ategawa* as shown below. Refer to your old sheath to determine how much to trim.



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