

FROM TONGUE TO TAIL

HOW INDIGENOUS PEOPLES USED EVERY PART OF THE BISON

Many Indigenous Peoples relied heavily on bison for their survival and developed a strong spiritual relationship with them. To show their respect to the animals, they tried to use almost every part of the bison. There are more than 140 traditional Indigenous uses for different bison body parts. Here are some of them:

HIDE: tipis, sweat lodge covers, clothing, moccasins, winter robes, bedding, pouches, straps, drums, shields, cradles, burial wrappings

HAIR: braided ropes, horse halters, bracelets, moccasin lining, doll stuffing

BONES: hide scrapers, knives, eating utensils, pipes, shovels, game dice, war clubs, sleds, toys

SKULL: ceremonial items

TENDONS (THE TOUGH BANDS THAT CONNECT MUSCLES TO BONES): bowstrings, arrow ties

FAT: grease for tanning hides, soap

BLOOD: paints

HORNS: drinking cups, ladles, headdresses, arrow points, medicines

HOOVES: glue, rattles, spoons

TEETH: ornaments

TONGUE (THE ROUGH SIDE): combs

STOMACH: cooking pots

STOMACH CONTENTS (PARTLY DIGESTED FOOD): medicines, paints

BLADDER: water containers, medicine bags

TAIL: knife coverings, whips, fly swatters

HI, MY NAME IS...

- aak'ii in Gwichya Gwich'in
- boy-zhan in Eastern Shoshone
- kuts in Paiute
- paskwâwimostos in Nēhiyawēwin
- paskwâw moshtosh in Northern Michif
- lii bufloo in Southern Michif
- tatanka in Lakota



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