

Willow Talk

The willow used in the production of Home Products Basketware baskets is cropped at two different times of the year. There are many types of willow rods known as “withies” used in basket making, below are the types we use:

White

The white willow is cropped between July and August while the sap is still rising and stripped of its bark straight away without boiling.



Buff

The buff willow is cropped mainly in November, but sometimes not until December. It is the most most popular and is obtained by boiling the willows, to release the natural colourant tannin from the bark into the wood. The bark is then stripped from the willow revealing the characteristic golden colour.



Double Steamed

As above but it is boiled twice for a deeper, richer colour.



Green

The green willow is used in its natural state, having gone through no treatment process. The name is from the raw state, not necessarily the colour.



The willow when dried is bundled together and tied up in different lengths ready for weaving. When weaving the willow the highly skilled makers use several different methods:

Single or Randed weave

This is when a single strand is used in the weaving. This method takes a lot longer but gives the basket a very strong finish.



Double, Triple or Slewed weave

This is when multiple strands are used in the weaving, this is a much quicker method but requires a very highly skilled maker.



Waling

This is the method used to add strength and shape to the basket as in the Step Basket and Potato Basket.



Tradition and Innovation