

Basic Detail Report



Needle-Case

Date

1800-1900

Medium

Walrus ivory, hide

Description

Women's needle case, made of walrus (morse) ivory. In several connecting parts: the main 'case' is a hollow tube that divides into two long tubes; a hide thong passes through the tubes and is attached to two curving, pointed caps at the ends. When the caps are removed from the top the thong is pulled through the case. At the wide, single end the thong continues without being split for a section and is split into two sections again. One end is finished with an ivory implement resembling a clip with a hand shaped curving end. There may have been two of these; one side appears to have broken off. A small additional piece of hide is included with the object. Before the introduction of steel needles manufactured in Europe, needles were made from bird's leg bones. Needles did not have an eye through which the sinew thread would be looped, as with metal needles. The thread was tied to a notch or knob at the end of the needle. Very fine seams and stitches were achieved using these needles, indicating the high skill of the craftswomen.

Dimensions

Object/Work: 290 x 30 mm