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ABOUT THE COVER

This issue's cover was done by Al Gould, Master Saddle Maker and 2009 Al Stohlman Award Recipient. Al and his wife, Diana reside in Clovis, CA where he is a custom saddle maker and leather artist. Al is an instructor at *The Journal's* trade shows. In this carving the only tool he used was his swivel knife.

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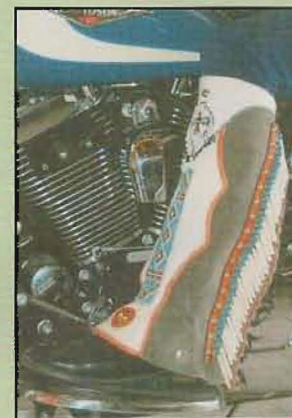
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How To Make A Custom Cell Phone Holder – Or How To Make A Custom Blackberry Cell Phone Holder

By Antonio Gualtieri



- Had 2 compartments – each the same size that fit the phone. He could put business cards in one and the phone in the other.
- Had a carving of a mouse with cheese on one gusset, a cross on the other gusset and his name across the bottom.

I. Introduction:

My son, an engineer, just got a new Blackberry Cell Phone and wanted me to make a holder for it. I used the same techniques that were use in the first article “How To Make a Custom Cell Phone Holder” published in the Sept. / Oct. 2009 issue to make it. However, this one was a little more complicated since he wanted a holder that:

- Fit his new Blackberry phone.
- Fit on his belt horizontally.
- Was very secure and would not fall off while he was working in the field.
- Had a flap to make sure the phone did not come out.
- Had a flap that went from the front to the back so it was not closing in on the phone.
- Had a flap that was easy to open and close without putting pressure on the phone – no snaps.
- Did not have an opening in the front – he wanted protection for the phone.

The sizes provided in this article were based on his phone which measured 4 1/4” high, 2 1/2” wide and 5/8” deep. (See **Pattern Pull Out**)

II. Directions:

My first step was to do some measuring and planning. After figuring out the size I had to decide how I was going to accomplish a couple of things. First, I needed to figure out how to separate the two compartments. I used a piece of leather covered with lining to divide the two compartments. Second, I needed to figure out how to attach it to his belt. Since the phone was going to be horizontal, it did not leave a lot of room for the flap and a clip to fit a 1 1/2” belt. I used a Tandy Spring Holster Clip and modified it.

Materials Needed:

(Based on phone size)
4-5 oz. Leather 1/2 Sq Ft
Lace or Waxed Thread
6 inches of 3/4” Velcro,
Lining Leather
Belt Clip
Finish
1/4” Magnet

A104
A104-2
B198
B936
B893
C770
C428
H903 & H904 or H907
S722

Tools Used

S987
Z610
E580 mouse (optional)
E671 cat (optional)
3/4 Alphabet Letter
1/4” Punch
3/16” Punch
5/16” Punch

A. Planning:

1. Measure your phone.

The one I used for this example was 4 1/4" height, 2 1/2" wide and 5/8" deep. The calculations I used for my phone are in the boxes to the right of each step. I transfer the measurements to a light non-corrugated piece of cardboard and cut out a template as show at the end of this article. Then I used the cardboard template to test against the phone and to mark the leather for cutting.

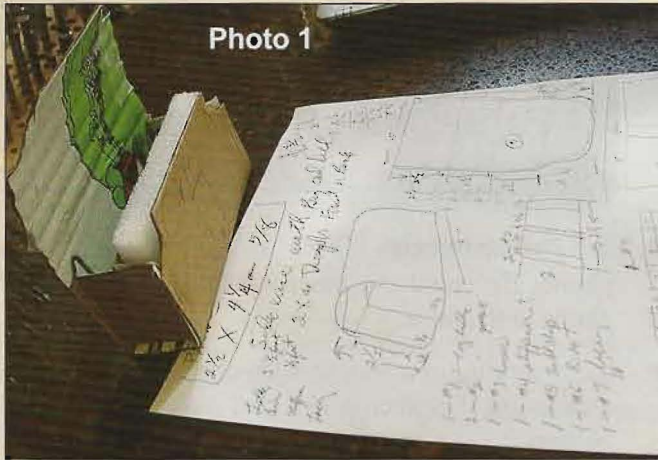


Photo 1

2. Calculate the overall holder length needed:

- 2 X Width (since it is horizontal.) (1 for the front and 1 for the back.)
- + 2 X Depth (For the bottom.) + 1/4" for the compartment divider and a little play room. (See step 4 below.)
- + 2 X 1/8" for the Bends
- + 2 3/4" for the Flap (1 1/2" for bottom + 3/4" for Velcro overlap + 1/2" for fold over.)

3. Calculate the overall holder width needed:

- Height of phone (since it is horizontal.)
- + 1/2" (1/4" for lacing on each side)
- + 1/4" for gusset leather thickness (1/8" for each side.)

4. Calculate the overall gusset width needed:

- 2 X Depth
- + 1/2" (1/4" for stitching on each side)
- + 1/4" for the compartment divider and a little play room.

5. Calculate the overall gusset height needed or wanted:

- Width of Phone
- Minus 1/4" for lacing
- Minus 1/4" for play.
(Subtract more if you want a gap at the bottom.)

6. Calculate the divider size (A simple rectangle.)

- The length of divider will be height of phone + 1/4" play to make it easier to slip the phone in and out.
- The width of the divider will be the same as the gusset height, or 2" – see step 5 above.

7. Calculate the divider lining size. The lining will cover both sides of the divider, the inside of the gussets (including the stitching area) and the bottom of holder. It is a rectangle with notches cut out of the corner and a slit in the middle of each end to allow the lining to bend for the gusset. See the white paper in the photo in Step B.1. Below.

- Calculate the lining length – Length of the divider + width of the gusset.
- Calculate the lining width – 2 X Height of divider + the width of the bottom of the holder.

B. Prepare Parts:

- Cut the holder, gussets and divider from 3-4 ounce leather. I used 5/8" Radius for round corners. Punch a 1/4" hole in the divider 1" from one side and 1" from the bottom for a magnet.

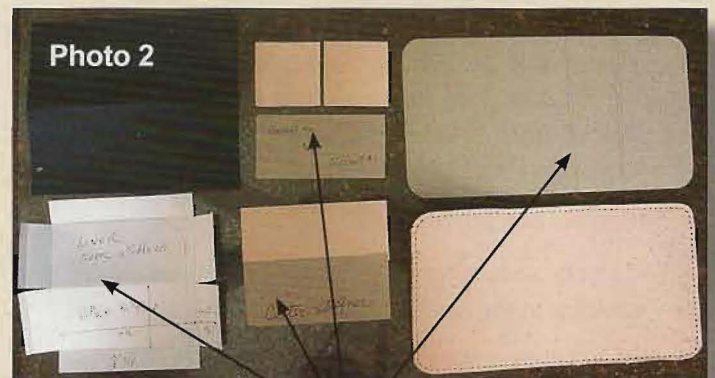


Photo 2

Cardboard
Cutting Templates

- Cut the liner for the divider. Once cut to length, notch the corners Cut out a 3/4" X 1" notch in each corner. The 1" will be cut into the longest part of the liner, into the 6 1/2" length. Also you will need to cut a 1" slit in the very center into the 6 1/2" length so you can bend the line to cover the gussets. At this point, you can fold the lining in half and at each of the bends and clip it with small clamps or spring clothes pins. This will make it easier to glue.

- Punch lacing holes or slits in the main holder body and into the sides and top of the gussets.

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Photo 4

4. Punch lacing holes or slits in the gusset. Be careful to position the gusset so the holes line up and you don't punch a hole or slit half on and half off the gusset. After

punching one hole I tied the two together to keep them from slipping. Always start the holes from the top and work to the bottom.

5. Cut the Belt Clip to size. I used a Tandy 7/8" Spring Belt Clip #1240-00. It is 3" long. However in order to fit, I cut 1" off the bottom and drill a rivet hole about 1/2" from the bottom. Size of hole will depend on the rivet you used. It is very hard to drill; a regular high speed bit will only scratch it.

6. Cut slits in back for belt clip and a hole for rivet to hold it in place. One slit is for the clip back to pass from the front to the inside. It should be at the top of back, 7/8" long and 1/32" thick. The second one should be 7/8" long and 1/16" thick for the V clip is set in, it will be just about 1/16"-1/8" from the bottom fold depending on the clip used. See Photo #6.



C. Tool and Apply finish:

1. Select your pattern and tool the holder and the gusset.
2. Apply finish.

3. While the finish is drying, I glued the lining to the divider.

D. Assemble:

1. Assemble the divider. I used Tandy Contact Cement and glued the gussets in place and stitched the tops. See Photo 5.

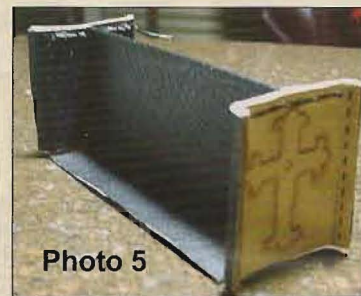


Photo 5

2. Once the finish is dry, place belt clip in place and set rivet.

3. Glue the Velcro in place on the back and the inside of the flap. Punch holes or slits into the Velcro that it covered up. You will need to notch the piece that goes on the back so it fits around the belt clip.

4. Glue the divider with gussets in place on the bottom of the holder and tie the gussets in place to make sure they are in the correct position when you stitch or lace the holder.



Photo 6

Top Slit/Cut - 7/8" cut
Distance depends on length of clip
Bottom Slit 7/8" X 1/16"

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5. Saddle Stitch the cell phone holder being sure to go through the sharp turns twice. You will need 15 feet of thread – or measure the perimeter and multiply for eight.
6. Start using it.

III. Options / Considerations:

The following are some options you have in making your custom holder:

- You could glue lining to the entire inside – I just did the center divider to hold it in place.
- I saddle stitched my son's holder since I felt the stitching would hold up better in the field over the years than lacing. However, lacing gives it a more elegant look.
- You could eliminate the second compartment all together. If you do, reduce the gusset width by 3/4" and shorten the length of the main body by 3/4". For example, Photo 7 shows one I made for my wife's beautician. I laced this one.
- The gusset could be 1 3/4" or 1 7/8" instead of 2" to increase the open space at the bottom of the holder.



Photo 7

If you do, be sure to place/lace the gusset at the top to the holder and keep the space at the bottom.

- You could cut out a small area in the front of the holder for the screen to show based on the size of your phone screen size. If you do that, you could saddle stitch a thick, soft piece of plastic to protect the phone.
- If you use a holster type belt-clip like I did – Tandy has some good ones – they will hold onto the belt extremely well. However, if you cut a small slit into the back where the V is so part of the V goes into the leather it will really stay on your belt. (I use a 7/8" wide clip and cut the length since it was too long since the phone was to be worn horizontally.)
- If you choose not to use the holster clip; use two narrow strips of leather and attach to the back so the belt runs through them. The disadvantage of this is you need to remove the belt to get the phone holder off.
- If the holder is for a lady with a purse, then instead of a belt-clip, attach a 1/2" or 3/4" strip of leather across the back. She can then slip the strap of her purse through it and hang the holder. To keep from swinging, attach two of them; one where the gusset starts and one where it ends.



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- Depending on your phone, you can also use these same design techniques to make a holder that run vertically rather than horizontally. In this case, you do not have to modify a belt clip.

IV. Lesson Learned:

After having made my first horizontal holder, I learned that I should have cut a curve in the top that folds over the phone so that it would avoid hitting the belt clip. See Drawing 3 in pattern pull out.

Since I cannot draw very well, to get a carving pattern that would fit the design, I created a word document with a one cell table to the exact carving area size. I scanned a couple of patterns from older project and free give-a-ways and inserted them into the cell. I then expanded or shrunk them to fit. I used two different patterns to create this one pattern.

I also learned that many BlackBerry type phones have a magnetic proximity sensor that determines if your BlackBerry smart-phone is in its case and if so, shuts off the screen to conserve battery life. It also gives you the option to choose unique notification settings for incoming calls and other functions. So, to enhance the holder to function like the ones on the market, I bought a 1/4" Power Magnet from Hobby Lobby craft store and place it in the divider. My location was 1" from the side and 1" from the bottom. Determine the location for your phone by just holding the magnet near the phone's key pad and finding the best location. Punch the 1/4" hole into the divider, glue the magnet in place and the cover the divider with the lining material. It will work just fine.

