# Formal Sporran Pattern

This pattern was developed from an older sporran I wear on formal and semi-formal occasions. I built another one for less-formal occasions which incorporated several changes to make it much more practical in an outdoor setting. Unfortunately I did not document the construction of that sporran and I gave the one I built to a friend.

The pattern here is drafted directly from the original sporran, with notes indicating the changes I remember making in the new one.

Materials:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1/8" tooling leather - | Sporran back, front, top, closure tab and belt loop |
| 5/8" belting strap - | waist belt (left and right halves), hanging loop on belt |
| 1/16" tooling leather - | bottom gusset, top gusset. |
| ¼" steel chain - | hanging chains on belt (NOTE: I changed this on the revised version) |
| Assorted hardware - | "D" rings, Chicago bolts, harness buckles, double-ended snap hook, etc. (most of this will be changed as you build your own version of the sporran) |

My personal recommendation is start with the belt. There are two variations of the hanging belt I have seen and used. The first is the traditional adjustable belt which is shown here.



It is simple enough to make being nothing more than two pieces of leather, one with a buckle and one with a series of holes punched to take the buckle tongue, with "D" rings attached to the other end. The chain on this one is a plain steel chain with a small piece of leather to go through the belt loop on the rear of the sporran. Pretty simple to build and looks reasonably good. Its only real shortcoming is when you are dressing it requires that you buckle the belt behind your back or slide the hardware around the front and then feed it through the belt loops on the kilt. Awkward to do in a hurry and you occasionally snag the metal hardware on the wool of the kilt.

When I was building my replacement, one of the things I wanted to fix was that awkward process and as I was the only one going to wear the sporran I changed the design somewhat. Cut a belt strap 24" x 5/8" and punch holes at 1" intervals from either end (see the pattern). Slip a "D"- ring over each and of the strap and then use a Chicago screw through the pre-punched holes to secure the "D"-rings. Take 8" of the chain and open one link and slip it over the "D"-ring. Repeat at the other end of the belt. Now take a small ring and open it up and slide it over the trailing end of the chain. Repeat at the other end of the belt. Now get a double-ended snap and clip it to one of the small rings … the belt is done and while it is not very adjustable, it makes a much neater looking belt.

I don't have a photograph of that belt as I gave that one away. One of the changes I made after that one was completed was to replace the chains with a braided leather cord. It does not chafe the kilt as much and was much easier to build than all of the other work with the chain. I could also use smaller single-ended lanyard hooks instead of the double-ended snap hook.

Now to the sporran construction. Cut the sporran back, front, top, closure tab and belt loop out of 1/8" tooling leather. The sporran shown here is built with a layered-sculptured leather system which has a thicker layer of leather as the base layer of the front and top with a very thin layer stitched over some decorative inlays. If you are going to use a fur face on the sporran, then cut out pieces of hide to cover the front and top pieces. One variation I have seen, was to cover the front of the sporran with fur, while tooling and decorating the top. This gives a nice effect. I didn't do anything that fancy, I just tooled and stamped the front and top and then started assembling. Now cut the bottom gusset out of 1/16" tooling leather.

Carve, tool, dye and finish the all parts before you stitch anything together.

Stitch the front piece and the gusset together with the good sides together. You are going to turn the leather gusset over to hide the stitching at the front. (See the photo below)



Now set the front piece to one side as you are going to assemble the back pieces.

Stitch the belt loop to the back piece of the sporran. As I wanted to be able to wear this attached to a regular belt, so I revised the size of the regular loop to accommodate either the original sporran belt or the regular leather belt I wear with the kilt for less formal occasions. (See the photo below)

Now attach the closure tab and sporran top to the rear piece. Once you have stitched these to the top of the rear piece, you may want to cover the stitched edge with a narrow strip of this leather to finish it neatly. (See the photo below – shown with the top and closure tab open)
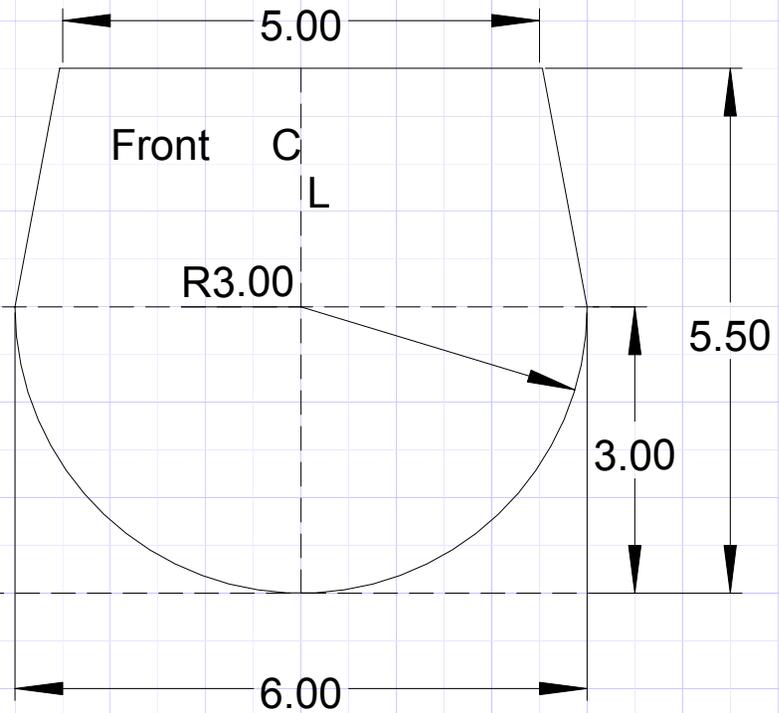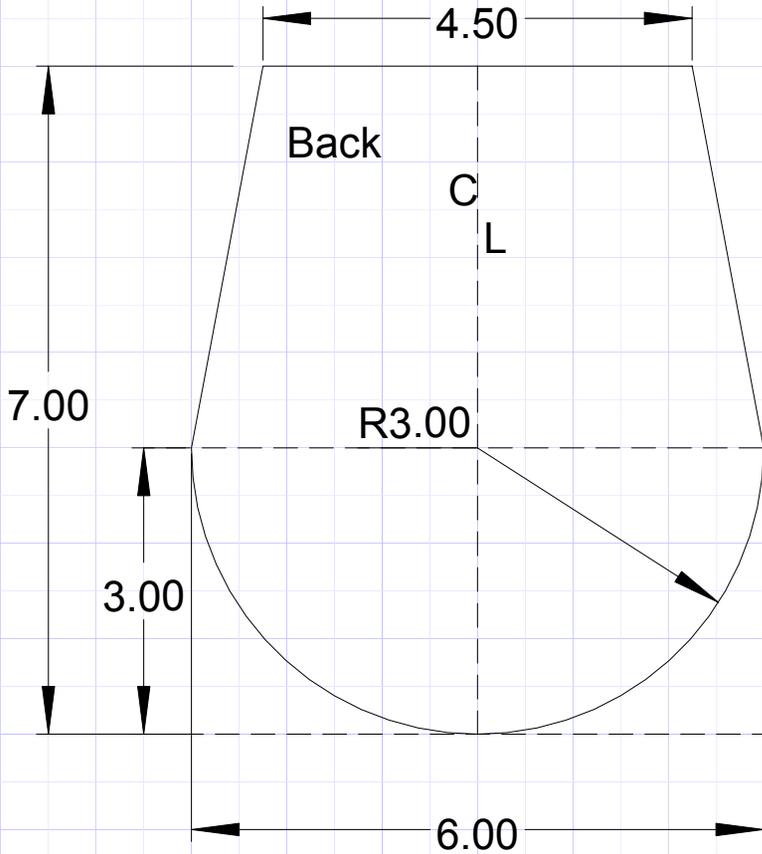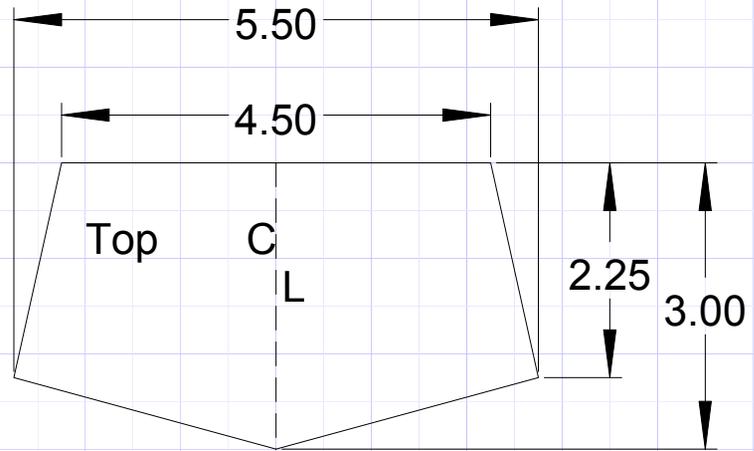


At this point it gets a little tricky as you will pull the gusset around the front piece and then stitch it to the rear piece. I suppose it would be possible to stitch the whole things inside out and then turn it right side out to hide the stitching (like a handbag I suppose). I chose to stitch it as a flat seam with the edges showing and then carefully cover the rough edges of the leather with a thin strip of leather similar to what was done at the top edge.

If I were doing a sporran for purely casual wear I would be tempted to construct it with flat seams on all except the belt loop and lace the pieces together using a fancy lacing stitch which covered the rough edges of the leather. This would be quicker to construct and not nearly so fiddly for stitching.
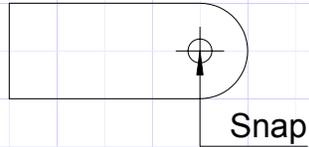
Sporran Pattern - Semi-formal - Sheet 1
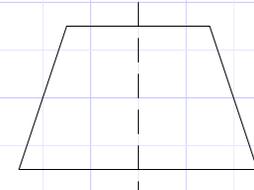Scaled 1" : 1/2"
All dimensions given in inches

Top     C
        L
5.50
4.50
2.25
3.00

Back
4.50
C
L
7.00
3.00
R3.00
6.00

Front     C
          L
5.00
R3.00
5.50
3.00
6.00

Sporran Pattern - Semi-formal - Sheet 2
Scaled 1" : 1/2"
All dimensions given in inches

Belt Loop - original
2-1/2" x 1-1/2"

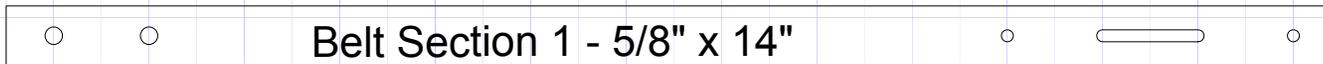Closure Tab - 1" x 2-1/2"
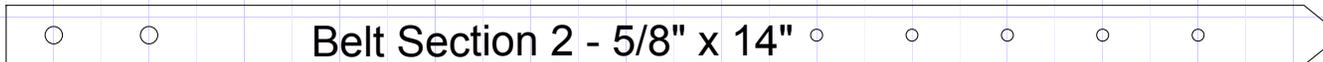
Snap

Belt Loop - revised
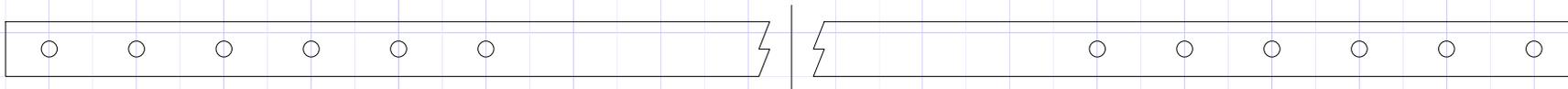4" x 2"
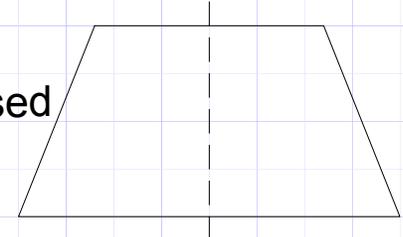
Bottom Gusset - 1-1/2" x 17-1/2"
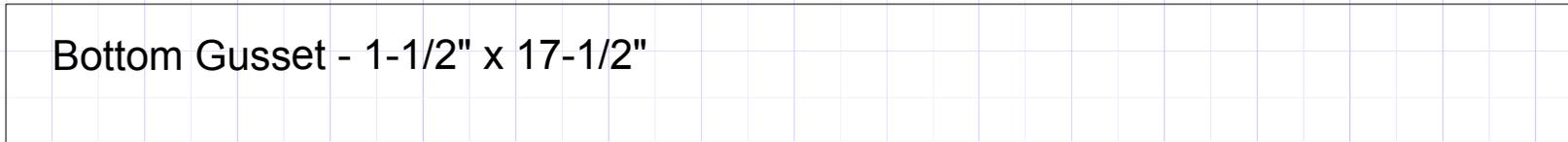
Belt Section 1 - 5/8" x 14"

Belt Section 2 - 5/8" x 14"

Revised Belt Section - 5/8" x 24" (or longer as required)

# Sporran Pattern - Semi-formal - Sheet 3
## Scaled 1" : 1/2"

Top of sporran

3/4" Offset for decorative inlay

Rear view of Back of sporran

1.25

Front of sporran

Tassel

Snap

Tassel

C L

C L