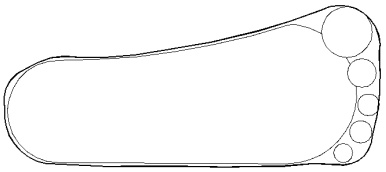
How to make Roman Army Sandals

Roman Army Caligae

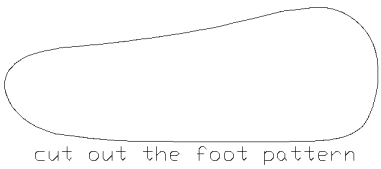
Making Roman Caligae is not as difficult as it may seem at first glance.
The tools required are quite simple.

Tools:
To the tools shown in the picture, add a hammer, and a drill, and it is possible for almost anyone to make these sandals.
Soles:
Leather 8oz weigh, a 12” x 30” piece is required.(sizes above 13 require more leather)
Pattern: For the pattern 6oz is recommended and you will need a piece 24” x 30”. (sizes above 13 require more leather)

Making the soles:

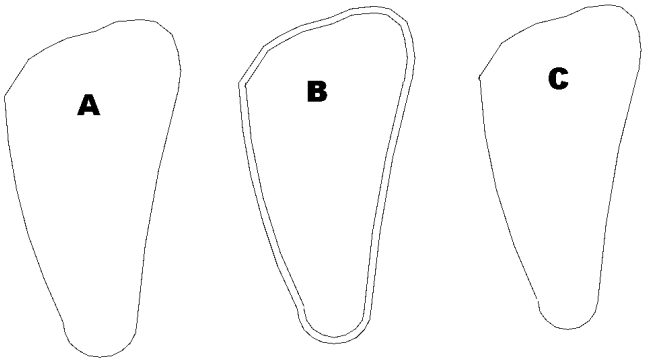


Place your right foot on a plain white sheet of paper and trace the outline.

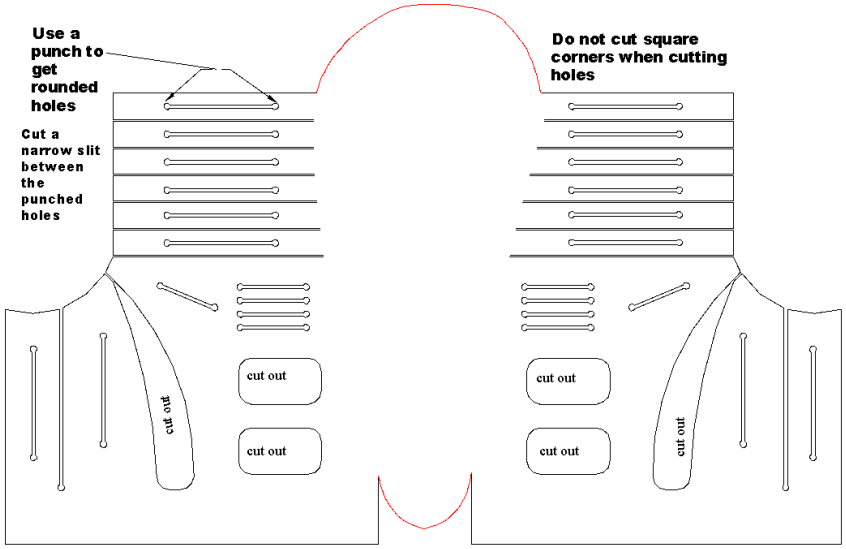


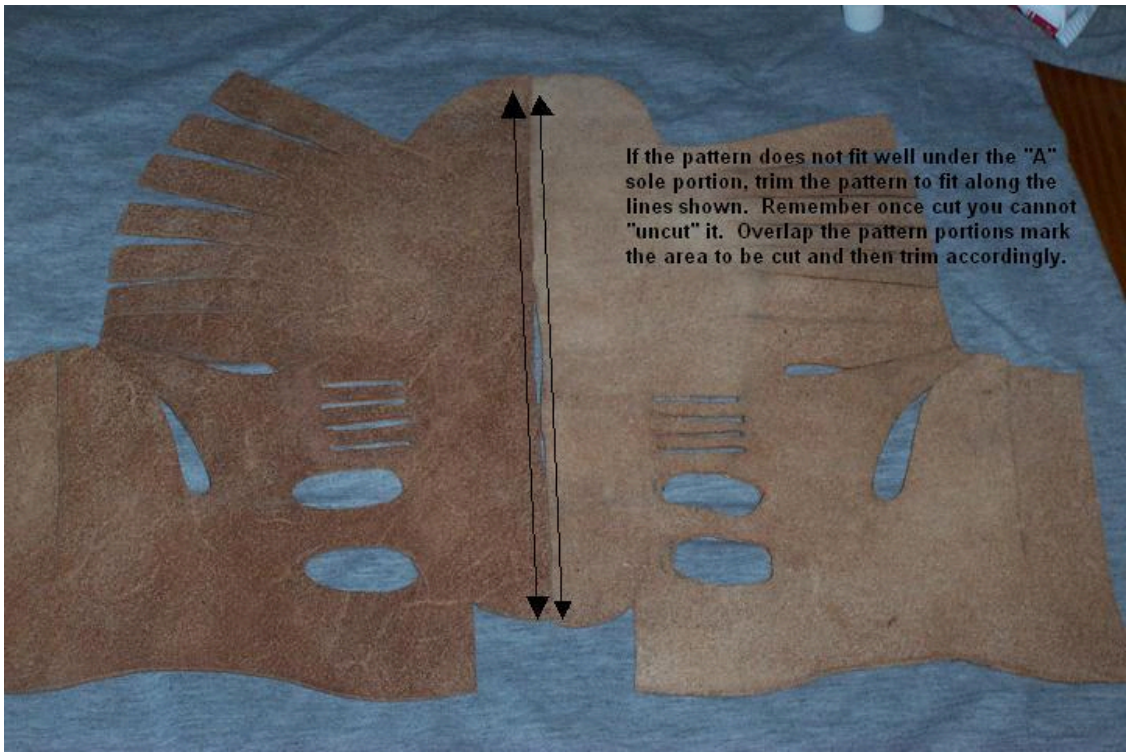
cut out the foot pattern
Mark right on one side and left on the other.

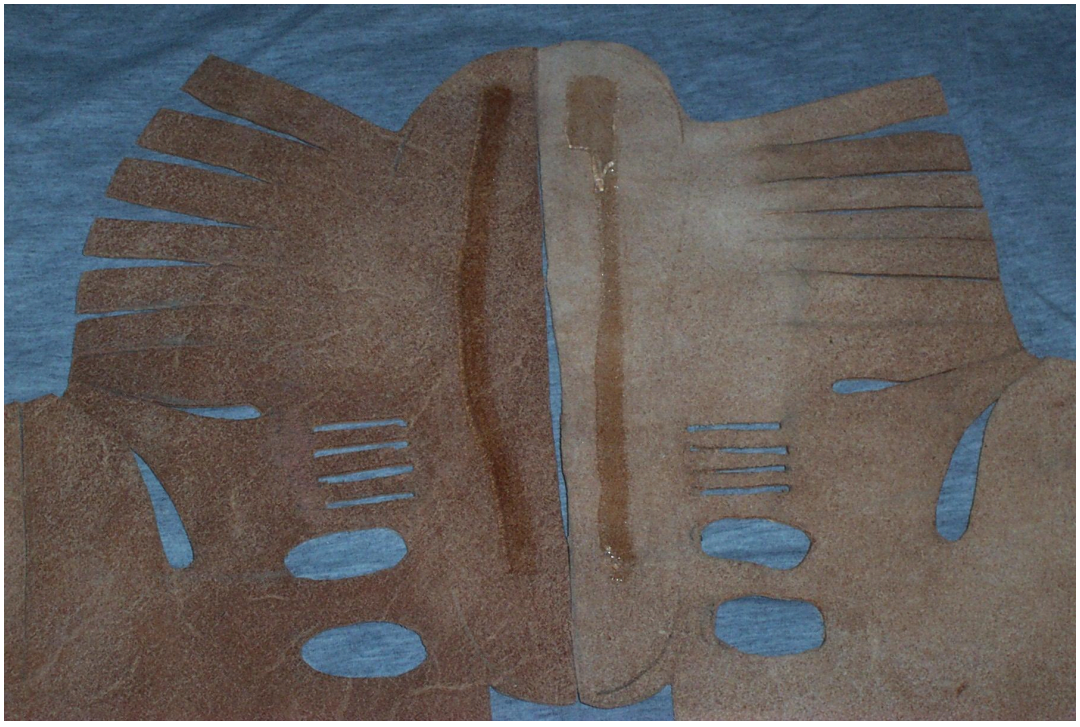
Position your pattern on the Leather and draw the outline of your foot. This should give you figure A. Now measure ¼" from the outside as in figure B. Cut out only the inside section of figure B, and you should have what is shown in figure C. Now **do the same for the right foot**. You will require **three rights** and **three lefts** for this project



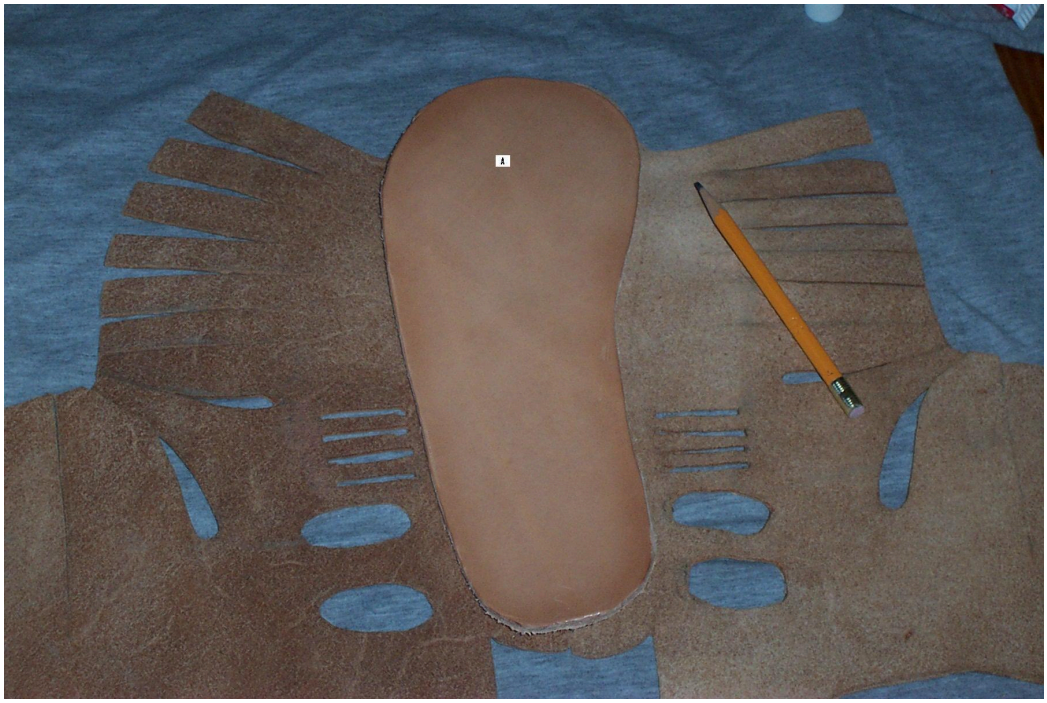
Making the pattern:
Now take the full size pattern available in **the index of this manual**, and if need be enlarge it to fit your left foot. You will need two copies of this pattern(**Remember you must flip the pattern over to get the right foot**). Cut out the stencil, and place it on a piece of 6 oz leather. Trace out the pattern on the leather, and with a sharp blade cut out the traced pattern. Please note that your foot size(men's size 10 and greater) may not fit on a standard 8"x11" paper. You may have to take the pattern to a copy center to get the right size. You will require one left, and one right for this project.
Cover all your cut pieces of leather in "Neetsfoot" oil(both sides) apply at least two coats and allow to dry before proceeding to the next step.




If the pattern does not fit well under the "A" sole portion, trim the pattern to fit along the lines shown. Remember once cut you cannot "uncut" it. Overlap the pattern portions mark the area to be cut and then trim accordingly.

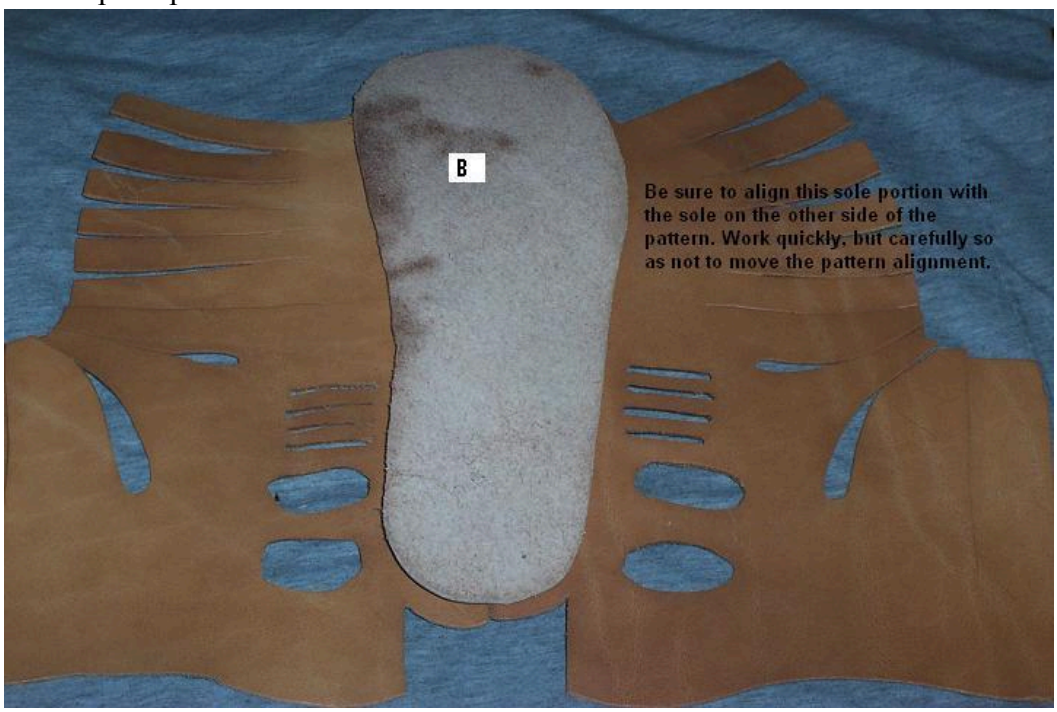


Put a line of glue on the pattern.

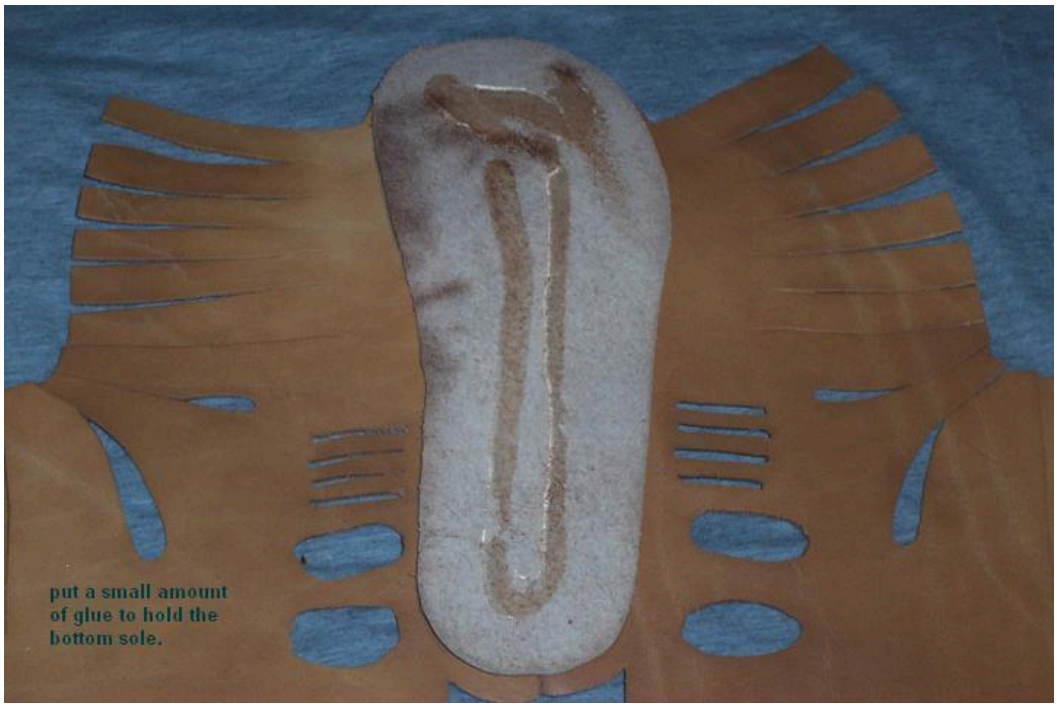


Place the “A” sole on the pattern hold down with weights until glue dries

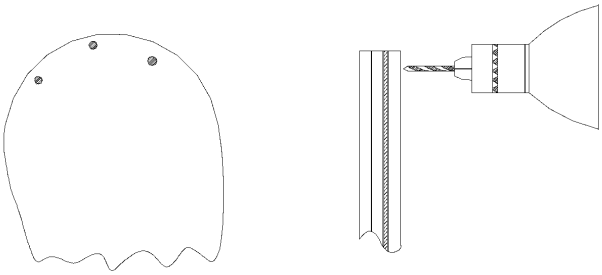
Now flip the pattern over.



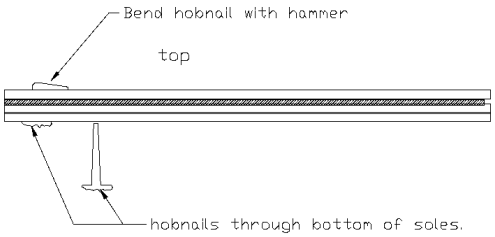
Place Sole “B” on the bottom of the pattern as shown.



Glue the soles together and with a drill, make three holes near the top of the foot area as shown. With a 1/8” bit, drill through all layers, making sure that you drill a straight hole not angled.

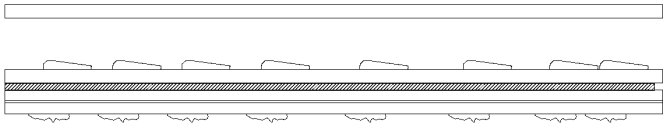


Hammer the hobnails through the three soles and the pattern, make sure that the nails go through as straight as possible. Now bend the protruding portion of the nail as flat as possible toward the toe portion of the sandal.

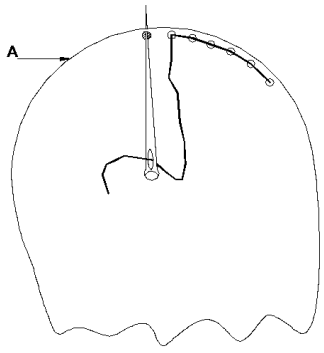


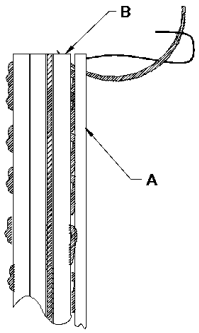
Once you have the three nails in place the soles should hold together to finish installing the rest of the Hobnails.

You may want to follow a pattern for the nails similar to the one shown in the diagram. When you have finished hammering in all the nails required, you will notice all the bent nails are where your foot has to go. There should be just enough 6oz leather to make two foot patterns(left and Right) like the ones shown at the beginning of the manual.
Cut out one left foot and one right. Place them over the bent nails on the sole as shown. You may want to soak the leather in water(cold) for a few minutes. This will make it easier to stretch over the sole area when you are sewing.



sew the upper soles(**A**) over the bent portion of the nails as shown making sure that your needle goes through the sole **B** Use waxed linen thread.

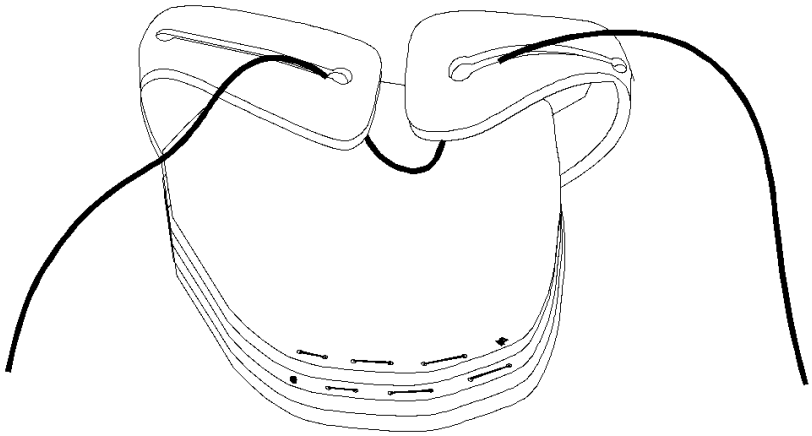




You do not need to sew the entire top sole if you don't want to. A few stitches at the top and at the heel will hold the sole in place. You may want to add padding for comfort. The next step is to sew up the heel portion of the caligae. Aa simple loop stitch as shown in the picture will suffice.

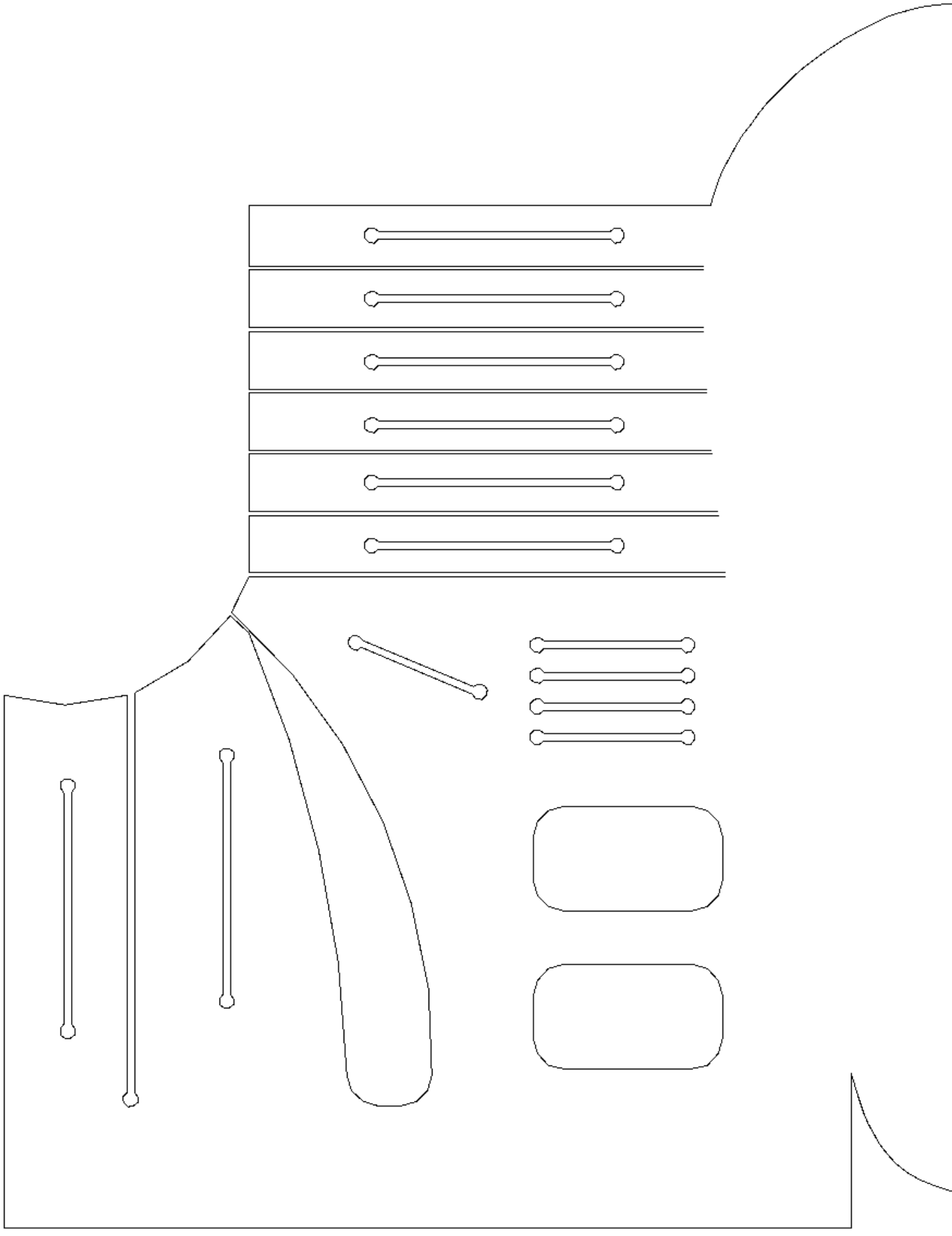
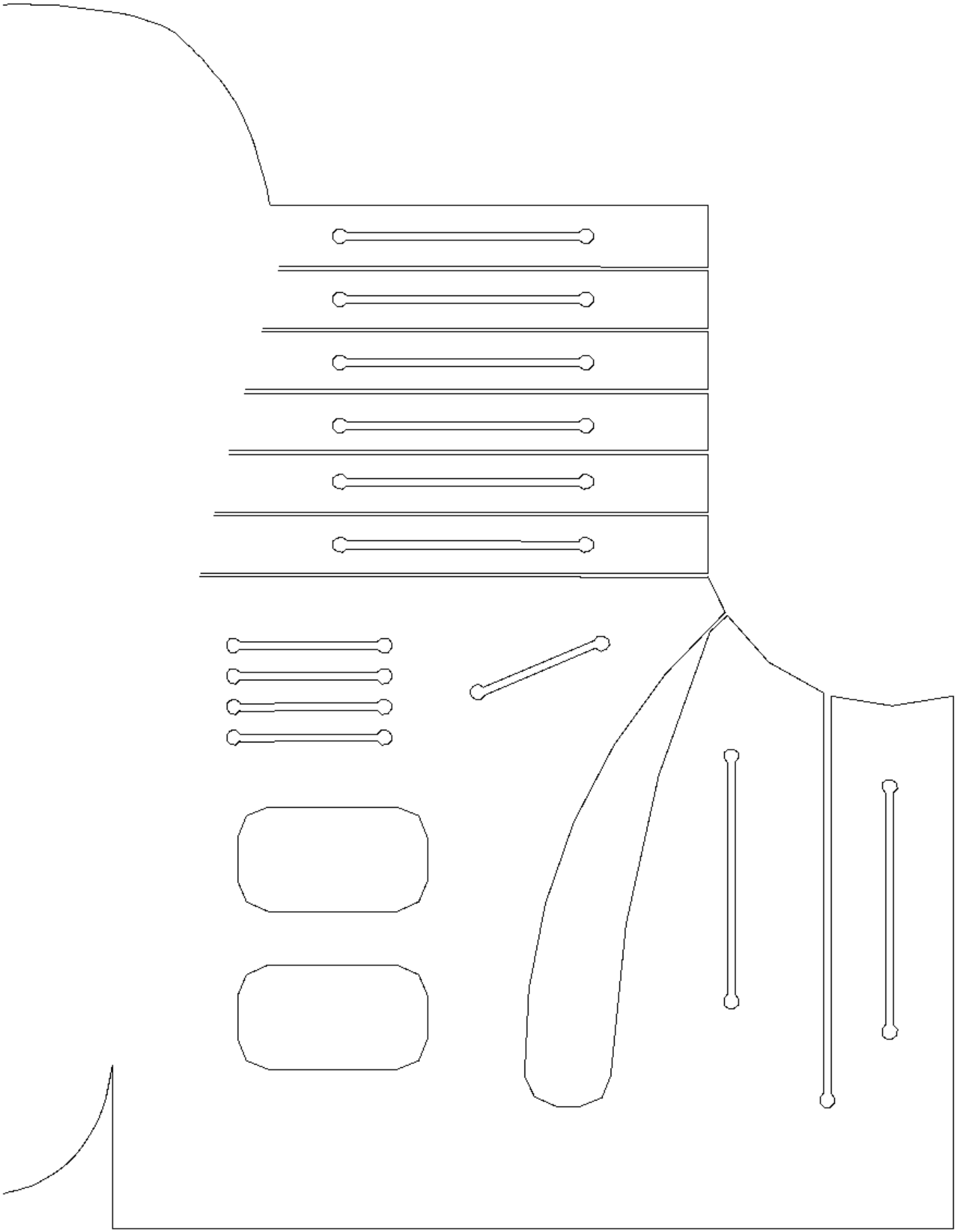
Loop stitch on Heel

The next step is the lacing. Obtain two 24” x 3/16” strips of leather. Treat them with the Neetsfoot oil, and allow todry. Push the lacing through the slits as shown in the diagram, and continue to lace up the sandal like a regular shoe.



Remember that if the Caligae become wet, you may have to apply another coating of Neetsfoot Oil after they dry out. Enjoy your Caligae.

Index of manual

- pattern half
- pattern half
- reverse pattern to obtain the left and right .

- NOTE: pattern is obsolete, update pending.