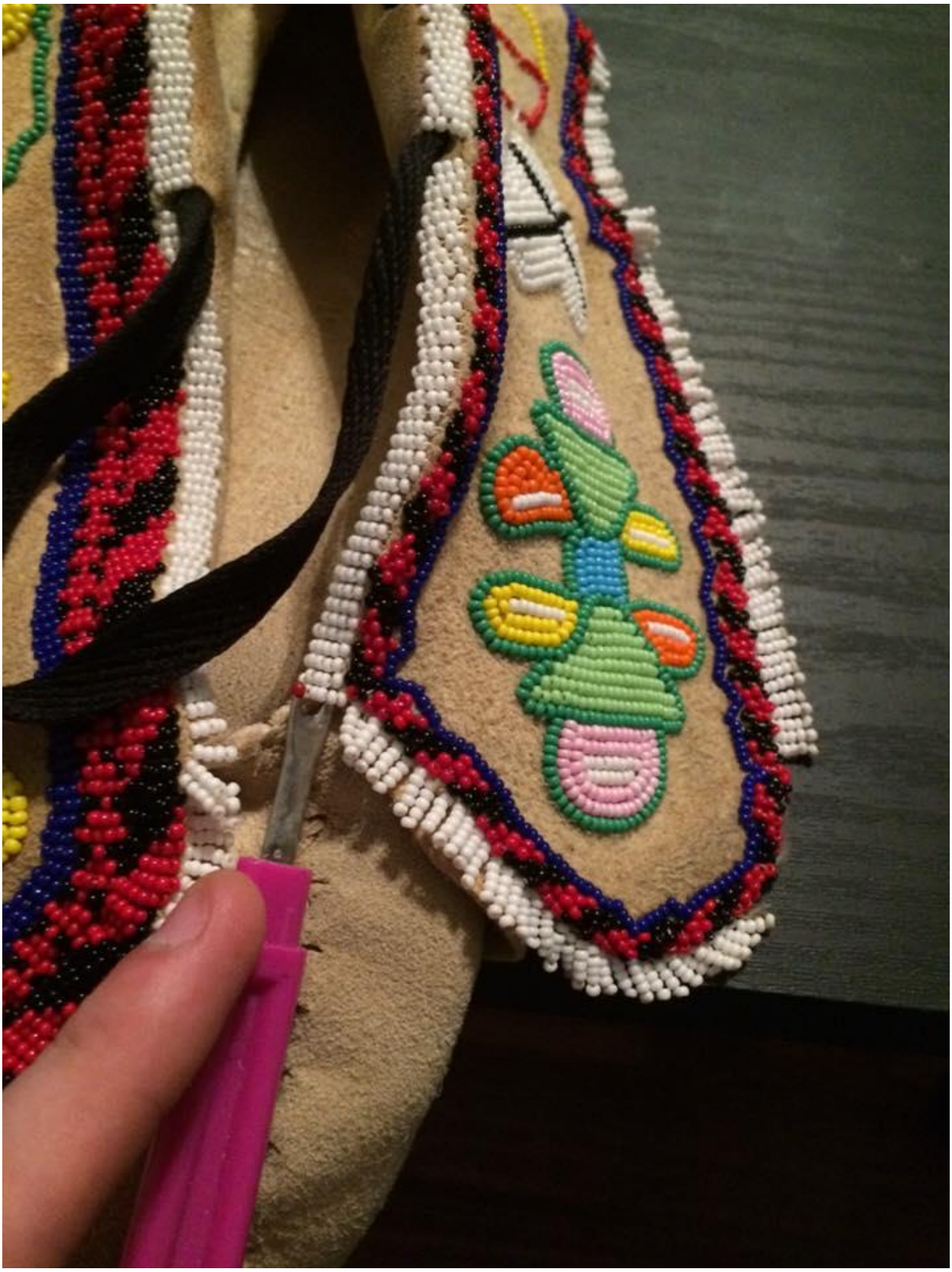
Guide for Making Potawatomi-Style Pucker-Toed M*kesinen* [Moccasins]

Courtesy of Lyle Simmons

These are my mkesinen. I like the soft sole center seam pucker tops.

The way I attach my flaps makes it were I do not have to bead them every time. So the first step is to strip my bead work.

It's mainly attached but a row of beadwork on top of the flap.



I clean extra dirty spots with leather cleaner. It's basically just white chalk.

Done with removal. Damage on the fringed beadwork around the edges will need to be repaired as well. These are all repaired and cleaned and ready for reattachment.

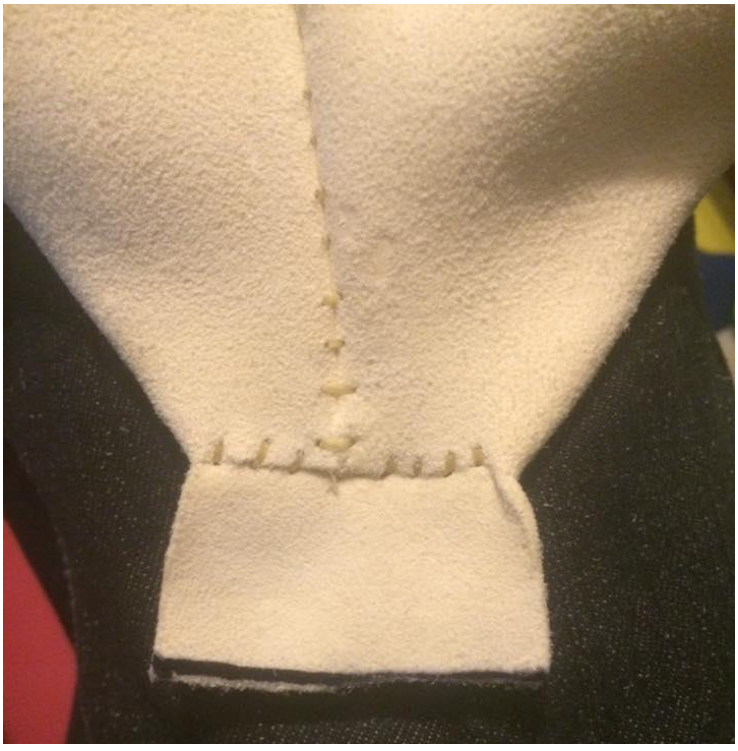
I like to use this pattern at http://www.nativetech.org/clothing/moccasin/mocinstr.html to get my leather cut just right. If you cut it in felt then you can just use that felt each time you need a new pair and save time on measuring. You should only have to measure one foot unless you have something going on there.

First step is to sew your mkesin INSIDE OUT. First you do the toe. It should look something like this.

For me I measure with these tabs long in case I want to put fur in for a winter. I dance in the south so I rarely do. So these I need to cut down. Put the moc on and measure it. They should barely touch. Flip it RIGHT SIDE OUT and try it on for this measurement.

Just sew the back and leave the little tab there not sewn. This should all still be INSIDE OUT.

Turn your moc RIGHT SIDE OUT and sew the tab. You may choose to tuck it in or cut it off. I like to attach stuff to mine sometimes. Or cut it for fringe.



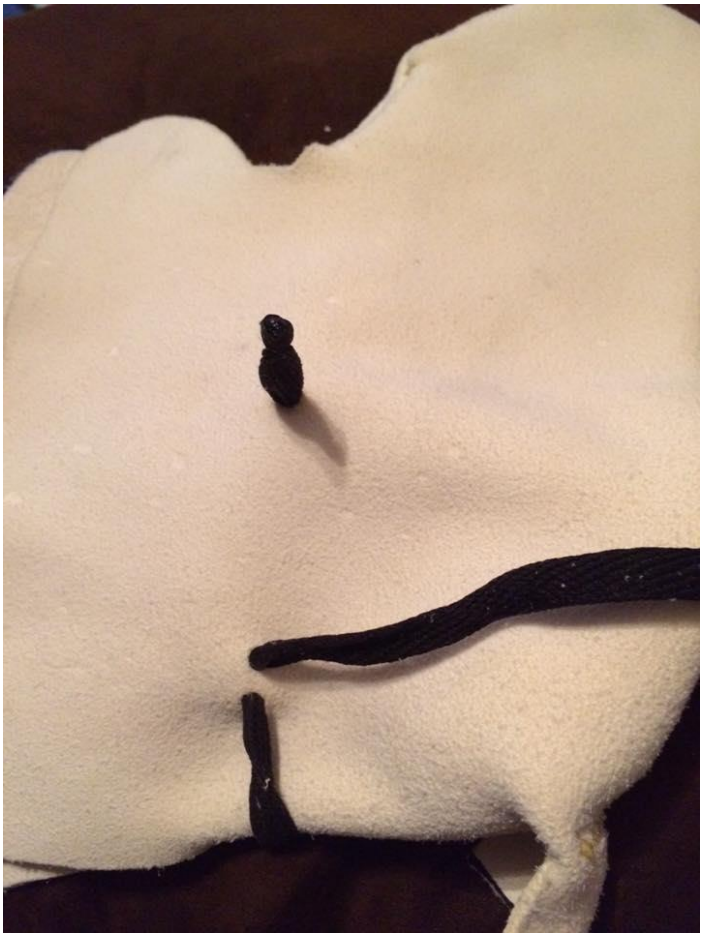
Make sure to get all the layers.

Now that's pretty much your mkesin.

There are many ways to attach your ties. I'll show you how I like to do them. It's super secure so they don't fall off while I'm gettin' down. Put them on and mark three spots just below where your flap folds. One just parallel to the front of the leg and and two at the ankle.

Punch them

Next, lace them in a way so that the lace lays across the top of the foot just in front of the ankle.



This lets you tie the lace under the inside flap so it's out of the way and secure.

Side view

Back view

Next I gotta sew the beadwork back on. I mix the beads that I managed to salvage with new ones to blend them.

Sew your flap on with a lazy whip stitch type style. Be careful not to sew over the holes.

This one is done. After this you can trim down the flap underneath the beadwork to lighten the moc up in weight. Then tack the flaps together with a few pieces of sinew through the beadwork where it's out of sight.

Bam! These shoes are made for dancin'! I pictured one with and one without so that you could see which you might like the best. Obviously with beadwork it will take much longer depending on what style you bead in. I realize there is a huge difference in contrast of the leather. But that won't last long after a few powwows. Once you make these, they will be universal. You will have to wear them in to a left and right. So mark the inside of you can't remember. It's easy with bead work. I just remember that the flowers go outside.