

Cutting reeds south of Riobamba, Ecuador

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A woman in a purple shirt and a fedora hat cuts reeds in a marshy area. A bundle of cut reeds floats in the water at her side. Reeds serve many purposes in traditional Andean building practices. They can be made into a surprisingly strong boat, they provide the framework for thatched-roofs, and they can be fashioned into a myriad of basket shapes. The knowledge needed to work reeds into their many useful products is passed down within families of Quechua-speaking peoples.



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