

*Tips for Buying Yarn Directly from Farmers* p. 28

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Winter 2024

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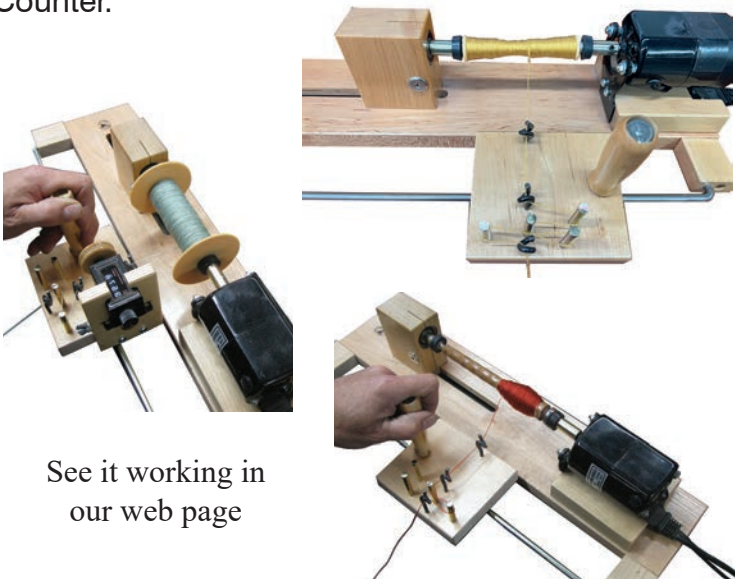
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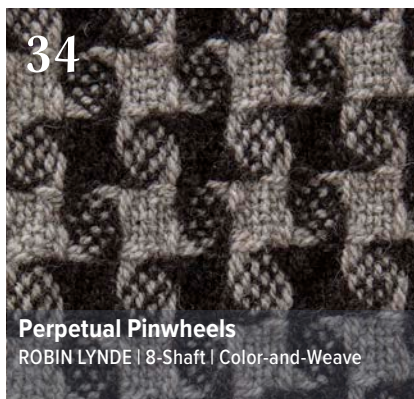
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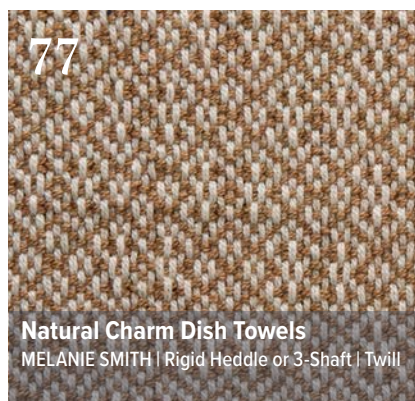
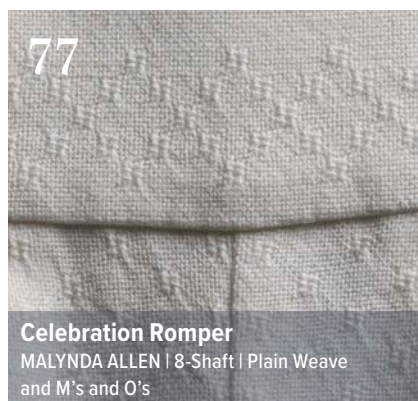
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## PROJECTS IN THIS ISSUE



## BONUS PROJECTS FOR SUBSCRIBERS





*I imagine that, from the outside,* most weavers seem pretty similar. We search out and buy large pieces of equipment and then shove the dining table aside to fit it all in the house (*I promise, this is the very last loom I'll buy . . .*). We get worked up about sticky sheds, fragile warps, and wobbly selvages. Any money left over from loom-buying gets spent on yarn or weaving books or workshops. We seem passionate

about “structure,” of all things. Sometimes we even touch strangers’ handwovens *while they’re wearing them!*

But if nonweavers want to learn just how varied we are, they can simply eavesdrop as we talk about color. They might hear:

- Neutrals are best. Color is nothing but a distraction from my one true love—texture.
- Neutrals are boring. They’re a distraction from my one true love—color.
- Color, yes! But not *that* color, which everyone agrees is terrible and should never be used!
- I’m only happy weaving with colors I’ve dyed myself.
- Naturally colored fiber is the only kind I weave with. I simply adore natural, brown, gray, greenish, and that other brown.
- Natural colors are fine, as long as I can perk them up with a touch of red or lime green.

Because color is a broad topic and we all have strong opinions, this issue includes projects woven in naturally colored fibers and others using neutral palettes. Some of the projects use commercially dyed yarn. Some designers dyed the colors themselves using conventional dyes, while others used historical methods. One project uses colors from a line created by the designer’s small company. And if you look closely, you’ll find a touch of red in one neutral project and a broader swath of lime green in another.

We know that many weavers feel uncomfortable with color. They might like a project but not the colors it’s shown in—and they feel uncertain about choosing a different palette. We’re going to work on that. In fact, one project in this issue includes tips for finding and trying out colors that appeal to you. And we’ll be digging more deeply into color at [handwovenmagazine.com](http://handwovenmagazine.com) and in upcoming issues.

What’s on your loom? Please show us on Instagram or Facebook by using #handwovenmagazine. And send your weaving questions and comments to [handwoven@longthreadmedia.com](mailto:handwoven@longthreadmedia.com). I look forward to hearing from you!

*Happy weaving,*

*Lynn*

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## FUTURE THEMES

### SPRING 2025

#### *Easy Breezy*

Pack away your warm winter textiles and welcome springtime with a range of lacy, open, and transparent weaves.

### SUMMER 2025

#### *Going on Vacation*

Trips to the beach or lake and lazy evenings around the firepit call out for easy-care, easy-to-carry items.

### FALL 2025

#### *Welcome Home*

Weave pillows, rugs, throws, and more to make your house feel like your personal comfort zone.

# HANDWOVEN®

WINTER 2024, Volume XLV Number 5

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Treenway Silks donates 10 percent of “65 Roses” sales to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, in honor of Andrea’s Angels, to help fund research for a cure.

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## Riverbed Hand-Painted Cotton Warp from Shiny Dime Fibers

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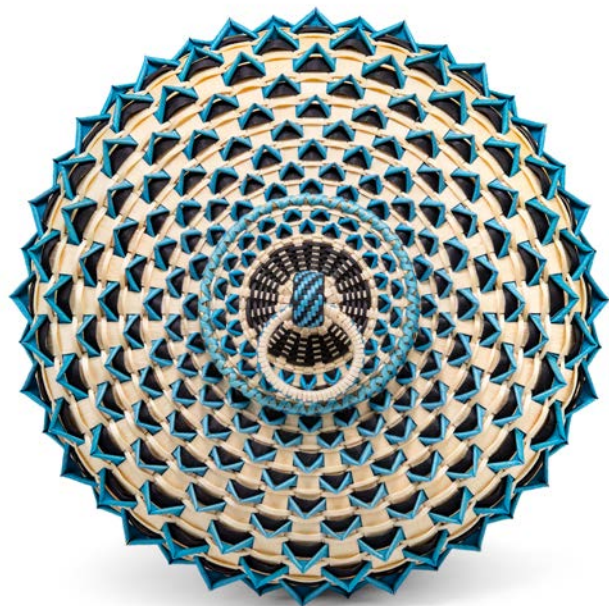
## Inkle Kit from Heritage Spinning & Weaving

This plain-weave inkle weaving kit includes Heritage's best-selling Cardinal kit from the Birds Band I series, a hand-crafted wooden belt shuttle, and a spool of braided heddle cord. Celebrating 25 years of business in 2025. Visit [www.heritag spinning.com](http://www.heritag spinning.com).

## Spread the Love Mug Rug Kit with Vermont Weaving Supplies

This kit is a small, fun project with big yields. The 15-page pattern includes directions for weaving an Atwater-Bronson lace heart on rigid-heddle, four-, and eight-shaft looms, plus weaving twill hearts on an eight-shaft loom. Includes yarn to make 25 mug rugs, envelopes, and stickers. The pattern is written as a tribute to Dena Moses's mom with stories, photos, and a recipe. Visit [www.vermontweavingsupplies.com](http://www.vermontweavingsupplies.com).





Images courtesy of Eric Stoner

## Delicate, Intricate, and Sinuous Vessels Woven from Black Ash and Sweetgrass

*Jeremy Frey grew up on the Passamaquoddy Indian Township Reservation in Maine, descended from a long line of weavers. He learned traditional basketweaving techniques from his mother and other family members, as well as from an apprenticeship at the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance.*

As a teenager on the reservation, Frey was pulled into the epidemic of drug abuse. While he was getting sober, his mother encouraged him to keep his hands busy with weaving. He quickly fell under the spell of basketmaking, and he learned to harvest and prepare the natural materials he works with.

*Jeremy Frey: Woven* is a mid-career retrospective exhibit of more than 50 complex and elegant baskets he wove over the past two decades. The exhibit is on view at the Art Institute of Chicago from the end of

October through mid-February (see box for details).

Frey draws on his heritage for the vocabulary of his works, while innovating within these long-standing forms and techniques. His baskets explore shapes, textures, elaborate weaves, and layered colors. Many of the pieces feature images intricately embroidered with dyed porcupine quills. Frey has recently experimented with using the baskets in printmaking, as well as creating his first time-based-media work—both of which are included in this exhibit.

The *New York Times* recently published an article profiling Frey and his work. You can find it at [nytimes.com/2024/04/26/arts/design/jeremy-frey-baskets-indigenous.html](https://nytimes.com/2024/04/26/arts/design/jeremy-frey-baskets-indigenous.html). You can learn more about Frey and his work at [karmakarma.org/artists/jeremy-frey](https://karmakarma.org/artists/jeremy-frey).

A printed exhibit catalog is available. 

—Handwoven staff



*Clockwise from top left: Blue Point Urchin (overhead view), 2016, ash, sweetgrass, and dye, 5" × 9" × 9"; Defensive, 2022, ash, sweetgrass, and dye, 12½" × 7½" × 7½"; Observer, 2022, ash, sweetgrass, porcupine quill on birch bark, and dye, 13½" × 10½" × 10½".*

**What:** Jeremy Frey: Woven  
**When:** Oct. 26, 2024–Feb. 10, 2025  
**Where:** Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL  
**Info:** [artic.edu](https://artic.edu) for hours and tickets

# Treat Yourself to a Wonderful Weaving Retreat

By *Handwoven* Editors

*What do you call a gathering of weavers? We call it Weave Together with Handwoven, and the next time it happens will be March 23–27, 2025, in beautiful York, Pennsylvania.*

This weaving retreat has classes, community, and fun, and it is a great place to try out multiple weaving techniques with a minimum of stress. Our lineup of teachers includes several who should be familiar to readers of *Handwoven*.

**Karen Donde** is offering a class covering a host of structures related to the simplest of all weaves—plain weave. Among them are double-weave, deflected doubleweave, honeycomb, turned beiderwand, M's and O's, and huck lace. You'll learn how the various structures work and then weave samples of each.

**John Mullarkey**, tablet weaver extraordinaire, is returning with a repeat of his popular shoelace-weaving class. He'll also be teaching two other beginner-friendly classes.

**Jennifer B. Williams** will be teaching three inkle classes for weavers of all levels. Whether you've never warped an inkle loom or are a seasoned bandweaving veteran, Jennifer has a class for you.

Bands not your thing? Long Thread Media's own **Angela K. Schneider**, whose popular weaving videos you may have seen, will be teaching pin-loom weaving. She'll also be teaching rigid-heddle-friendly classes, as will **Angela Tong** and **Sara C. Bixler**—they're the perfect choice for beginning weavers

who are tired of plain weave but don't know what to do next.

We've also lined up classes on loomless fiber techniques. Angela K. Schneider has a workshop on kumihimo braiding—perfect for making bag handles—and **Mary Shackelford** offers classes on traditional finger weaving and a short sampler workshop on twining.

Some of the classes are weaving-adjacent. Karen Donde is teaching two classes to get your design juices going, and **Tom Knisely** will lead a workshop on finishing techniques for rugs.


Know somebody who isn't a weaver yet but wants to be? We've got intro-level classes for pin-loom, rigid-heddle, inkle, off-loom, and tablet weaving.

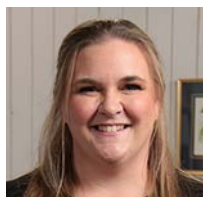
Along with three full days of weaving classes, there will be exciting speakers, a marketplace filled with weaving and fiber goodies, and lots of opportunities for community. Lodging and all meals are included; you'll be eating alongside your fellow attendees, allowing plenty of

opportunity to make new weaving friends—including instructors and *Handwoven* and *Little Looms* editors. It really is a great place to spend quality time with talented weavers.

There's no need to worry about logistics. All meals and most classes will take place at the beautiful Heritage Hills Resort. For classes not at Heritage Hills, students will be transported to Red Stone Glen Fiber Arts Center—the teaching home of Sara C. Bixler and Tom Knisely. Students taking classes at Red Stone Glen will arrive to find their looms warped and ready to go.

Speaking of looms, we have looms available for all classes. You can bring your own loom if you'd prefer, but if you don't have one or if lugging one along would make travel too difficult, don't worry one bit. All rental costs are included in the Weave Together price (although a deposit may be required).

Visit [weavetogether.handwovenmagazine.com](http://weavetogether.handwovenmagazine.com) to learn more about Weave Together 2025, the teachers and classes, and what to expect, including how to purchase tickets and sign up for classes. Space is limited, so don't delay. We hope to see you in Pennsylvania! 



Sara C. Bixler



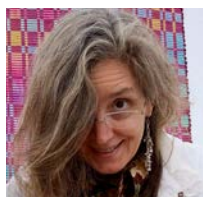
Karen Donde



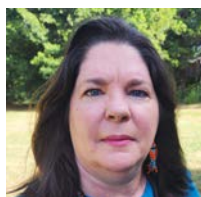
Tom Knisely



John Mullarkey



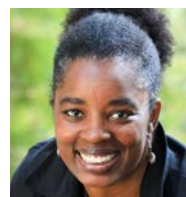
Angela K. Schneider



Mary Shackelford



Angela Tong



Jennifer B. Williams



## Shuttle Race

Ashford folding table looms will now include a shuttle race, which eliminates all shuttle diving, and makes your weaving faster and more enjoyable!



Scan QR code to see the shuttle race in action!



### NEW Retrofit Shuttle Race Kit

The shuttle race is also available as a retrofit kit to fit all Ashford folding four, eight and sixteen shaft table looms manufactured after 1998 with \*curved beater arms. The kit is quick and easy to install, it includes the shuttle race, new curved beater arms, bungy cords and spanners.

Available to fit all 16", 24", and 32" folding table looms.

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## Jack Loom

Expand as a weaver - choose the loom that will suit your needs now and in the future.

*Eight shafts,  
10 treadles,  
38" weaving width.*



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## Cottolin

A lovely blend of 70% Cotton 30% Linen. The combined softness of cotton and crispness of linen result in a woven fabric that is very versatile. This durable yarn can be substituted in any project requiring 8/2 cotton.

*Available in 18 vibrant modern colors, 200gm cones.*



## Ashford Book of Weaving Patterns From Four to Eight Shafts

By Elsa Krogh

All of Elsa's favourite patterns - a mixture of classic weaves and modern techniques - for fashion and homeware. 92 pages.



## Hobby Bench

Adjustable height and tilt options, handy storage shelf with a smooth lacquer finish.

## Warp Thread Weights

Use these handy warp thread weights to weigh floating selvages, supplementary or broken warp threads. Hold long lengths of warp thread around the central spool. Sold in pairs.



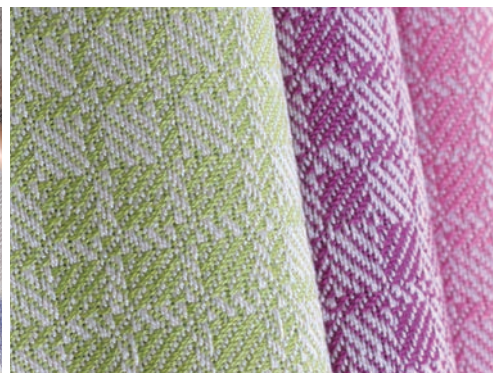
## Warp Yarn Stand

Wind your warps without fuss on this handy six-cone stand. Smooth yarn guides ensure tangle and snag-free warping. Rubber feet for stability.



## Fringe Twister

Create the perfect twisted fringe or decorative cord.



Caterpillar Cotton

## Favorite Finds

A bookmark-sized loom, sari silk yarn bundles, a weaverly ornament for the holidays, and color cards to help you design

### The Gift of Weaving

Make small gifts at home or on the go with this bookmark loom kit from Mabel and Maple. The kit includes three random colors of yarn, a tapestry needle for weaving, a comb for packing, and the important part, a small loom! The frame measures 2½ inches by 8 inches—just the right size for a bookmark or a bracelet.

[mabelandmaple.etsy.com](http://mabelandmaple.etsy.com)



Photos by Matt Graves



### Rustic Color

Add some texture to your next project with these mini recycled sari silk bundles from Unfettered Art and Supply. Available in your choice of over 50 different colors, they can be purchased in your choice of 4-, 6-, or 10-pack bundles. Each mini ball is about 35 feet long. Weave them on their own or use them as accents in a larger piece. [unfetteredco.etsy.com](http://unfetteredco.etsy.com)

### The Perfect Present

Are the weavers in your life hard to shop for? Showcase their love of weaving at the holidays and all year long with this fun ornament from Sadler Creations. Made of porcelain and measuring about 3 inches in diameter, it's a great way to show a weaver some love. [sadlercreationsllc.etsy.com](http://sadlercreationsllc.etsy.com)



### Choose a Palette

Need a little help choosing colors for your next project? Let the 180-card Palette Scout from Zollie help. Each card displays a color or shade, along with ideas for using it in various palettes. A booklet lays out color theory basics, and challenge cards help you break out of your color comfort zone. [zolliemakes.com](http://zolliemakes.com)





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# The Changing Language of Weaving Drafts

BY TOM KNISELY



While weavers have been writing down their drafts for hundreds of years, modern weavers may find the notation used in older drafts to be a mystery—to say nothing of the handwriting.

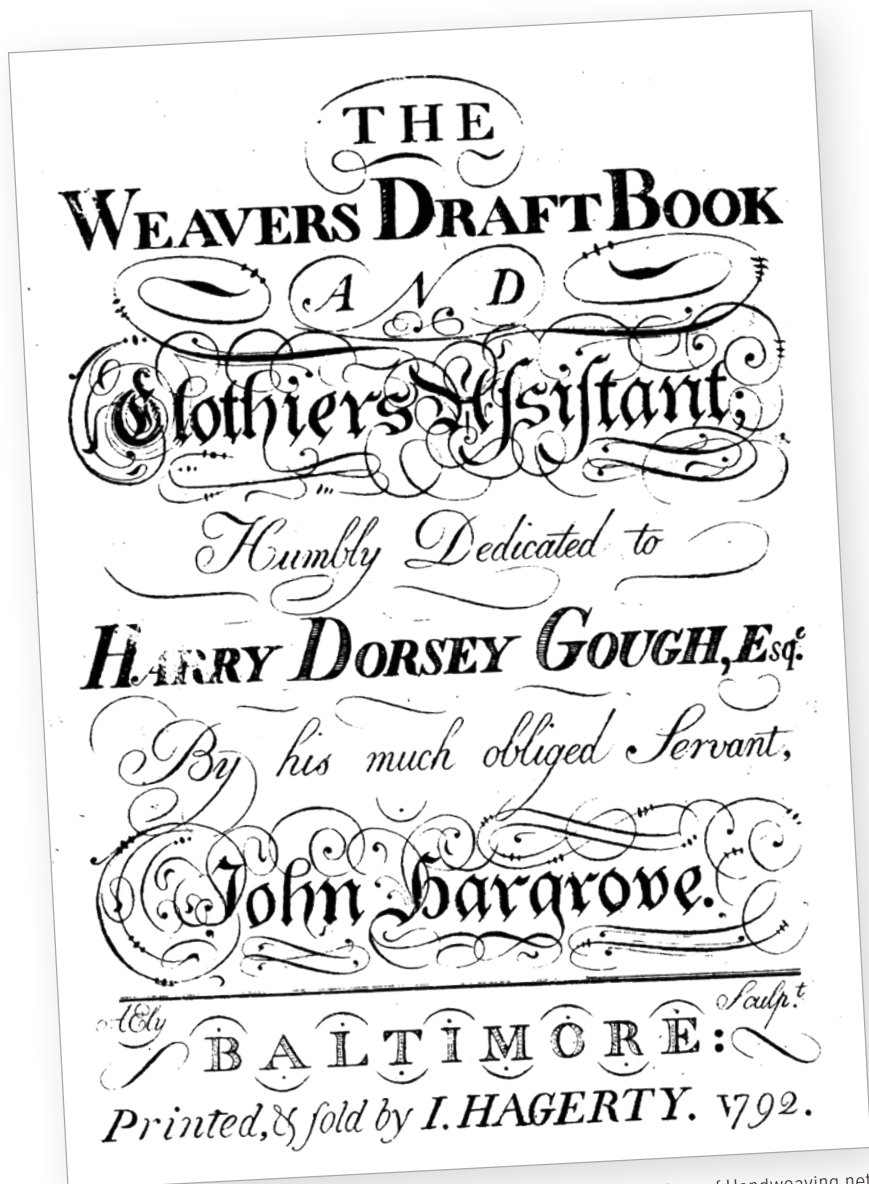


Image courtesy of Handweaving.net

In his preface to *The Weavers Draft Book and Clothiers Assistant*, printed in 1792, John Hargrove explains how to sley cotton, linen, and worsted warps, as well as how to interpret the harness leaves (shafts), threadings, and treadlings of the drafts included in the book.

Even relatively recent drafts can be confusing. Let's take a moment to compare two classic pattern books: *A Handweaver's Pattern Book* by Marguerite Davison (published in 1944) and *A Weaver's Book of 8-Shaft Patterns*, edited by Carol Strickler (published in 1991).

## MARGUERITE'S NOTATION

In Marguerite Davison's drafts, the threading is represented by short vertical marks within four horizontal lines. The tie-up in the upper right corner uses x's to indicate which shafts should be connected to the treadles. The photo at left on the next page shows Davison's draft for Six Thread Bird's Eye, which has a tie-up with both plain-weave and twill treadle combinations. Her drafts usually include several different ways to treadle the pattern, along with a photograph showing the woven result of each treadling.

So, if you warp your loom with this threading, tie up the treadles as shown, and use the first treadling variation, as you weave, you'll see the cloth shown in the corresponding photo, right? Well, maybe!

Remember those x's in the tie-ups? They mean the draft was written for sinking-shed looms, such as counterbalance looms. But if you weave on a jack loom, as many

weavers in the United States do, you should be aware that it makes rising sheds. And the fabric you weave will be upside down compared with the sample photo.

To weave the fabric as shown on a rising-shed loom, you need to lift the opposite shafts of the ones required on a sinking-shed loom. But never fear—it's not hard. Simply reverse the tie-up! My version, below right, shows the revised tie-up using o's (the symbol that indicates a tie-up written for the rising-shed loom). The threading and the treadling stay the same.

And when it comes to tie-ups, it doesn't matter what type of loom you're weaving on, sinking-shed or rising-shed. After you take your piece off the loom, if you prefer the reverse, turn it over and enjoy that side.

#### NOTATION CHANGES OVER TIME

Carol Strickler's 8-shaft pattern drafts (remember, that book was published in 1991) show the tie-ups with o's, meaning they were written for rising-shaft looms (see the top

image on the next page). *Handwoven* magazine and Interweave Press (which published this book) used o's in their published drafts at that time, too.

If you were using a counterbalance loom like I was, you had to reverse-think the tie-up for use on a sinking-shed loom. (My next loom was a countermarch with a double set of lamms. You tie each treadle to both sets of lamms; tie-ups written for countermarch looms show both x's and o's, and you must tie for both the rising and sinking sheds. Oh my!)

Now take a moment and flip a few pages to a draft in this issue of *Handwoven*. Then come right back. Did you notice the differences in current draft notation compared with what we see in Davison or Strickler?

The threading order is now shown with numerals or colored circles on shafts instead of dots and slashes. The tie-ups use numerals to indicate which shafts are tied to which treadles, rather than x's or o's (although they still assume you'll be weaving on a rising-shed loom). The

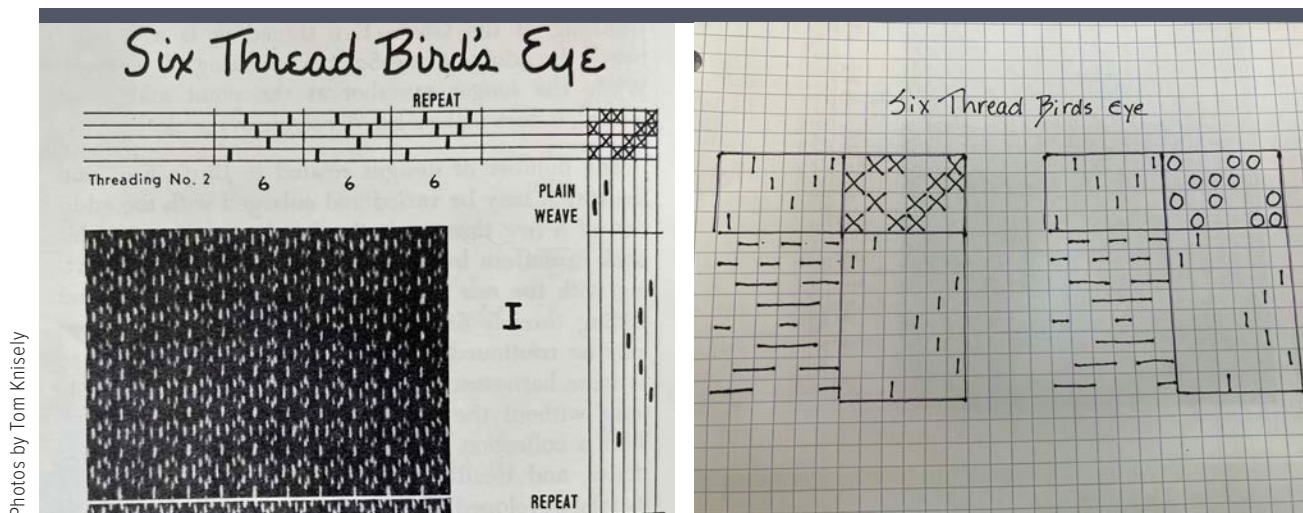
treadling order moves from top to bottom following each horizontal row, one by one, with single-color wefts shown as slashes, and weft color order shown as colored blocks.

#### STEPPING BACK SEVERAL CENTURIES

If you browse through the archive documents on Handweaving.net, you may find pattern books from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with very confusing weaving drafts. When I find an old draft that interests me, I take my time figuring out whether I understand what all the notations mean, sometimes referring to modern drafts with similar structures.

Let's take a look at a draft from John Hargrove's *The Weavers Draft Book and Clothiers Assistant*, printed in the late eighteenth century. The draft, shown at the bottom of the next page, is listed as Number VI and is titled Large M's and O's.

At first glance, Hargrove's draft seems to follow modern drafting conventions. There are four horizontal lines in what looks to be the



Photos by Tom Knisely

Left: Six Thread Bird's Eye from Marguerite Davison's *A Handweaver's Pattern Book* (originally published in 1944). The tie-up uses x's, and the threading and treadlings use tick marks. Photos show samples of each swatch. Right: I wrote out two versions of Davison's Six Thread Bird's Eye—with x's for sinking-shed tie-ups on the left and o's for rising-shed tie-ups on the right.

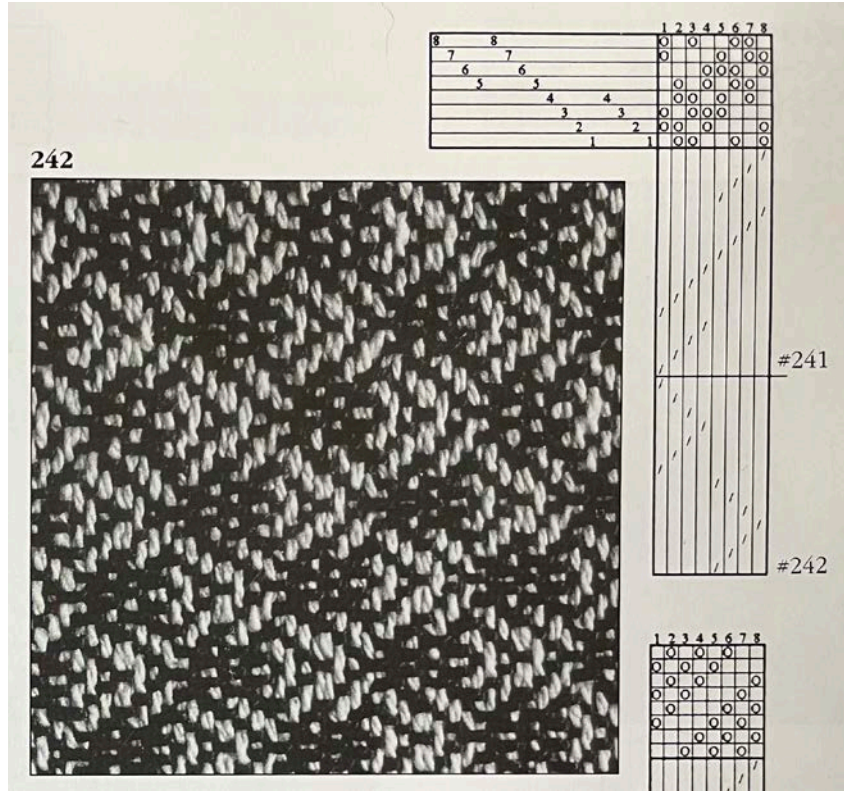
threading area, with a succession of numbers that read from right to left. The numbers jump from line to line.

The tie-up is in the upper left, which looks odd to modern eyes—but it shows x's, so I interpret it to be written for a sinking-shed loom. The treadling order is written under the tie-up, as it is in modern drafts. The treadling is read from top to bottom, and the numbers indicate the order that the treadles are to be pressed.

I believe I understand this draft, but I'll still reference a modern pattern book that shows drafts for M's and O's and compare them to what I understand Hargrove to mean. I'll also run the old draft through weaving software or do a drawdown with a pencil and graph paper, just to make sure I totally understand Hargrove's notations.


Below is my version of this old draft rewritten to follow modern drafting notations. The next step is to put on a warp and weave a sample of it. In fact, the project on page 60 in this issue follows this draft!

This may sound a little crazy, but for me, working on an old draft is almost like going back in time and



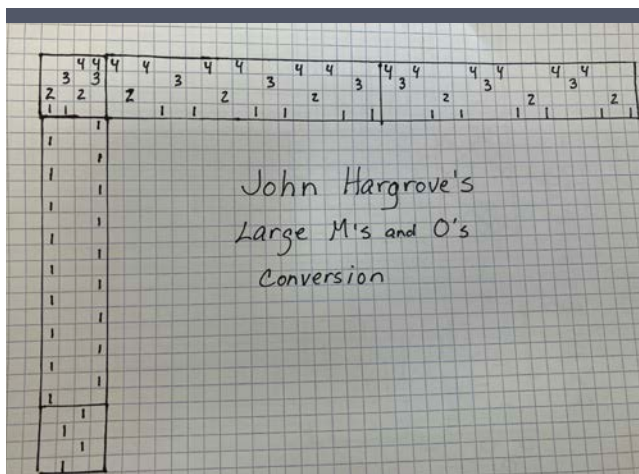
The draft for a two-block twill from *A Weaver's Book of 8-Shaft Patterns*, edited by Carol Strickler (published in 1991). The tie-up uses o's, the threading uses shaft numbers, and treadlings are represented with tick marks. Photos show samples of each swatch.

Photos by Tom Knisely

connecting with my new friend John Hargrove. I would love to have him over for a beer and nibbles and talk weaving all night long. I know I could learn a lot from him. 

**TOM KNISELY** is a regular contributor to *Handwoven* and has written five books on weaving.

*Happy Weaving!*  
Tom



X	X			18	16	12	10	6	4	18	16	12	10	6	4
X	X			14	8	2				17	11	5			
	X	X		17	11	5				14	8	2			
		X	X	15	13	9	7	3	1	15	13	9	7	3	1
2			1												
4			3												
6			5												
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18	19														

Left: My version of John Hargrove's *Large M's and O's* using modern weaving notation. Right: The original notation.

Image courtesy of Handweaving.net



Model L4  
45" 4H, 6T



Harrisville Designs

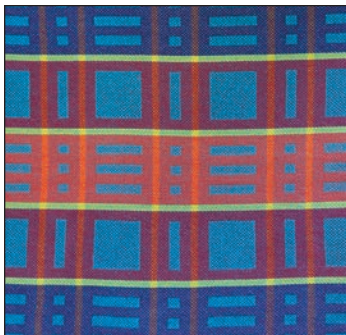
- ◆ Removable beam in 4 colors
- ◆ Built-in tensioning feature
- ◆ Unique foldability
- ◆ Thoughtfully designed
- ◆ Loom ships assembled

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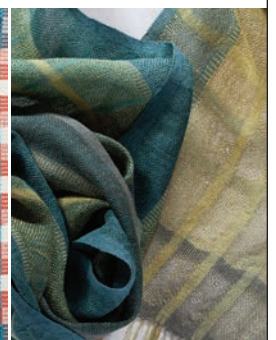
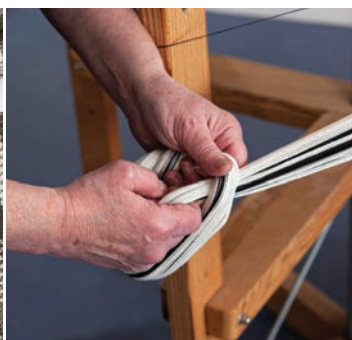




Photo by Cynthia Evetts

The sample was not living up to Sam's vision. Blue and green blurred together, as did brownish and orange, resulting in a drab design.

# *Vintage Weavers: Conquering Vision Challenges*

Good nutrition, exercises, and smart weaving practices benefit aging eyes

CYNTHIA EVETTS AND TINA FLETCHER



*Sam promised to weave a hatband using earthy colors for a special friend. She selected an array of green, blue, orange, and brown cotton warp threads to represent the colors of nature they had enjoyed on a recent hike. Sam then began sampling on a comb, using her warp colors to approximate their scenic view. She tried several combinations of thick and thin stripes both horizontally and vertically, along with blocks and dots to add interest.*

But trying to capture the image of nature was harder than she had anticipated. The warp colors blended into a series of blurry blobs and hazy lines rather than a distinct design. Discouraged, Sam set the project aside and decided to try again later.

## AGING EYES

Research on eye health in weavers across the world shows that they

experience increasing vision changes as they age, usually in the form of refractive errors such as near- or farsightedness. This is especially true for women, who report that vision challenges escalate when menopause kicks in.

Typically, vision challenges are related either to the field of vision or to the eye and eyelid themselves. Field of vision refers to what the eye

typically sees. Disturbances occur when this field has holes or blocks or seems to pull in on itself and get smaller. The field can also grow cloudy, dark, or dim and might even bend or wave. Eye and eyelid challenges include refraction changes, heavy or droopy eyelids, decreased eye moisture, and increased light sensitivity.

We will discuss common vision challenges that can affect weaving, ways to optimize visual health, and how weavers with aging eyes can keep weaving.

Low vision is not just limited to weavers—it's a common effect of getting older. Eyes begin to show signs of

aging when people turn 40 years old. In the United States, leading causes of low vision and blindness are age-related macular degeneration (damage to the center of the retina), cataracts (lens clouding), diabetic retinopathy (retina damage caused by too much blood sugar), dry eyes, temporal arteritis (blood vessel inflammation), and glaucoma (increased eye pressure). Other pesky eye disorders include amblyopia (lazy eye), strabismus (crossed eyes), and astigmatism (irregularly shaped lens or cornea that blurs or distorts vision).

### FEED YOUR EYES

In previous Vintage Weavers articles, we've recommended all kinds of foods to promote health. While we wish we could report that a dark chocolate and red wine diet is best, our eyes actually need a rabbit diet full of antioxidants. What you eat can make a big difference in maintaining central vision, staving off cataract formation, making tears, and promoting sharp night vision.

Here are some of the best choices:

- **Vitamin C** from citrus fruits, peaches, red bell peppers, tomatoes, and strawberries
- **Vitamin E** from avocados, almonds, and sunflower seeds
- **Vitamin A** from vegetables and fruits including carrots, sweet potatoes, cantaloupe, and apricots
- **Lutein and zeaxanthin**, antioxidants in leafy green vegetables such as kale, spinach, and romaine lettuce

For readers weary at the thought of so many leafy greens, egg yolks and cold-water fish high in omega-3 fatty acids (including salmon, tuna, sardines, halibut, and trout) are all good sources of nutrients that combat eye disease. Tina's Italian physician husband would also like to share the good news that some vegetables, including tomatoes, have higher levels of antioxidants when they have been cooked. This means a big pot of marinara sauce bubbling away on the stove can support healthy vision!

### GIVE YOUR EYES A WORKOUT

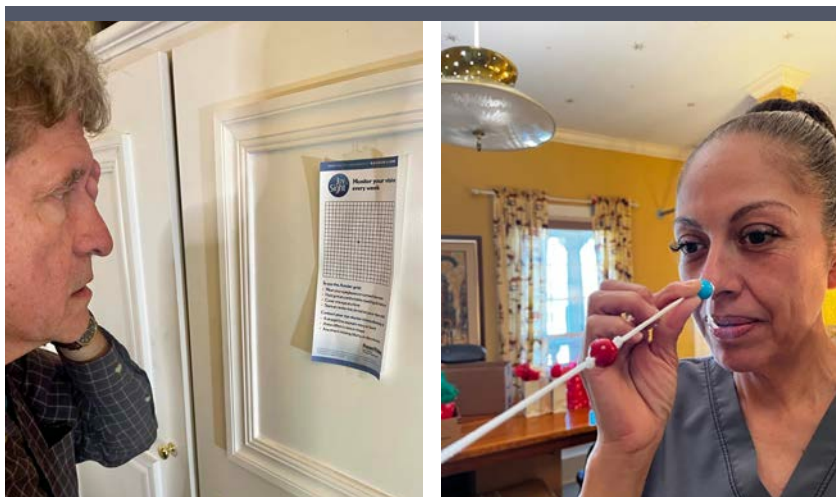
You might wonder if eye exercises can help your sight. Experts at Harvard advise would-be exercisers to use caution.

You might try eye exercises if your eyes are having trouble working together. Classic examples are difficulties maintaining eye focus, double vision when weaving, or challenges with depth perception, all of which can make accurately threading a loom difficult. Proceed with caution when considering eye exercises that promise to keep you out of glasses or prevent squinting, eye spasms, frequent blinking, glaucoma, or macular degeneration.

Which exercises are helpful? First and foremost, make sure you blink frequently when focused on a visual task. Here are other common (and useful) eye exercises:

- **Focusing 20-20-20.** When focused on a task, pause every 20 minutes and look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- **Palming.** Cup your palms and cover your closed eyes for 30 seconds, until you register nothing but darkness. Keep your eyes free from any pressure from your palms.
- **Making Figure Eights.** Imagine a big number 8 lying on its side. Slowly follow it with your eyes in one direction and then the opposite direction.
- **Rolling Your Eyes.** Without moving your head, look right and left and then up and down several times.
- **Shifting from Near to Far and Back Again.** Hold one thumb near your face and one farther away. Focus on the near thumb for two seconds, then on the far one, then on something across the room, and

Photos by Tina Fletcher



*Left:* Every week, Rick does a quick check with an Amsler grid to make sure he doesn't have any emerging problems with blind spots, lens irregularities, or his central vision. Grids are available online or from eye doctors. *Right:* Sandra gives her eyes a workout with a Brock string, a device that aids with the Shifting from Near to Far and Back Again exercise.

then on something even farther away. Repeat several times.

#### CHALLENGES AND REMEDIES

Here are some of the vision difficulties older weavers might experience, along with practical solutions for managing them:

**Contrast sensitivity diminishes, causing patterns to blend into backgrounds and making details more difficult to distinguish.**

Use greater contrast to ease this difficulty. Consider intensity of color, yarn size, and texture to create more contrast.

**Lenses develop cataracts, which make everything seem like you're looking through blurry yellow goggles. Whites appear dull, pinks look dirty or orange, and blues may seem greenish.**

Ask someone else to review color choices, or purchase fibers in preselected color bundles. Use your smartphone or digital camera to take a picture of your fiber selections, and then change the picture to black and white. This allows you to compare the intensity of the colors and determine if they are distinct (see photo at right). When selecting light bulbs, choose those that produce blue or white light and avoid yellow.

**Maculae degenerate, causing central vision to decline while peripheral vision is unaffected.**

Expect that tasks requiring visual focus will be slow and labor-intensive. Consider asking a friend to help with drafting, warping, and finishing tasks. Create wide warps rather than narrow bands so shuttles will be in your peripheral vision. Use

colors with high contrast in wide stripes or big plaids.

**Lenses harden, making fine print and small details harder to see.**

**Close-range activities, such as reading weaving drafts, are more challenging.**

Use a magnifying glass or a tablet or computer screen to enlarge drafts; weave with larger fibers or those with high contrast.

**Retinal rod cells weaken. Seeing at night or in poor light becomes difficult. Rods are responsible for low-light vision, and the eyes no longer adjust and focus as they once did.**

Honestly, eat carrots. Also, choose light bulbs that work best for you in lamps that provide light where you need it most.

**Eyes produce fewer tears, making them dry and itchy, especially in postmenopausal women.**

Try artificial tears or drops recommended for dry eyes and stay hydrated. It is easy to get absorbed in weaving and ignore feelings of thirst. Keep water nearby as a visual reminder to stop and drink now and then.

**Eye pupils become smaller and less responsive to light changes, resulting in light and glare sensitivity.**

Generally speaking, adjust lighting inside, wear sunglasses outside, and use a screen filter on smartphones, tablets, and computers.

When weaving, use natural light for distinguishing yarn colors. Filter harsh sunlight with sheer curtains or screens, and provide focused lighting with lamps during detail work such as dressing the loom or picking up warp ends.

**Usable vision diminishes, despite wearing glasses.**

If this happens to you, it's time for a visit to the eye doctor. Many causes of



Sam selected a second set of fibers for her project based on a grouping that had good contrast in a black-and-white photo.

Photo by Cynthia Evetts



Photos by Cynthia Evetts



Nature inspired but did not dictate the color combinations for Sam's weaving. Adjusting the photo for higher contrast and brighter colors created a better palette for selecting fibers.

diminishing vision are abnormal and should not be ignored. Your eye-care professional (physician or ophthalmologist) is your best source for information and medical advice about your vision health.

Think about using low-vision aids, which include smartphone apps, telescopic glasses, lenses with light filters, magnifying glasses, and magnifying sheets. Some of these devices are handheld or can be laid directly on paper drafts or your current warp. You can adjust e-books, tablets, and other devices to provide larger, darker print.

**REMEMBER SAM?**

The hatband had been all but abandoned when a friend suggested Sam work near a window with lots of natural light. The original design simply needed more contrast to be visually appealing—and to avoid the nightmare of warping strands of very similar colors. Sam chose a turquoise blue to represent the sky and a deeper green replaced the

original washed-out shade. She added bright white for contrast, and she strategically placed bold colors between the more muted tones to ease the visual challenges she was experiencing. The resulting hatband was striking and well received by a grateful friend, just in time for another hike. ⇄

**RESOURCES**

**Vision problems**

Learn more about age-related eye problems at [my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/common-age-related-eye-problems](http://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/common-age-related-eye-problems).

Using caution with eye exercises: [health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/the-lowdown-on-eye-exercises](http://health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/the-lowdown-on-eye-exercises).

The American Academy of Ophthalmology offers excellent advice for techniques and assistive devices to compensate for poor vision. See [aao.org/eye-health/diseases/low-vision-assistive-devices](http://aao.org/eye-health/diseases/low-vision-assistive-devices).

**Vision aids**

For more information about Brock strings, see [optometrists.org/vision](http://optometrists.org/vision)

-therapy/guide-to-vision-therapy/vision-therapy-faqs/how-is-a-brock-string-used.

Why use an Amsler grid? Read about it at [my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diagnostics/amsler-grid-eye-test](http://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diagnostics/amsler-grid-eye-test).

Download a free printable Amsler grid at [brightfocus.org/macular/publication/amsler-grid-eye-test](http://brightfocus.org/macular/publication/amsler-grid-eye-test).

For seeing true color, CNET recommends GE Reveal bulbs. Read more at [cnet.com/home/kitchen-and-household/best-led-lights](http://cnet.com/home/kitchen-and-household/best-led-lights).

For advice about making good choices with reading glasses, visit [warbyparker.com/learn/reading-glasses-strength](http://warbyparker.com/learn/reading-glasses-strength).

*Together, CYNTHIA EVETTS and TINA FLETCHER have 85 years of weaving experience, 80 years of occupational therapy practice, 49 years in higher education, and 20 years of friendship and shockingly similar interests. They are definitely vintage weavers.*



# Bluebird Towels

CHERYL WHITE

## STRUCTURE

Overshot and plain weave.

## EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 20" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 2–5 shuttles; 5–7 bobbins; double-bobbin shuttle (optional but recommended).

## YARNS

**Warp:** 10/2 Ring Spun, Combed Georgia cotton (unmercerized cotton; 4,200 yd/lb; Georgia Yarn Company), Warm Navy, 90 yd; Lt. Cornflower, 1,030 yd; Carolina Blue, 875 yd.

**Weft:** 10/2 Ring Spun, Combed Georgia cotton, Warm Navy, 74 yd; Lt. Cornflower, 749 yd; Carolina Blue, 576 yd; Persimmon, 288 yd; Old Brick, 423 yd.

## WARP LENGTH

399 ends 5 yd long (allows 13" for take-up and 41" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 20 epi (2/dent in a 10-dent reed).

**Weft:** 20 ppi (plain weave); 29 ppi (overshot, combined tabby and pattern).

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 20".

**Woven length:** (measured under tension on the loom) about 126".

**Finished size:** (after hemming and wet-finishing) four towels, about 17" × 26" each.

*When I started weaving, I was drawn to color.* Even though the beige 1970s were in full stride, I wove colors. I collected rainbows of yarn and enjoyed warps with many hues—some subtle, some bright and bold.

When my husband and I added dyed yarns to our Georgia Yarn Company cotton line, I was determined to have colors that weavers could blend and contrast with one another. Choosing what colors to use was an adventure (see “Creating a Custom Color Line” on page 24) but well worth the effort.

I wove these towels as spring began arriving at my studio. While feeding the birds, I thought of their lovely variety of colors, and eastern bluebirds came to mind with their bright blue and rust feathers. I designed these towels to reflect those wonderful avian visitors.

For my draft, I chose the Cross of Tennessee from Josephine Estes’s *Miniature Overshot Patterns for Hand Weaving*, one of my favorite overshot draft books. The lovely patterns have short floats, making them ideal for towels and smaller items. This particular draft with its cross and table lends itself well to multiple colors in warp and weft. I find it slow to wind, as I count and change colors, but fast to thread, as the color changes create an automatic check of the threading. If you end a threading block before a color finishes, something needs checking.

Adding color to the warp and weft of an overshot draft can be fun—and it’s not difficult. Patterns with definite blocks and tables, such as this one, are a good place to start. I chose Carolina Blue for the table of this design and added Lt. Cornflower for the cross. A three-end stripe of Warm Navy in the center of the point adds interest and makes a nice plain-weave check if you don’t want all overshot for your towels.



Photo by Skyler Ewing via Pexels

For her design, Cheryl was inspired by the bright colors of the eastern bluebird.

The tabby and pattern colors change with each block. Try it once to see the effect. If you don’t want to deal with frequent color changes, try using one color for the tabby or the pattern weft. If weaving the plain-weave towels or the towels with a border and section of plain weave, you might want to weave 4 picks of navy and an even number of picks of the Carolina Blue (I wove 26) to square the design. I alternated sides with



the color changes to avoid buildup of the selvages.

Even if you are weaving these in winter, I hope you think about the brightly colored feathered visitors that will soon be on their way with the changing of the seasons. May these pretty bluebird colors brighten your day!

**1** Wind a warp of 399 ends 5 yd long following the warp color order in Figure 1. Warp the loom using your preferred method,

following the draft in Figure 2. Centering for a weaving width of 20", sley 2 per dent in a 10-dent reed. Sley the last 5 ends 2-1-2.

**2** For the plain-weave and tabby picks, wind 1 bobbin each of Warm Navy, Lt. Cornflower, and Carolina Blue. For the pattern weft, wind doubled strands of Persimmon and Old Brick onto separate bobbins for use in a standard shuttle, or wind 2 bobbins of a single strand per color and use a double-bobbin shuttle.

**3** Spread the warp with scrap yarn using plain-weave treadles 5 and 6.

**4** Towel 1 is overshot on the full towel. Weave a 1½" plain-weave hem using Lt. Cornflower and ending on treadle 5.

**5** Continue to weave following the treadling in Figure 2 while using tabby. **Note:** The Persimmon pattern weft is always paired with the Carolina Blue tabby, and the Old Brick pattern weft is always

## CREATING A CUSTOM COLOR LINE

When you select colors of yarn for a project, do you ever wonder how those specific hues were chosen when that yarn was dyed? I can tell you how we did it at our small company.

In 2011, my local weaving group wanted to make a project for which we all used the same yarn. My husband, Michael, sourced that yarn for us—and that was the beginning of Georgia Yarn Company. Our business quickly expanded to include cotton, silk, linen, and other fibers. Our primary customers have always been handweavers, but we also number knitters and crocheters and even doll makers and fishing enthusiasts among them. (Those last two groups are interested in silk for making doll hair and fishing flies, respectively.)

After a time, we added natural Georgia-grown ring-spun cotton in a variety of weights to our product offerings (to the delight of our enthusiastic customers). Later, I designed a snowflake towel kit and had a few colors of 8/2 unmercerized cotton custom-dyed for it. The kit's popularity and the difficulty of finding 10/2 cotton at that time led us to develop a standard color line of unmercerized 10/2 cotton, starting with the red and two greens I'd used in that kit.

### Colorful decisions

Choosing our colors was a challenge. Michael suggested starting with a line of 10 colors, but we soon realized that neutrals alone would take at least half of those slots, and we needed to go bigger. I collected scraps of yarn, paint chips, and fabric swatches to find a group of colors that my weaving experience and color sense told me would blend well. My choices leaned toward shades and tones, while Michael preferred purer colors. We particularly disagreed on greens: Shamrock was Michael's choice, and Olive was mine (we compromised by adding both to the list). Dreaming up color names was lots of fun.

In the end, our first run included 28 colors. We sent our color samples along with written descriptions and a supply of our 10/2 unmercerized cotton to the dyehouse, and soon the beautiful colors we envisioned began arriving for approval a few hanks at a time.

### Business challenges

Ordering enough yarn for a project or getting a box holding a few cones is one thing; receiving a tractor trailer full of yarn is another. Our first order included all the colors in the new line, most in 100-pound amounts, so the sheer size of that delivery was daunting. Fortunately, we already had a solid set of business



Photos courtesy of Cheryl White / Georgia Yarn Company

*Top:* The Penfield Store, shown here in 1941, was a gathering place for the community. Georgia Yarn Company bought the long-abandoned building to hold its yarn inventory. *Bottom:* The line includes hues Cheryl enjoys weaving with as well as colors she and Michael developed based on customer requests.

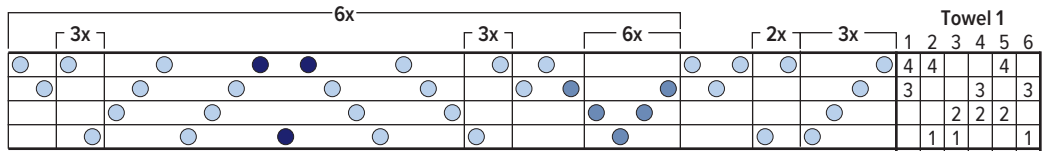
practices in place for receiving, processing, and selling yarn. We did have to rent warehouse space for a while to store it all.

Our 10/2 line currently has 37 colors, and it seems to grow by a few shades each year. And we have purchased the historic Penfield Store to hold all those cones—no more need for warehouse space!

If you'd told me 40 years ago that we'd have a business connected to my greatest passion, I wouldn't have believed you. But to my unending delight, today we live and work in a small Georgia community, shipping our own colorful line of locally grown cotton to weavers around the world.

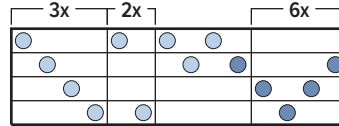
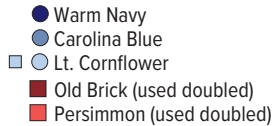
—Cheryl White

## 2. DRAFT

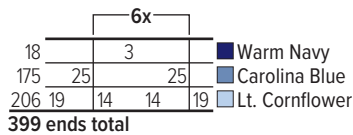


### HEDDLE COUNT

Shaft 4	86
Shaft 3	93
Shaft 2	114
Shaft 1	106
<b>Total</b>	<b>399</b>



### 1. WARP COLOR ORDER



paired with the Lt. Cornflower or Warm Navy tabby.

**6** After repeating the middle section 7 times, end with the balance picks, the border, and a 1½" Lt. Cornflower plain-weave hem. Weave 2 picks with a contrasting scrap yarn.

**7** Towel 2 is patterned in a blue plaid, without overshot elements. Weave it in plain weave following the weft color order in Figure 3. Weave 2 separating picks.


**8** Towel 3 combines a plain-weave plaid body with overshot borders (motifs A and B on one end and motif A alone on the other end). Follow the treadling and weft color order in Figure 3. At the end of Towel 3, weave 2 picks of contrasting yarn.

**9** Towel 4 combines plain weave with narrow accent overshot stripes. Follow the treadling and weft color order in Figure 3. Weave

several picks to protect the weft. Remove the towels from the loom.

**10** Cut the towels apart between the scrap yarn picks and zigzag stitch the raw edges.

**11** Turn the raw edges under ½" and then ½" again. Press. Stitch the hems by hand or machine.

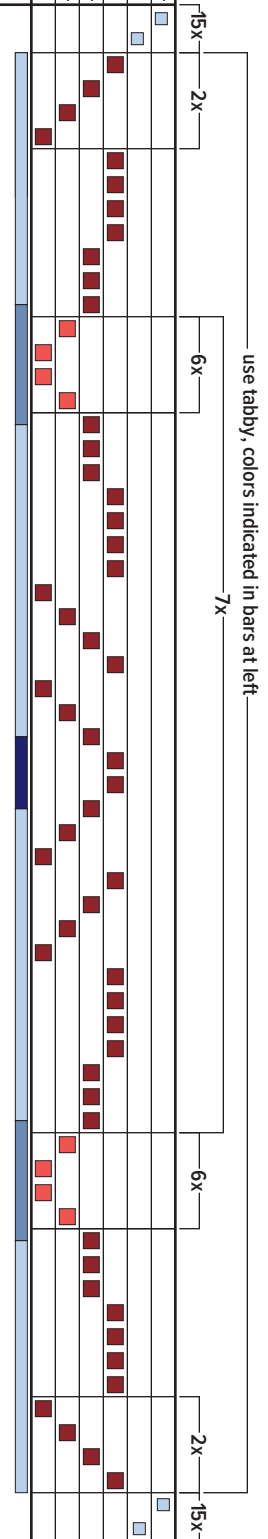
**12** Wet-finish by machine washing in warm water. Tumble dry until damp-dry. Remove from the dryer and steam-press. 

### RESOURCES

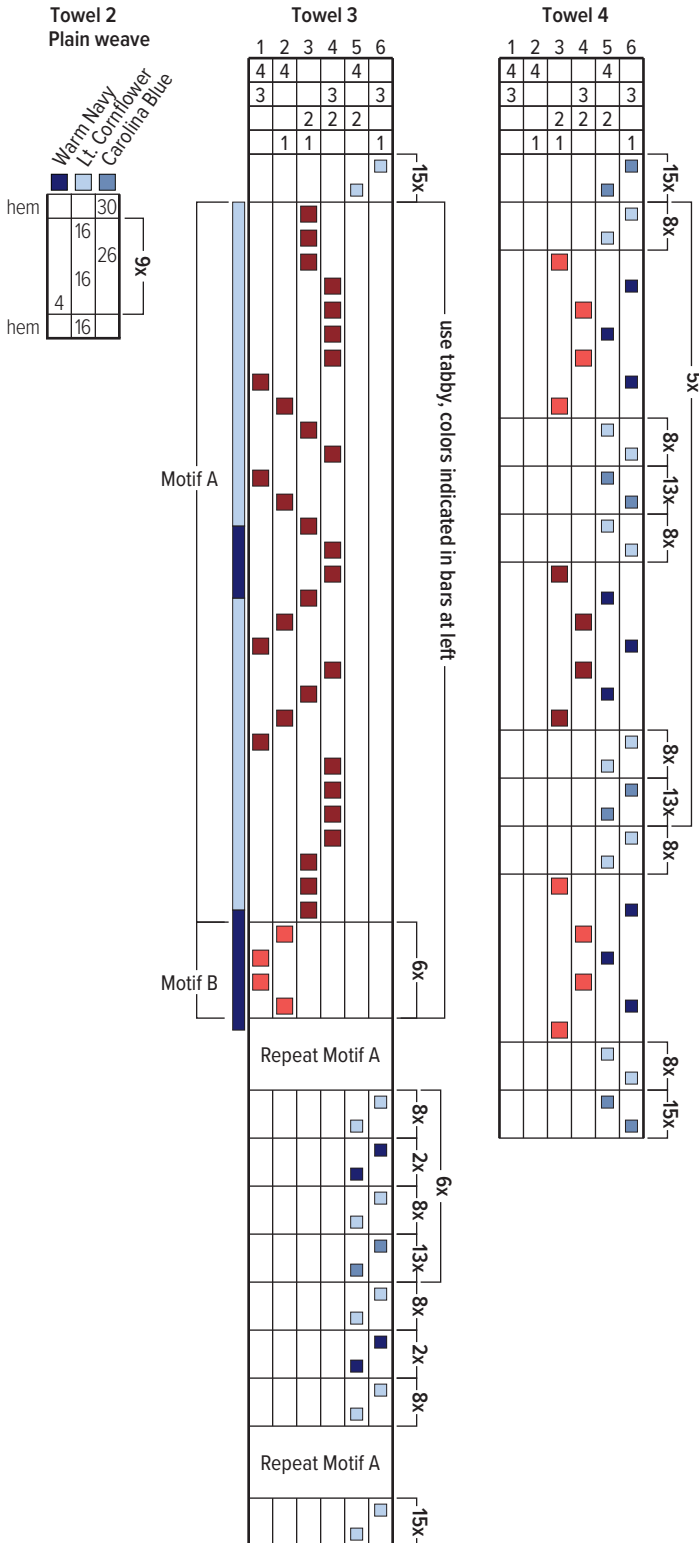
Cheryl used the Cross of Tennessee draft from Josephine Estes's *Miniature Overshot Patterns for Hand Weaving*, edited by Mitchell and Thompson (Saunderstown, RI: Weavers Guild of Boston, 1994), 41.

*From her studio in Penfield, Georgia,*

**CHERYL WHITE** weaves, teaches, and designs colorful projects using Georgia Yarn Company yarn. She can be found at [handweaver.us](http://handweaver.us).



### 3. WEAVING AND WEFT COLOR ORDER



### MAKE IT YOUR OWN



Photo by Matt Graves

Wondering if you might prefer these towels woven in a different set of colors? A yarn wrap is a quick way to take a look. The lower wrap shown here uses Cheryl's complementary color palette, while the upper one is a very different group of colors pulled from a pillow we found at the retailer Anthropologie (using Georgia Yarn Company's 10/2 unmercerized cotton in the colors Peach, Persimmon, Herb, Smoked Pearl, and Gold).

If you don't even know where to begin with colors, try this. Collect some images that appeal to you (at retailer or home-decorating magazine websites, or flowers from your garden, or a favorite outfit). Take a good look at them. Are you drawn to a particular color or group of colors? That's where you should begin.

#### How to make a yarn wrap

Start with a narrow piece of sturdy white cardboard or chipboard (such as the Bristol board shown here). Affix a piece of double-sided tape along the back and wrap your yarn in snug groups around the cardboard, pressing it to the tape as you go. Your goal is to include groups of yarn showing all the colors in the approximate order and proportions of the warp's design.

This style of yarn wrap doesn't show interlacements, but it gives you an idea of how colors look when placed next to each other. You don't even need to have the exact project yarn on hand—use what you've got in the appropriate colors. At this point, you're making a rough draft rather than a final plan.

If the wrap's not feeling quite right, make another one using a different group of colors from your collection of images. When you've made a wrap you like, you're ready to plan a warp using your personal set of colors.

—Handwoven editors



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Photos by Robin Lynde

Rose wears a heavy wool coat before shearing. All Jacob sheep have horns, and their fleeces are naturally multicolored.

# *How to Source Yarn Directly from a Farm*

BY ROBIN LYNDE



*Why might you want to buy yarn from the farmer who produced it? Maybe you discovered an intriguing yarn at a fiber festival, or you fell in love with a cute sheep or found a particular breed with characteristics you admire and want for your weaving. Or perhaps you'd simply like to support growers in your region by buying locally.*

I have a flock of more than 70 Jacob sheep (a small multihorned, spotted breed), and each year I proudly sell a batch of natural-color yarn to eager weavers and knitters. I also process and sell yarn spun from a neighbor's flock of white-faced sheep of Targhee, Rambouillet, and Polypay breeding. And when I'm not

caring for my sheep or getting fleeces to a mill for spinning, I enjoy weaving with these yarns.

My farming and weaving experiences combine to give me a broad perspective on the ins and outs of buying yarn directly from the producer that you may find helpful. Let's begin with how wool is grown.

## **GROWING AND SELLING WOOL**

While I don't know what goes on behind the scenes at large yarn retailers, I assume that it's vastly different from what happens at my farm. I have my hands on every aspect of every fleece from the moment the lambs are born, to shearing day, to skirting and sorting wool, to delivering wool to a local mill, to finding customers for the resulting yarn.

You could say the process of growing wool begins anew each year, the day after shearing. All year



long, I monitor sheep health and nutrition (to prevent the weak sections in fleeces known as wool breaks), and I manage pasture and feeding practices (to minimize vegetable matter in the fleece).

Or maybe it starts before that, when I make sure the pregnant ewes have adequate nutrition so that the lambs are born with their full genetic potential for growing good wool (see Resources).

We shear our flock once a year in January or February, about a month before lambing. Sheep are held off feed and water for 12 hours before shearing for the comfort of both the sheep and the shearer. Shearing is skilled physical work—our shearer can shear a sheep in two minutes. Members of our Meridian Jacobs Farm Club come to help with shearing day tasks, and local fiber guild members are invited to come and watch.

Fleeces weigh anywhere from 3 to 6 pounds and are available immediately for sale. After shearing, we lay each fleece out on a table for skirting (removing less desirable wool from around the edges). Some buyers sort their new fleece into colors and separate britch wool (a coarse wool from the back legs) before taking their fleece home. I skirt and sort all remaining fleeces and deliver them to a local mill for scouring, carding, and spinning.

In a typical year, our farm produces 275 pounds of fleece, and I also purchase about 50 pounds from a neighboring Jacob farmer and about 120 pounds from the nearby Timm Ranch. After scouring, our yield is 55 to 65 percent clean fiber, some of which becomes roving and the rest of which is spun into yarn.

Typically, I end up with about 40 pounds of Jacob yarn per year, plus 60 pounds of yarn from Timm Ranch fleeces.

I sell to customers in person at the farm, online, and at Lambtown (our local California fiber festival). Our naturally colored yarn may sell out by the following summer. If it does, there won't be more until we grow, shear, and process the next batch of fleeces.

#### FINDING A FARMER

If you're intrigued by small-batch yarn, how do you find farmers who sell yarn?

Most farmers who are direct marketing their yarn are happy to answer questions, and many have samples of finished goods. You may be able to meet them and their sheep at county and state fairs, as well as during sheep or fiber festivals. Some may also sell at farmers markets or may open their farms to visitors.

An obvious way in today's world is to search online—but not all small farms have websites, and those with websites may not show up within the first few search pages. You can find a directory of heritage sheep breeders as well as info about a breed's fleece



*Top:* Rose after shearing, feeding her twin lambs. *Bottom:* On shearing day, Farm Club members show off staple length as they skirt Jacob fleeces.



Mills adjust their equipment for each batch they process, working with each farmer to spin yarn that is most appropriate for that fiber and for the farm's customers.

characteristics and its best uses at [livestockconservancy.org](http://livestockconservancy.org). Another source is [Fibershed \(fibershed.org\)](http://Fibershed.org), an international network of farmers, mill operators, and textile producers. It has an affiliate directory that lists local chapters, which can provide information about wool growers.

#### BUYING SMALL-BATCH WOOL

After you've met a farmer at a sheep show, found a farm down the road, or discovered an interesting website, how do you decide if the yarn is right for you? Consider these factors.

#### Breed

The breed of sheep generally determines whether its fiber is fine or coarse. In the wool world, those terms refer to the diameter of individual fibers measured in microns and indicate whether wool is soft or scratchy. Some breeds have very fine fleece (Merino and Rambouillet are well-known examples). Others, such as Lincoln and Cotswold, are considered coarser longwool breeds.

You'll want fine wool if you're weaving next-to-the-skin pieces, but coarse wool will be sturdier for saddle blankets or household items such as rugs. Don't overlook medium wool (such as Corriedale and Columbia) for blankets, wearables, and more. There are even double-coated breeds such as Navajo-Churro and Karakul, which have a coarse outercoat and a finer



*Top:* Bags of skirting and sorted fleece are ready for a trip to the mill for processing. *Middle:* It takes a skilled worker about two minutes to shear a sheep. *Bottom:* Looking quite a bit less fluffy after shearing, a group of Jacob sheep show their color markings.

undercoat. Traditionally, fiber from both coats is spun together, and the yarn is great for rugs, saddle blankets, or heavy outerwear.

There are dozens of sheep breeds that you won't find on standard breed lists. Some are referred to as "primitive," "unimproved," or "classic," which on the wool side means they haven't been bred to produce an all-white or heavier fleece. Discovering rare or lesser-known breeds and deciding what to weave with their wool is one of the exciting things about buying yarn directly from the source.

### Yarn Packaging

When you buy yarn from a large retailer, you can expect standard yardage in skeins or on cones, with standard labeling information indicating yards per skein or yards per pound (ypp) for cones.

When you buy yarn from individual farmers, they may market it to a broad customer base in skeins rather than cones, and they may describe it using knitting words such as fingering, sport, or DK

rather than the ypp weavers expect. Also, the smaller mills they use for processing may not be set up to produce standard and consistent package weights. If you have a specific use in mind, be prepared to buy all you need for your project (or even a bit more for sampling).

How the yarn is processed also affects the sett when you are ready to weave. Skeined yarns are finished at the mill differently from coned yarns. As shown in the photos below, wrapping my Timm Ranch coned wool yields a wraps per inch (wpi) of 19; the same wool from a skein has a wpi of either 16 (straight out of the skein) or 12 (after a dip in water). In general, plain-weave sett is roughly half of a yarn's wpi—which you might think means 8.5, 8, or 6 for this yarn, depending on its put-up. My experience weaving with this wool is that it is best sett at 8 ends per inch.

While not all farmers are weavers (truth to tell, most are not), you can always ask them for insights about what to expect as you weave with their yarn. Some will even be glad

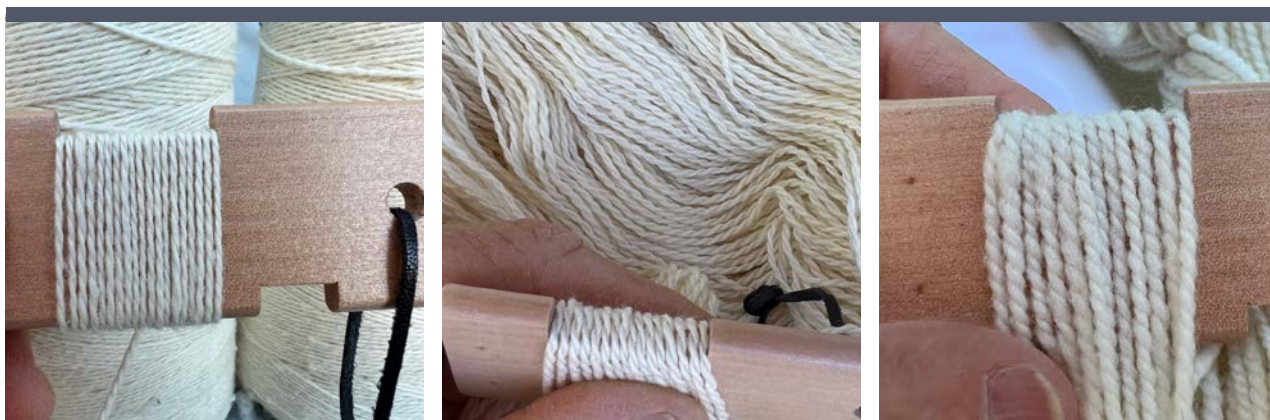
for your feedback so they can use that information when they design and label next year's yarn.

### Consistency and Availability

The idea of consistency applies both to a batch of yarn from a particular year and to yarn from that producer over multiple years. Mills adjust their equipment for each batch they process, working with each farmer to spin yarn that is most appropriate for that fiber and for the farm's customers. Even so, characteristics may vary for a single batch of wool spun at two separate mills or spun at one mill but at different times—just as a handspinner can spin yarn that varies from one bobbin to the next.

I use two local mills, and both do a great job with my Jacob wool. However, when I sort my wool by natural Jacob colors (black, white, gray, and lilac), each lot may have slightly different values for ypp and weight per skein, even when processed one right after another.

If yarn consistency is important to you, buy enough yarn for your project from a single year's



Wraps per inch for yarns from the same fiber can vary substantially depending on put-up. This yarn measures 19 wpi from a cone (*above left*), 16 wpi straight from a skein (*above center*), and 12 wpi from a skein that's been dipped in water and allowed to dry (*above right*)—leading to setts from 6 to 8.5 epi. Sampling is the only way to determine which sett is best.



A Jacob fleece shows multiple natural colors as well as the fiber's staple length and crimp.



After a year of work, cones and skeins of naturally colored Jacob yarn are ready for buyers.

production, or work directly with a farmer who can help you find yarns that work well together even if the numbers aren't exactly the same. Many small-batch farmers can tell you how well yarn from one year is likely to match yarn from another.

Whether farmers have dozens or hundreds of sheep, they will not have limitless quantities of yarn for sale. A good rule of thumb is to buy what you need all at once or be prepared to be flexible when you want more.

#### WEAVING WITH SMALL-BATCH WOOL

So, you came home from a fiber festival with several yarns you just couldn't resist. Now what? You may not know how the yarns will behave in a project, but if you know the breed, you can make some assumptions as you plan.

Broadly speaking, the elasticity and grist of your yarns can make a great difference in the outcome of a project. Sampling is one way to learn about how yarns will behave together, but it may not be an option if your supply is limited. One way to compare yarns is to cut a

piece of each yarn the same length in its relaxed state. Measure the yarns under tension and then again after soaking and drying them. You may get clues as to how to use these yarns together.

If your yarns have very different characteristics but you want to use them together, consider using one as warp and the other as weft. My Jacob wool can be used in warp and weft, but the britch wool has much less elasticity and will cause rippling if used as a warp stripe alongside the other yarns. My other wool has even more elasticity. I often use one yarn type as warp and the others as weft, but I don't mix them in the same warp.

If you want to put dissimilar yarns together in a warp, use very narrow stripes (such as alternating single threads). Great differences in elasticity may still be evident if one yarn shrinks more than another, but the effect will be over the whole piece rather than in large bands.

Or you could plan a project that takes advantage of the differences in elasticity to intentionally

produce differential shrinkage during wet-finishing.

Weaving with yarns purchased directly from the farmer can be a rewarding experience—if you know how to approach using these yarns. It's my hope that after reading this article you can do so with confidence. 

#### RESOURCES

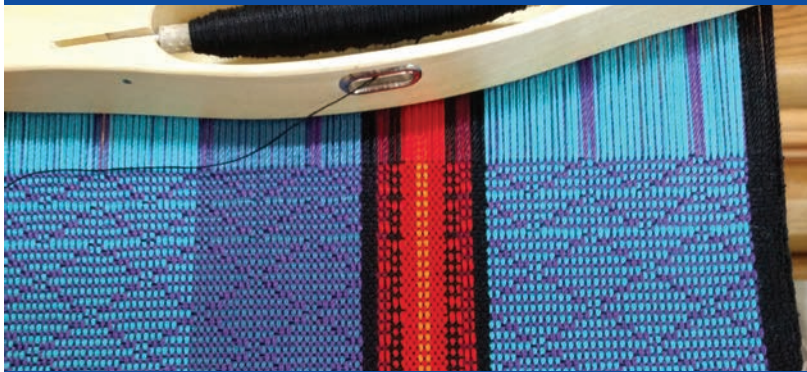
To learn about how wool develops on sheep, visit [woolwise.com/educational-resources/crc-for-premium-quality-wool-resources/wool-biology-2/theme-wool-biology-follicle-development](https://woolwise.com/educational-resources/crc-for-premium-quality-wool-resources/wool-biology-2/theme-wool-biology-follicle-development).

For more about the advantages of buying yarn from local farmers, read Carol J. Sulcoski's "Think Globally, Knit Locally" at [farmfiberknits.com/think-globally-knit-locally](https://farmfiberknits.com/think-globally-knit-locally).

For information about heritage breeds and links to farmers in your area, visit [livestockconservancy.org](https://livestockconservancy.org) and [fibershed.org](https://fibershed.org).

Watch Jacob sheep being shorn at Robin's farm at [youtube.com/watch?v=nFG6qwzys5Q](https://youtube.com/watch?v=nFG6qwzys5Q).

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# Perpetual Pinwheels

ROBIN LYNDE

## STRUCTURE

Color-and-weave.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 18" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** Jacob DK Yarn (100% Jacob wool; about 1,160 yd/lb; Meridian Jacobs), JW23-VO-LL-2 Lilac and JW23-VO-B Black, 267 yd each.

**Weft:** Jacob DK Yarn, JW23-VO-LL-2 Lilac and JW23-VO-B Black, 205 yd each.

**Note:** The JW23 lot of yarn will be sold out by the time this issue is published, but JW24 yarn will be available. See "How to Source Yarn Directly from a Farm," page 28, to learn how to find and work with small-batch farm-produced yarns, and why yd/lb measurements are approximate.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Unicorn Fibre Wash for wet-finishing (optional).

## WARP LENGTH

178 ends 3 yd long (includes floating selvages; allows 7" for take-up, 25" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 10 epi (1/dent in a 10-dent reed).

**Weft:** 9–10 ppi.

**Note:** While Robin aimed for a balanced weave (the same epi as ppi), she found that her ppi was closer to 9 because she used a light beat.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 17<sup>8</sup>/<sub>10</sub>".

**Woven length:** (measured under tension on the loom) 76".

**Finished size:** (after wet-finishing and sewing ends together Möbius-style) 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" × 62".

*The color-and-weave pinwheel pattern* is a perfect design to showcase the different colors and values of the yarn grown by my Jacob sheep. Both sides of the cloth look the same with this draft, which means the pattern is continuous throughout the Möbius strip after finishing.

While writing this article, I got sidetracked reading about Möbius strips. I learned that the properties were independently described by two German mathematicians in 1858, one with the last name of Möbius. About these infinite loops, *Scientific American* says, "A single-sided surface with no boundaries, the strip is an artist's reverie and a mathematician's feat."

The Möbius shape is easy to wear since it stays in place on the shoulders and has an attractive twist in front. During finishing, the ends of this shawl are sewn together. Because there is no fringe, the waste yarn that must be accounted for when planning a project truly is wasted. To make limited quantities of special yarn go as far as possible, you can lash your warp on rather than tying it on—or you can spread the waste by doubling the warp and weaving an extra Möbius (or fringed) shawl for a friend.

**1** Wind a warp of 178 ends 3 yd long following the warp color order in Figure 1. One end on each side will be a floating selvage. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 2. Centering for a weaving width of 17<sup>8</sup>/<sub>10</sub>", sley 1 per dent in a 10-dent reed. Sley the floating selvages through empty dents on each side of the warp.

**2** Wind bobbins with each of the weft colors. Spread the warp with scrap yarn.

**3** Weave following the draft in Figure 2 for about 76" or desired length. See Weaving Tips for info about handling shuttles with two colors, as well as thoughts about woven length.

**4** Remove the fabric from the loom. Machine stitch both ends to secure. **Note:** Robin uses a row or two of zigzag stitch (or other stitch with some flexibility). Trim the warp yarn to about 1/2".

**5** Wet-finish in warm water with Unicorn Fibre Wash or another mild detergent. Soak the fabric for 10 minutes, then agitate. Robin agitates most of her wool pieces for 2 to 3 minutes, either by hand or in the washing machine (preferably one that can easily be started and stopped). Drain and squeeze out soapy water. Place in clean rinse water and swish briefly.







Natalie records her ikat template for each project in a dye journal.

# Fun with Ikat and Ice Dyeing

BY NATALIE DRUMMOND



*About a decade ago, around the same time I started vat dyeing indigo, I also began ice dyeing. I found Mary Zicafoose's ikat work (see Resources) to be especially inspirational, and at some point, I wondered about combining ikat with ice dyeing. When used together, the techniques provide so many opportunities to explore color and pattern on woven cloth. That's how my journey to the Ikat and Ice Scarf (page 42) began.*

## PREPARING THE WARPS

For my Ikat and Ice Scarf, I began with three 4½-yard warps, wound separately using a warping board. A couple of notes about my warps: First, I include extra ends in each warp to have on hand in case of broken threads needing repair. Second,

the 4½-yard warps I describe here are longer than you'll see in the Ikat and Ice Scarf project to account for shrinkage during the dyeing process. I also adjust ikat positioning as I warp, and I like to sample as I weave—both of which use extra warp length. If you don't expect to sample or shift

the ikat positions as you warp, try starting with 3½-yard warps. After dyeing, these will provide the 3-yard warps used in the project.

Two of the warps include ikat binding or wrapping to provide sections that resist dye. To create each resist section, wrap the tape in one direction for the width you'd like and then reverse it to the other direction, stretch it, and tie it with a slipknot. Loosely wrapped ikat tape will encourage wicking, while tightly wrapped tape results in sharp color boundaries. More about this process can be found in Mary's

book or in *Japanese Ikat Weaving* (see Resources).

For Warp 1 (84 ends, including extras), measure 18 ends on the warping board and temporarily secure the working end of the yarn around the first peg to keep it under tension. Wrap a 4" ikat tape resist around these ends every 29 inches. (On my warping board, the wrapped sections sit directly above or below each other.)

Unwrap the working yarn from the first peg and wind 24 more ends. Secure the end of the working yarn again and then wrap a 3" resist around both the previously wrapped resists and the newly wound 24 ends, creating an extra layer of resist that is shorter than the previous wrap. Leave the previous layer's slipknot exposed. Repeat the 3" resist wrap on top of each of the 4" wraps.

Continue the same process with another 24 ends, this time using a 2" resist while leaving the previous slipknots exposed.

The final section in Warp 1 has 18 ends with a 1" resist over all previous resists. To finish off Warp 1, secure the cross and wrap a choke tie to form loops at the beginning and end of the warp. At this point, I'll sometimes add a narrow wrap that I can use as a registration mark over all the ends behind the cross if I'm interested in creating additional ikat shifts as I thread my loom.

You can take Warp 1 off the warping board, or push it back on the pegs to make room for Warp 2.

For Warp 2 (66 ends, including extras), tie 2" ikat tape wraps every 6 inches. Wind and wrap all ends at once.

Warp 3 (108 ends, including extras) has no ikat resists.

#### DYE PREPARATION

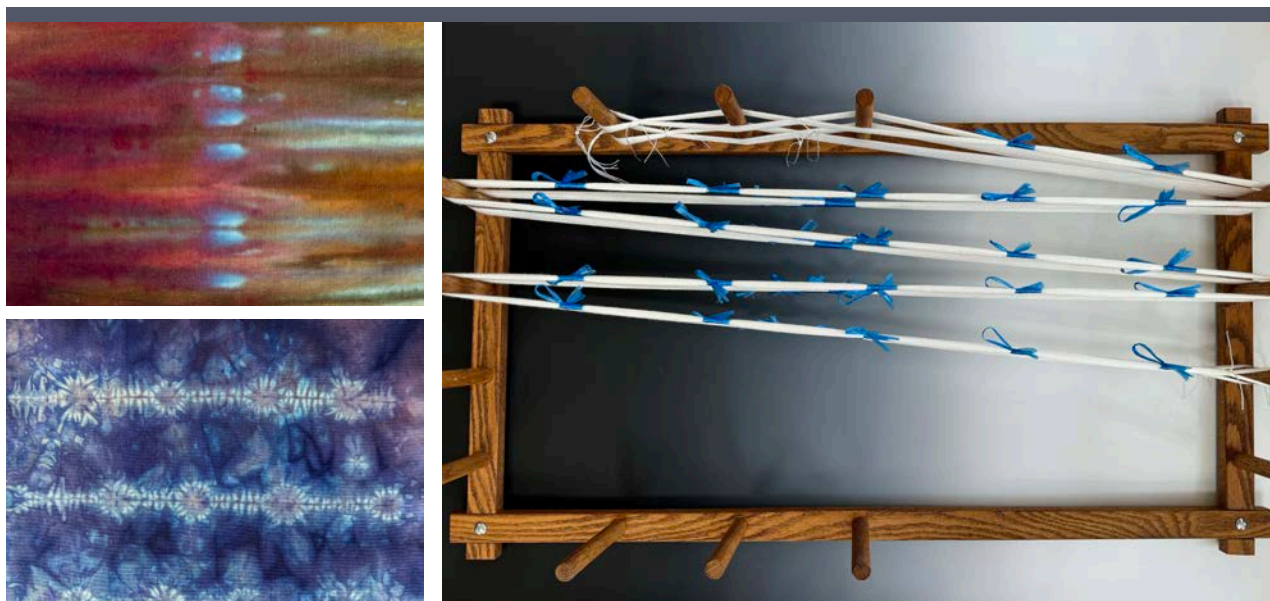
When preparing dyes, I mix small batches as I work, referring to my records of previous ice-dyed warps. Because some dyes split (separate into component colors—see photos

Soda ash helps fibers absorb dyes, giving you brighter, more colorfast results.

below) when they come in contact with ice, I do a lot of sampling to learn how dyes will react to ice. I use the results of these samples when choosing an ice-dye palette for a warp.

To determine how much of each dye I need, I use my records as a guide, along with a web tool by Dharma Trading Company that calculates the amount of dye needed based on how much fiber you're dyeing and what dye you're using (see Resources).

Soda ash helps fibers absorb dyes, giving you brighter, more colorfast results. For Tencel warps, I skip soaking the fiber in soda ash beforehand and instead mix the soda ash with the dye powder in a 3:1 ratio by volume. Refer to the chart on page 39 for dye mixture amounts needed for



*Left:* Some dyes split into component colors during ice dyeing. Natalie dyes reference samples such as these to learn about such splitting. *Right:* Two warps being measured out, with periodic bands of ikat tape.



*Left:* Warps 1 and 2 are snaked back and forth along the bottom of individual tubs. Ice is added to cover each warp, and then horizontal bands of each warp's dye mixtures are sprinkled over the ice. Often, the ikat tape wraps will align in the tub. *Right:* Warp 3 is dyed in a deep bin with loops of warp hanging vertically through the openings in a wire closet rack, and rubber baseboard is wrapped around the top edge to contain the ice. A small amount of the dye powder is sprinkled underneath the ice, with the rest of each mixture reserved and spread on top of it. Plastic clips on the edges of the bin mark boundaries for the dyes.

each warp. (Some dyeing processes use weight measurements, but I've found that volume works well for ice dyeing.)

For safety's sake, use equipment and tools that are reserved for dyeing only, and always wear a mask, gloves, and protective eyewear when mixing or applying dyes.

**DYEING THE IKAT WARPS**

I used two approaches to ice dyeing for this project. Warps 1 and 2, which both include ikat-resist tape ties, were dyed in separate tubs under a layer of ice, with bands of dye sprinkled over the ice. As the ice melts, the dyes settle onto the fiber, and the warps sit in the resulting soda ash and dye-water muck.

To begin, snake Warp 1 back and forth across the bottom of a 28-quart tub (see photo at left above). Use masking tape or plastic

clothespins on the edges of the tub to mark the ikat tape boundaries, and then cover the warp with two layers of ice (7 pounds or so). Spread the Bronze, Midnight Blue, Sky Blue, and Indigo Blue soda ash and dye mixtures in horizontal bands across the legs of the warp, making sure to avoid overlapping the dyes.

Using a separate tub, follow the same process with Warp 2 and its dye mixtures.

**DYEING THE COMPANION WARP**

Warp 3, which doesn't have any ikat-resist areas, is suspended in a deeper tub, with dye applied both underneath and above a layer of ice. This warp should not touch the bottom of the tub or sit in the melted ice and dye that collect there.

To prepare Warp 3, find its center and mark it with a plastic clothespin or clip. Set a wire closet rack

**DYE MIXTURES FOR EACH WARP**

**Ikat Warp 1**

	Dye	Soda ash
■ Indigo Blue	1 tsp	3 tsp
■ Sky Blue	1 tsp	3 tsp
■ Midnight Blue	½ tsp	1½ tsp
■ Bronze	½ tsp	1½ tsp

**Ikat Warp 2**

	Dye	Soda ash
■ Wand Wood	1½ tsp	4½ tsp
■ Strawberry Skies	½ tsp	1½ tsp
■ Mystic Blue	¼ tsp	¾ tsp
■ Alpine Blue	¼ tsp	¾ tsp
■ Indigo Blue	½ tsp	1½ tsp

**Companion Warp 3\***

	Dye	Soda ash
■ Strawberry Skies	1 tsp	3 tsp
■ Wand Wood and a dusting of Bronze	1 tsp	3 tsp
■ Mystic Blue	¾ tsp	2¼ tsp
■ Alpine Blue	¼ tsp	¾ tsp

\*Sprinkle a small amount of these dye mixtures on Warp 3 before adding ice. Reserve most of each to sprinkle over the ice.

Over the next 24 hours, the ice in all three bins will slowly melt, releasing water that will react with the dye and color the yarn.

across the top of a deep tub and snake loops of the warp through the rack's openings, skipping several openings between loops. Do not let the warp rest on the bottom. When you reach the clothespin at the midpoint, snake the rest of the warp back through the rack's openings to the beginning position.

In separate areas directly above the yarn, sprinkle small amounts of the mixtures of soda ash and dye (see photo at right on page 39). Reserve larger amounts of the dye mixtures for use on top of the ice. Mark the transitions between dye colors with clips. Dye coverage will be best at the top of the rack, and some of the powder will fall to the bottom of the tub.

Lay a window screen over the rack and yarn to keep the ice from falling through the setup. Wrap a length of 4-inch rubber baseboard around the edge of the tub to contain the ice, positioned so that when ice melts, it drips directly on the yarn.

Spread a 4- to 5-inch layer of ice evenly over the warp and sprinkle the remaining soda ash and dye powders over the top, following the color areas defined by the clips.

#### FINISHING THE DYE PROCESS

Over the next 24 hours, the ice in all three bins will slowly melt, releasing water that will react with the dye and color the yarn. The dyeing

time required for each setup depends on the amount of ice used, but when all the ice in a bin has melted, you can remove that warp.


At the end, if clumps of dye powder and soda ash are visible on the fiber (see photo below), you can irrigate the setups with hot water to dissolve and carry away the excess.

Rinse the warps one at a time in a sink with warm water to discharge excess dye. Follow up with rinses using hot water and Synthrapol until the water runs clear. Straighten the dyed warps as you would a dry warp—under tension! Hang each warp to dry unchained, or chain the warp and then use a spinner to remove excess water before hanging it to dry.

#### PLANNING TO WEAVE

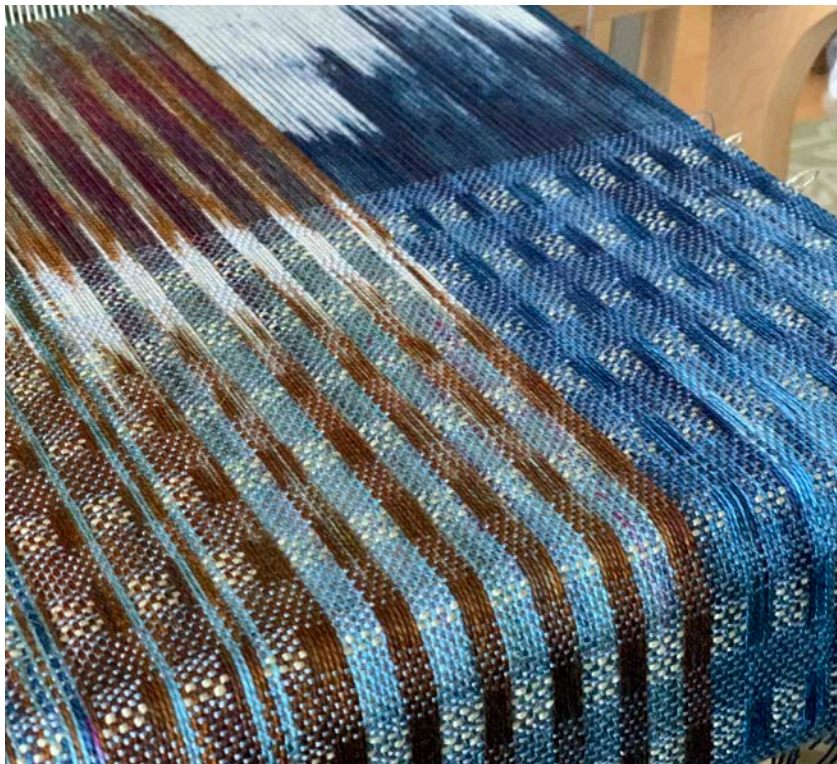
I dress the loom from front to back so I can design in the reed and adjust exactly where the warp ends fall if needed.

For these warps, I designed a draft to showcase the ikat and ice-dyed warps in plain weave along with warp and weft floats using woven shibori methods (see *Ikat and Ice Scarf*, page 42). The draft uses a 4-shaft deflected-doubleweave block threading and a monk's belt tie-up. One side alternates ikat Warp 2 with the companion Warp 3 for a striped effect. Ikat Warp 1 is on the other side.

The supplemental pattern weft is gathered before washing the woven cloth and then removed from the cloth after washing. This process creates open spaces in the woven cloth rather than permanent pleating. 



After dyeing but before rinsing, clumps of the soda ash/dye powder mixture are evident on this warp. You can rinse them off with hot water.



The shibori supplemental-weft picks (visible as light loops on the right edge) result in open lace-like areas in the final fabric of the scarf.

**RESOURCES**

Mary Zicafoose provides a thorough look at ikat in *Ikat: The Essential Handbook to Weaving Resist-Dyed Cloth* (Loveland, CO: Interweave, 2020).

Another good book about ikat is Jun and Noriko Tomita's *Japanese Ikat Weaving: The Techniques of Kasuri* (London: Routledge Kegan & Paul, 1982).

You can find the Fiber Reactive Dye Yields estimator tool at [dharmastrading.com/cgi-bin/procion\\_yields.cgi](http://dharmastrading.com/cgi-bin/procion_yields.cgi).

**NATALIE DRUMMOND** is an instructor, weaver, and dyer based in Fremont, Indiana. Her work can be found at the Orchard Gallery of Fine Art in Fort Wayne, Indiana.



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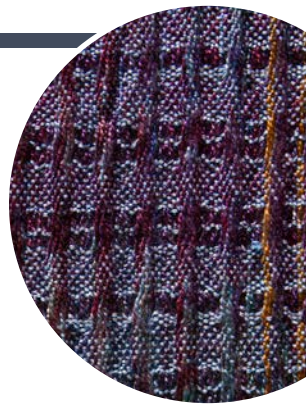
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# Ikat and Ice Scarf

NATALIE DRUMMOND



## STRUCTURE

Plain weave with floats.

## EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 12" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 5/2 Tencel (100% lyocell; 2,100 yd/lb; Shiny Dime Fibers), Undyed, 903 yd.

**Weft:** 60/2 silk (14,800 yd/lb; Valley Yarns), #655 Sepia and #644 Aqua, 420 yd each.

**Pattern weft:** 5/2 cotton (2,100 yd/lb; Valley Yarns), #1089 Alabaster, 90 yd. **Note:** Any light color may be used for the pattern weft.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Ikat tape (Maiwa); dyeing supplies including tubs/bins, closet rack, window screen, clothespins or clips, rubber baseboard, measuring tools, soda ash; Synthrapol; Fiber Reactive Procion Dyes (Dharma Trading Company), #26 Sky Blue, #27 Midnight Blue, #37 Bronze, #77 Alpine Blue, and #168 Indigo Blue; Fiber Reactive Dyes (Happy Cat Tie Dye), Wand Wood, Mystic Blue, and Strawberry Skies. See "Fun with Ikat and Ice Dyeing" on page 37 for dye amounts needed. **Note:** If the Happy Cat Tie Dye options are out of stock, Natalie suggests substituting Dharma #34 Rust Brown for Wand Wood, Dharma #153 Mermaid's Dream (T) in a light dye application for Mystic Blue, and #8132 Stormy Sky MX from PRO Chemical & Dye for Strawberry Skies.

## WARP LENGTH

222 ends 3 yd long (allows 8" for take-up, 26" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe). See additional info about warp length before dyeing in Natalie's article on page 37.

## SETTS

**Warp:** 20 epi (2/dent in a 10-dent reed).

**Weft:** 20 ppi.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 11 $\frac{1}{10}$ ".

**Woven length:** (measured under tension on the loom) 74".

**Finished size:** (after wet-finishing and hemming) 7" x 72" plus 4" fringe.

*When designing my scarf,* I wanted to combine three techniques I'm especially interested in: ikat, ice dyeing, and woven shibori.

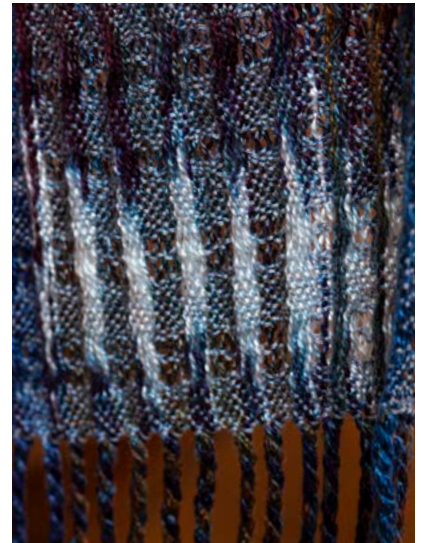
A workshop with Mary Zicafoose sparked my interest in weaving ikat. To create the ikat patterning in this scarf, I used tape from Maiwa to bind warp ends together before ice dyeing, protecting sections of the warp from the dye. For my scarf's design, these areas of resist were as important as the dyed portion of the warp.

I love ice dyeing because, as the ice slowly melts, the dye powder splits or separates into a variety of colors on the yarn. The three warps in this project are ice dyed separately, but all three have sections dyed with various blues and bronze to unify the final scarf. In some places on the scarf, you can't tell that the yarn was dyed in separate batches.

The woven shibori component came as an idea while weaving a 4-shaft deflected-doubleweave draft, which prompted the question, "What else can I do with this threading?" Catharine Ellis's *Woven Shibori* led me to consider a monk's belt draft that uses the same threading. While weaving a sample scarf, I discovered a treadling modification that produced plain weave with warp floats on the face of the cloth and plain weave with weft floats on the back. The yarn for

the supplemental pattern weft could then be gathered and tied, and the woven piece rinsed and steamed to further enhance the texture. After I removed the pattern weft, the sample ended up with open spaces, creating a lace-like appearance.

**I** Following the directions in "Fun with Ikat and Ice Dyeing" on page 37, wind three separate warps for the colorways shown in the warp color order, Figure 1. Wrap the two ikat warps with ikat tape as outlined in the article. Dye the three warps using the recommended color palettes and dye amounts on page 39 and then wash with Synthrapol until the water runs clear. **Note:** As the article indicates, you will wind and dye a few extra ends with each warp to use in case of broken warp threads.



**HEDDLE COUNT**

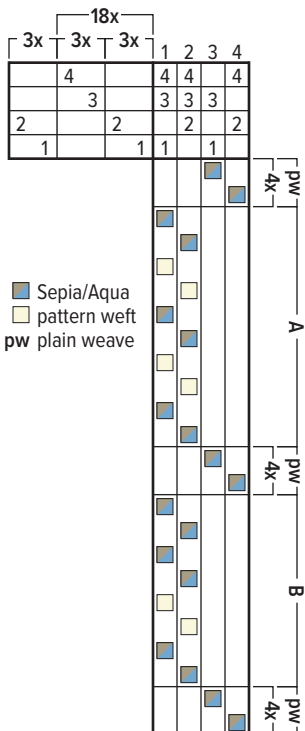
Shaft 4	54
Shaft 3	54
Shaft 2	57
Shaft 1	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>

**1. WARP COLOR ORDER**

	2x		5x		
72	30	6	6		
54		6	12	6	
96	6				90
<b>222 ends total</b>					

Ikat Warp 1: #168 Indigo Blue, #26 Sky Blue, #27 Midnight Blue, #37 Bronze  
 Ikat Warp 2: #168 Indigo Blue, #77 Alpine Blue, #37 Bronze, Wand Wood, Mystic Blue, Strawberry Skies  
 Companion Warp 3: #77 Alpine Blue, #37 Bronze, Wand Wood, Mystic Blue, Strawberry Skies

**2. DRAFT**



**2** Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the warp color order in Figure 1 and the draft in Figure 2. Natalie warps from front to back as she puts on the three warps one at a time. This method allows for the easy separation of Warp 3 and ikat Warp 2.


**3** Wind a bobbin, using the two colors of 60/2 silk held together. Wind another bobbin of 5/2 cotton. Spread the warp with scrap yarn.

**4** Weave following the draft in Figure 2 for about 74", following pattern blocks A or B in random order separated by 8-pick blocks of plain weave, and ending with plain weave. Avoid crossing your supplemental and ground weft

yarns. Leave the supplemental pattern weft loose at the selvages to reduce draw-in; it will be removed later.

**5** Leaving at least 8" for fringe on both ends, cut the fabric from the loom. Twist fringe using 2 groups of 6 ends in each fringe.

**6** Pull each loop of pattern weft along one selvage. Tie pattern threads in groups of 4 or 6 with an overhand knot. The woven cloth will compress to approximately 2" wide.

**7** Wash with Synthrapol in warm water and spin dry. Clip and remove pattern warp threads. Steam the finished scarf. Do not iron. 





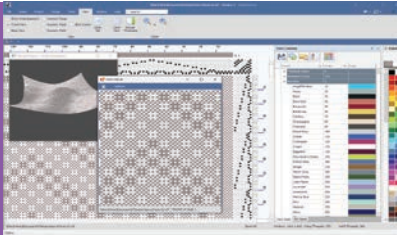
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# Op Art Table Linens

TIEN CHIU



## STRUCTURE

Doubleweave.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 14" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** Naturally Colored unmercerized 10/2 cotton (4,200 yd/lb; American Maid; Lunatic Fringe Yarns), Dark Green, 1,656 yd; Natural White, 1,296 yd.

**Weft:** Naturally Colored unmercerized 10/2 cotton, Dark Green, 1,227 yd; Natural White, 753 yd.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Raddle (optional); warping sticks. **Note:** Because the warp is beamed at two different densities (20 epi in the green edge sections and 40 epi in the green and white center sections), Tien recommends using warping sticks to evenly tension the warp. Paper separators are not stiff enough. See Weaving Tips for more about managing warp and cloth tension.

## WARP LENGTH

492 ends 6 yd long (allows 20" for take-up, 40" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 40 epi (20 epi per layer, 4/dent in a 10-dent reed); 20 epi in single-layer green edges (2/dent in a 10-dent reed).

**Weft:** 32 ppi where the layers are woven together; 40 ppi in white and green separated layers; 20 ppi in single-layer green hems.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 13<sup>8</sup>/<sub>10</sub>".

**Woven length:** (measured under tension on the loom) 156" (24<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" each placemat, 57" table runner).

**Finished size:** (after wet-finishing and hemming) four placemats, 11" × 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" each; one runner, 11" × 44".

*These table linens were inspired by the lovely scarves and shawls of Ruth Blau and Pat Stewart. Their work, on 24—or more—shafts, features separate layers of cloth at the selvages and intricate doubleweave center designs. I decided to see whether the same technique could be used with 8 shafts and discovered, to my delight, that it could!*

These placemats with matching table runner are woven in three blocks using a combination of doubleweave and single-layer cloth. One of the warps is narrower than the other, which enabled me to create a placemat with a two-layer doubleweave border on all four sides.

To give these table linens an understated elegance, I decided to make them using green American Maid naturally colored cotton yarn. This is cotton that is bred to produce color as it grows; the lovely color of the placemats is not dyed!

The magical part of naturally colored cotton is that the color is muted on the cone; to bring out the natural shade, the finished items must be scoured in very hot water with soda ash or baking soda. The result is nothing short of magical: a boring placemat design transforms into distinct blocks of creamy white and a beautiful shade of olive!

**1** Wind a warp of 492 ends 6 yd long following the warp color order in Figure 1. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 2. Centering for a weaving width of

13<sup>8</sup>/<sub>10</sub>", sley the solid green border at 2 per dent in a 10-dent reed, sley the center green and white section at 4 per dent, then sley the second solid green border section at 2 per dent. Beam the warp with warping sticks (see Weaving Tips).

**2** Wind a bobbin of Dark Green and a bobbin of Natural White. Spread the warp with scrap yarn.

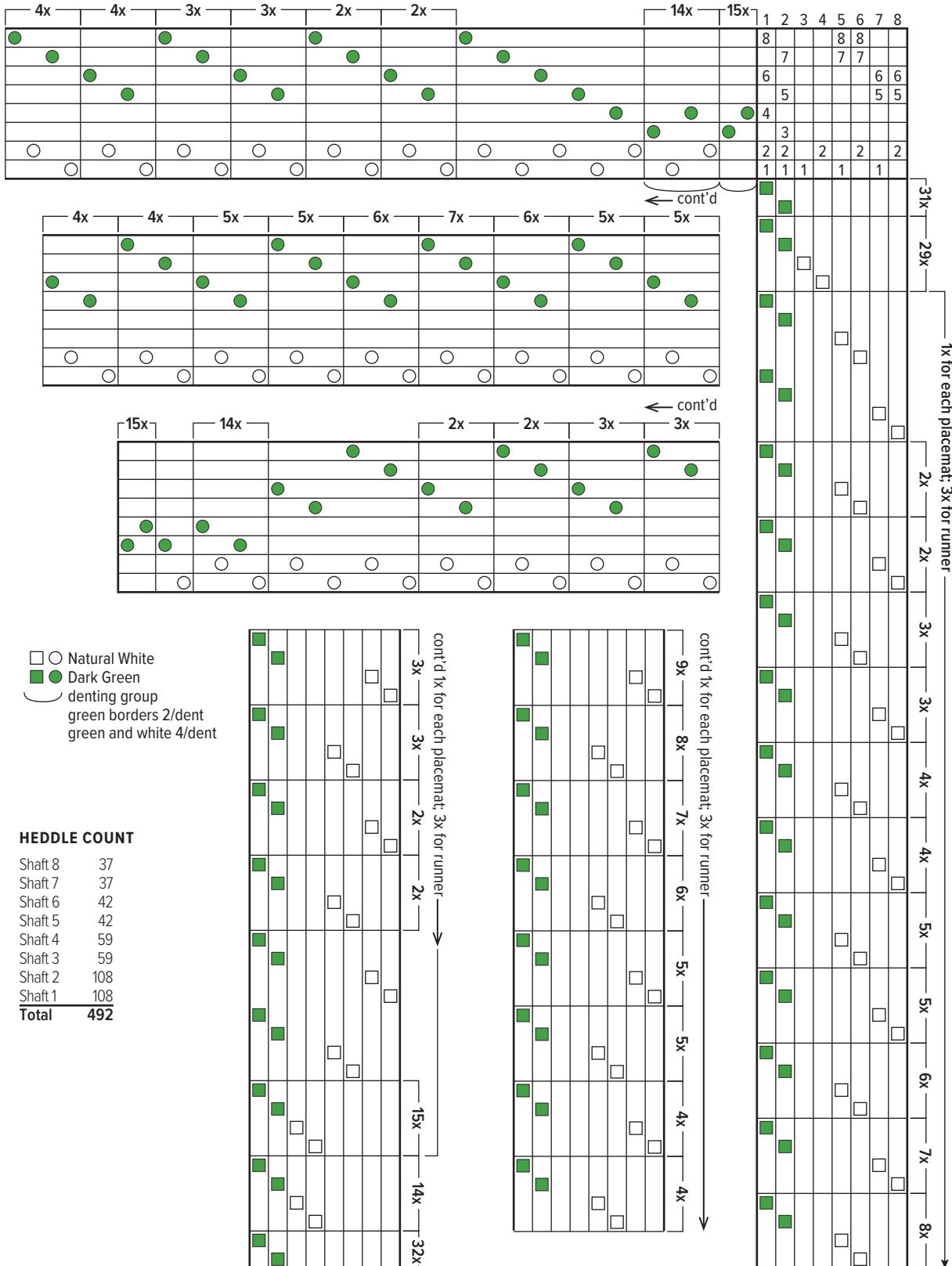
**3** Weave the first placemat following the draft in Figure 2. Weave a few picks of contrasting yarn for a cutting line, then weave the next three placemats and runner, continuing to follow Figure 2 and separating each item with scrap yarn. Note that the center motif is repeated three times for the runner.

**4** Weave a few picks of scrap yarn to protect the weft. Remove the fabric from the loom.

# 1. WARP COLOR ORDER

[216x]			
216	1	□	Natural White
276	30	1	30 ■ Dark Green
492 ends total			


# 2. DRAFT



## Weaving Tips

- If you're warping back to front on one beam, make sure when winding the warp to wind the 30 green ends at the beginning and end in raddle groups appropriate for 20 epi; wind the center 432 green and white ends in raddle groups appropriate for 40 epi. To prepare for beaming, place the first green bout in the raddle at 20 epi, then place the mixed white and green bouts in the raddle at 40 epi. Finally, place the second 30-thread green bout in the raddle at 20 epi.
- Beam your warp using a generous supply of warping sticks. Do not use paper or cardboard! Because the warp is winding on at two different densities, you need something stiff to keep the layers parallel at the edges.
- If you plan to weave more than one set of placemats at once, two warp beams will work better. Place the mixed green and white center section (sleyed at 40 epi) on one warp beam and the green-only border sections (sleyed at 20 epi) on a second warp beam.
- If the finished cloth is winding onto the cloth beam unevenly and causing tension problems, you can either cut off and retie between placemats or use warping sticks on the cloth beam to even out the tension.

**5** Wet-finish by washing in hot water with dishwashing liquid and enough baking soda to make the water feel slippery. Tien recommends boiling the water, removing it from the heat source, and allowing the water to cool just enough to safely put your hands in. Enjoy watching the color change in the water! Rinse well and press dry.

**6** Cut apart the items at the scrap yarn picks. Press the hems under and then hem the green and white ends of the placemats and table runner by hand. 

*TIEN CHIU teaches color in weaving at the Handweaving Academy, [handweavingacademy.com](http://handweavingacademy.com).*

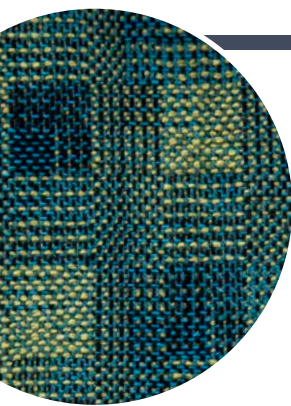
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# Concentric Squares Scarf

JEANNE RALSTON

## STRUCTURE

Doubleweave.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 13" weaving width; 8-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 10/2 pearl cotton (4,200 yd/lb; Valley Yarns; WEBS), #2746 Dark Teal, 711 yd; #8990 Black, 718 yd.

**Weft:** Zephyr 18/2 (50% merino wool/50% silk; 560 yd/50 g; Jagger Spun), Chartreuse, 550 yd. 16/2 unmercerized cotton (6,720 yd/lb; Maurice Brassard), #5029 Bleu Moyen, 550 yd.

## WARP LENGTH

408 ends 3½ yd long (includes floating selvages; allows 8" for take up, 32" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 32 epi (4/dent in an 8-dent reed).

**Weft:** 32 ppi.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 13".

**Woven length:** (measured under tension on the loom) 86".

**Finished size:** (after wet-finishing) 11" × 78" plus 5½" fringe.

A *MidAtlantic Fiber Association (MAFA)* class led by Denise Kovnat inspired this scarf. As we were weaving the final structure on our warps for echo weave and jin (an integrated doubleweave structure), Denise showed us an integrated doubleweave tie-up in Marian Stubenitsky's book *Weaving with Echo and Iris*. Once home, I was inspired to experiment with traditional doubleweave tie-ups and various threadings using Fiberworks software.

My Concentric Squares Scarf began with a checkerboard doubleweave tie-up. I then expanded a traditional doubleweave block threading (1-2-3-4 for block A, 5-6-7-8 for block B) to an advancing twill threading with repeats in the advance to allow for the formation of squares (for example, **1-2-3-4**, **1-2-3-4**, **1-2-3-4-5**, 2-3-4-5, 2-3-4-5, 2-3-4-5-6, 3-4-5-6, 3-4-5-6, 3-4-5-6-7, 4-5-6-7, 4-5-6-7, 4-5-6-7-8, **5-6-7-8**, **5-6-7-8**, **5-6-7-8-1**, etc.). The threaded areas in bold create doubleweave pockets, while the rest make up an integrated layer of cloth (interlacement) between the two layers.

When woven as shown in this project, the areas of doubleweave are small enough to not impact the cloth texture. You could alter the threading by repeating the sequences in bold to create larger areas of doubleweave in the fabric. This would create texture/dimpling in the cloth as it goes from two layers of cloth to one layer.

As I was designing this on Fiberworks, I also found that color was important for showing the halo effects emanating from the squares. Analogous blues created the halos and vibrating effect, but complementary colors seemed to dull and flatten the effect.

I urge you to explore other color combinations and different sizes of doubleweave pockets in your version of this scarf!

**1** Wind a warp of 406 ends 3½ yd long alternating the teal and black (203 ends each). (Jeanne held 1 teal and 1 black end together as she wound her warp.) Wind 2 extra ends of black to be used as floating selvages and set them aside. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 1. Centering for a weaving width of 13", sley 4 ends per dent in an 8-dent reed. Sley the floating selvages through empty dents on each side of the warp, and weight them over the back beam.

**2** Wind bobbins with each of the weft colors. Leaving at least 8" of unwoven warp for fringe, spread the warp with scrap yarn.

**3** Leaving a tail 1 yd long for hemstitching, weave 4 picks of plain weave, then begin the pattern treading for about 1". Use the tail to hemstitch in groups of 6 warp ends.

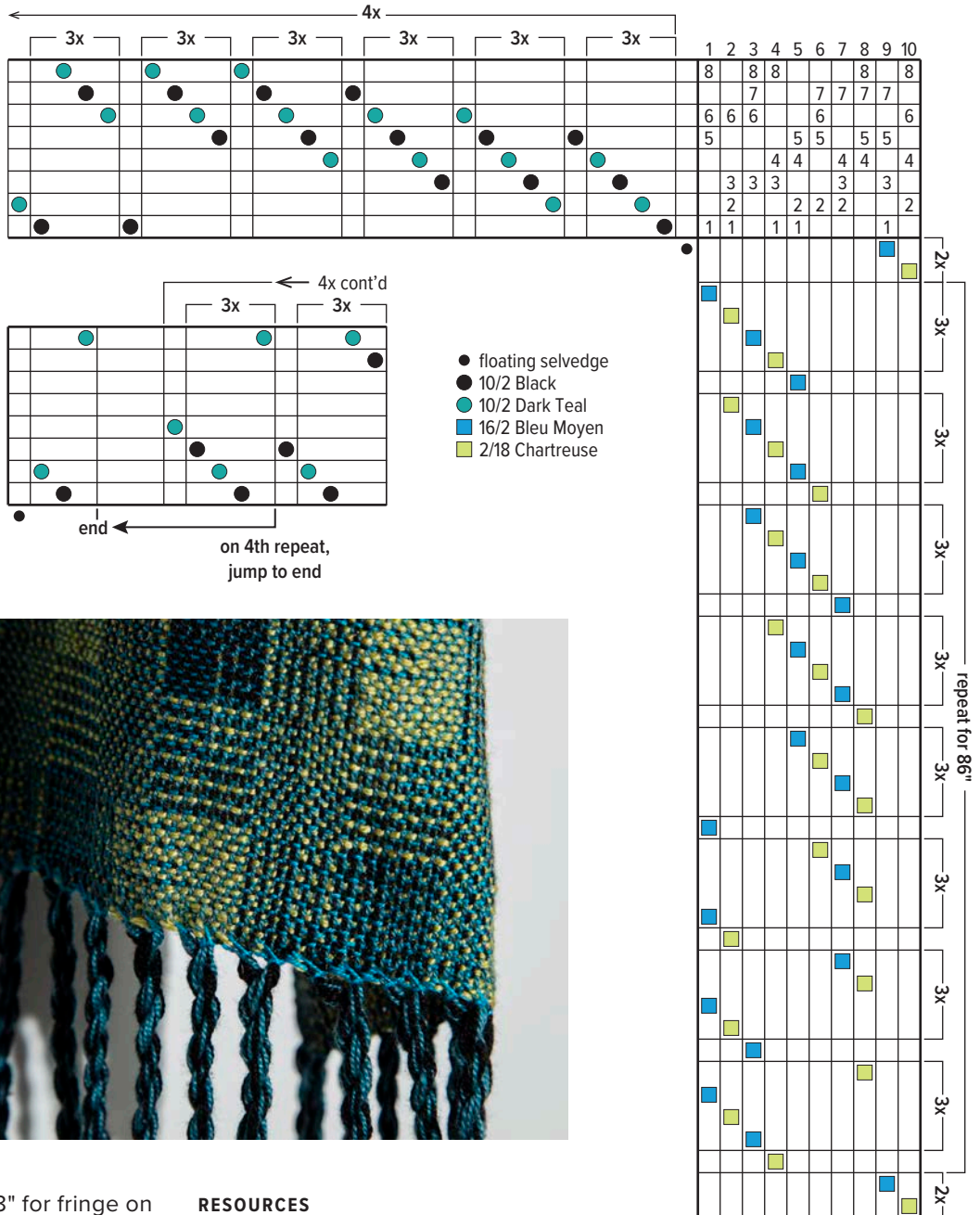
**4** Continue weaving, following the draft in Figure 1 for about 86". End with 4 picks of plain weave and hemstitch as you did at the beginning.



**HEDDLE COUNT**

Shaft 8	50
Shaft 7	52
Shaft 6	52
Shaft 5	52
Shaft 4	51
Shaft 3	49
Shaft 2	50
Shaft 1	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>406</b>

**1. DRAFT**



**5** Leaving at least 8" for fringe on both ends, cut the fabric from the loom. Prepare a twisted fringe using 2 hemstitched groups in each fringe.

**6** Wet-finish by handwashing in cold water with dish or wool detergent. Line-dry. ⇄

**RESOURCES**

Madelyn van der Hoogt's *The Complete Book of Drafting for Handweavers* gives a good overview of doubleweave (Coupeville, WA: Shuttle Craft Books, 2000).

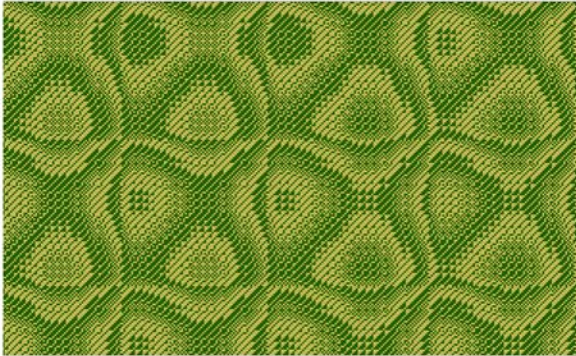
Read more about integrated doubleweave tie-ups in Marian Stubenitsky's *Weaving with Echo and Iris* (self-published, 2020).

*JEANNE RALSTON is a handweaver living in the southwest mountains of Virginia with her husband and her dog. Her woven pieces reflect her fascination with weave structures.*



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# Cascading Silk Blouse

DIANE G. CROWDER

## STRUCTURE

Advancing twill.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 30" weaving width; 8-dent reed; 1 shuttle.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 8/2 Cascade Silk (1,985 yd/lb; Henry's Attic; Yarn Barn), white, 1,410 yd.

**Weft:** 20/2 Tussah Silk (4,960 yd/lb; Henry's Attic; Dharma Trading Co.), semibleached, used doubled, 2,308 yd. **Trim:** 8/2 Cascade Silk, 16 yd for single-crochet edge; more for optional edging.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Sewing thread, matching and contrasting; crochet hook, size C-2/2.75 mm or size needed to work 8 sc/in.

## WARP LENGTH

470 ends 3 yd long (includes 2 floating selvedges; allows 8" for take-up, 20" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 16 epi (2/dent in an 8-dent reed)

**Weft:** 16 ppi.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ ".

**Woven length:** (measured under tension on the loom) 80".

**Finished size:** (after wet-finishing) body fabric, 24" × 58"; two sleeves, 24" × 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " each.

*For me, silk is the most exquisite (and comfortable) fiber.* So when I wanted to make a summer blouse, silk was the natural choice for warp and weft. Deciding on what kind of silk took some more thought, as I wanted Jean Hutchison's advancing-twill design (see Resources) to be the focal point. However, using a single color of yarn in warp and weft can obscure patterns in the weaving. While the sheen of silk creates some contrast, the effect is muted at a distance. I had done some spinning with wild tussah silk made from cocoons of uncultivated moths, which can range in color from nearly white to various shades of gold and brown. I thought a very light tussah might give just enough contrast with white silk to show off the weave pattern.

I already had some 20/2 tussah silk that was a pale gold, so I decided to use that doubled as weft, with white 8/2 silk as warp. The subtle difference in color made the advancing-twill pattern more visible.

For the shirt itself, I chose a simple crewneck T-shirt sewing pattern that required minimal cutting and made the fabric the focus. To finish, I added a single-crochet edging around the neckline and sleeves.

The final color reads as ecru at a distance, yet the silky sheen constantly shifts between white and warm off-white closer up. The overall effect reminds me of freshwater pearls. Using silk in natural colors to create an interesting fabric was a most satisfying aspect of the project.

**1** Wind a warp of 468 ends 3 yd long. Wind 2 additional ends to be used as floating selvedges, and set them aside. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 1.

Centering for a weaving width of 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ ", sley 2 per dent in an 8-dent reed. Sley the floating selvedges through empty dents on each side of the warp, and weight them over the back beam.

**2** Wind a bobbin with the 20/2 tussah silk doubled. Spread the warp with scrap yarn.

**3** Weave 2" in plain weave for the hem, then weave in pattern for 58" following the draft in Figure 1, followed by a second 2" plain-weave hem for a total of 62".

Insert a pick of waste yarn to mark the cutting line, then weave in pattern for



## 1. DRAFT

6x						2x		3x		3x		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
8	8												8	8	8				8	8	8	8
7	7	7		7								7	7	7				7	7	7	7	
6	6				6	6	6	6				6	6			6	6		6	6	6	
	5			5	5	5	5					5			5	5		5	5	5	5	
	4				4	4	4	4				4	4	4	4			4	4	4	4	
	3					3	3	3				3	3	3	3			3	3	3	3	
	2						2	2	2				2	2	2	2			2	2	2	2
	1							1	1				1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1

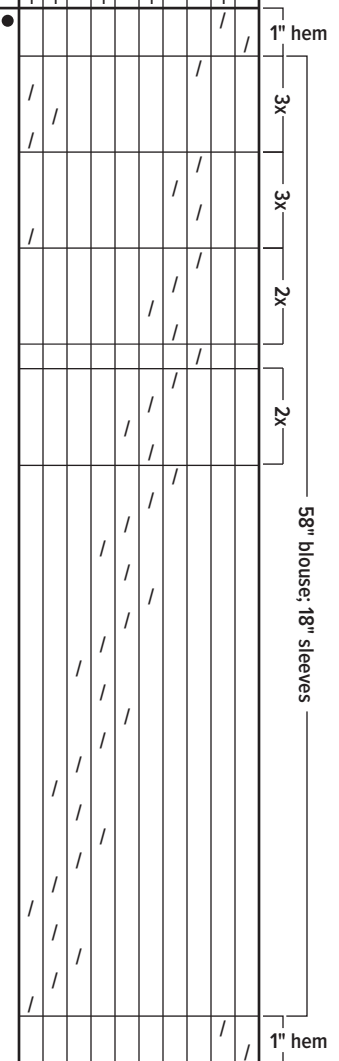
### HEDDLE COUNT

Shaft 8	36
Shaft 7	54
Shaft 6	60
Shaft 5	60
Shaft 4	66
Shaft 3	78
Shaft 2	72
Shaft 1	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>468</b>

← cont'd

	8				8	8	8	8															
	7					7	7	7	7														
	6		6	6	6	6	6																
	5			5	5	5	5																
	4		4																				
	3																						
	2						2	2	2														
	1							1	1														

● floating selvedge



another 18" for the sleeves, with a pick of waste yarn after 9" to mark the cutting line between the sleeves. Weave an inch of scrap yarn to protect the weft.

**4** Remove the fabric from the loom, and machine sew with straight stitch at the beginning and end of the garment fabric. Trim off loom waste.

**5** Wet-finish in tepid water and a few drops of Ivory dish detergent or shampoo. Let the fabric soak for 20 minutes. Rinse thoroughly, roll the fabric in a towel to remove excess water, and line-dry.

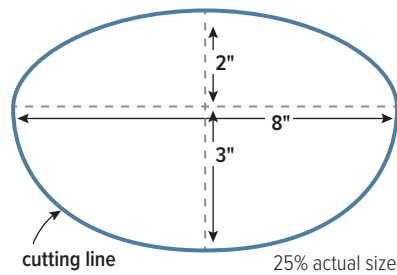
**6** Machine stitch on each side of the waste-yarn picks marking the ends of the body section and the two sleeves, cut, and finish all raw edges with zigzag stitching. You will have one long section of fabric

for the body and two short pieces for the sleeves. **Note:** Diane finishes raw edges with a line of straight stitching on each side of the waste yarn picks before cutting, followed by a line of zigzag on each cut edge to better control raveling.

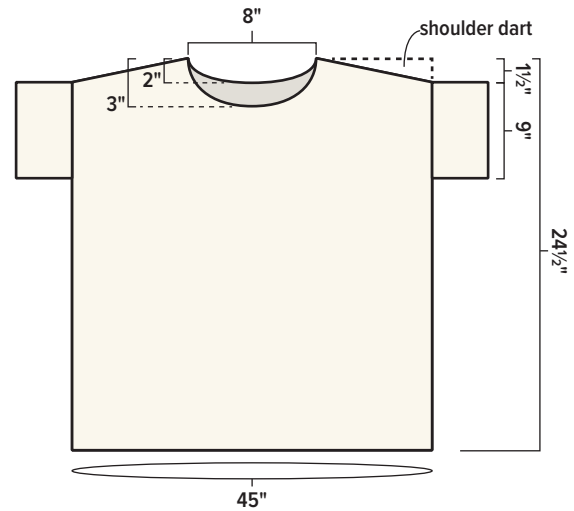
**7** With right sides together, fold the body section in half at the shoulder line, dividing the front and back. See Tips. Press the fold. Fold side to side to find the center back and front, and press to fold. Unfold the fabric. Make a paper pattern for the neck opening 8" side to side, 3" below the shoulder line in front, and 2" above in back (see Figure 2). Wind your sewing bobbin with thread that contrasts with your fabric. Pin or baste the pattern to the fabric, right side up, centered over the fold lines, and stitch carefully with a short straight stitch close to the paper. Turn the fabric

over and cut out the neckline close to your stitching. Replace sewing bobbin thread with matching thread, and zigzag stitch the raw edge. Turn under the raw edge  $\frac{1}{8}$ ", and sew along the fold with a straight stitch to make a base for crochet edging.

## 2. NECKLINE DETAIL



## 3. SCHEMATIC



### Tips

- See Figure 3 for a schematic of Diane's blouse and its dimensions. We recommend constructing a muslin of the blouse including sleeves before weaving and sewing the final garment, to confirm size information. Consider whether you need to adjust the warp size or woven length.
- Diane added darts following the natural slope of the shoulders to eliminate the "wings" that make many handwoven garments look boxy.
- Diane's blouse uses a very old construction method in which a single length of fabric drapes over the body, with a hole added for the head opening. As a result, the twill patterning on this blouse will face one direction on the front and the opposite direction on the back.
- After sewing the top, Diane decided to add a decorative shell and picot edging (see Resources) to the sleeves, picking up from the single-crochet edge. She used off-white silk yarn from her stash for this final edging.

**8** Refold the body section's shoulder line with right sides together. Beginning  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the neckline, pin a dart slanting from the fold to  $\frac{1}{2}$ " away from the fold at each side edge. Stitch the darts and press them toward the back. See Tips and Figure 3.

**9** Trim the sleeve widths to desired measurement. Diane's sleeves are 18" wide (plus 1" for a seam allowance), so she trimmed 5" from each 24" sleeve piece before sewing them into the body as follows. Placing the center of each sleeve at the dart with right sides together, stitch the sleeves to the body using a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance on the sleeves and a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance on the body selvedge. Press seams toward sleeves. At sleeve cuffs, turn under and stitch  $\frac{1}{8}$ " from edge for crochet base.

**10** With right sides together, seam blouse sides and sleeves using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Clip seams at the underarm corner and press open.

**11** To hem the blouse, with wrong side facing out, fold the bottom edge up  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and lightly press. Fold again to create a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hem and handstitch.

**12** With crochet hook and Cascade yarn, pick up and work single crochet around the neckline (starting at back center) and sleeve hems (starting at underarm) at about 8 sts/in. If desired, add optional sleeve edging (see Tips).

### RESOURCES

Diane used Jean Hutchison's draft for advancing twill from her project "Two Techniques for the Beginning Sewer" in *Handwoven*, May/June 2001, pp. 56–60. The optional sleeve edging is from Des Maunz's pattern "Quad Cluster Border." [ravelry.com/patterns/library/quad-cluster-border-w--picots](https://ravelry.com/patterns/library/quad-cluster-border-w--picots).

**DIANE G. CROWDER** has been weaving clothing, linens, and tapestries for more than 30 years. She lives with her partner and two cats at the Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri.

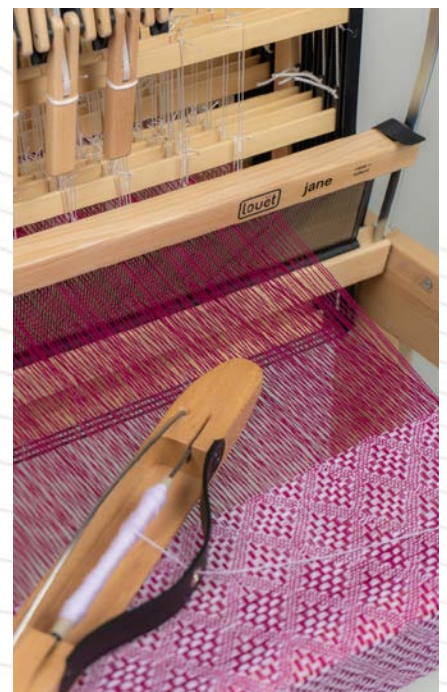
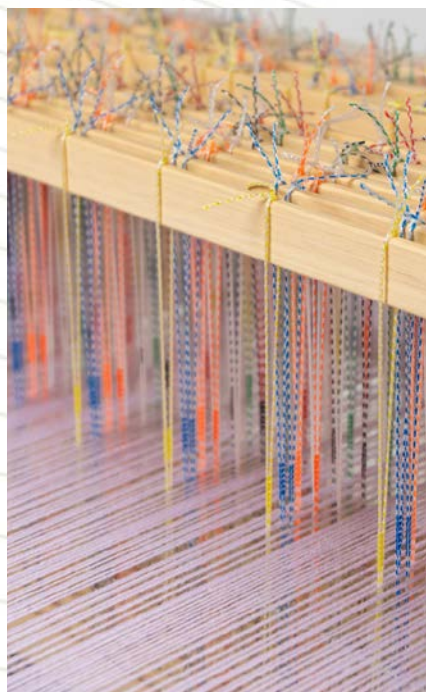
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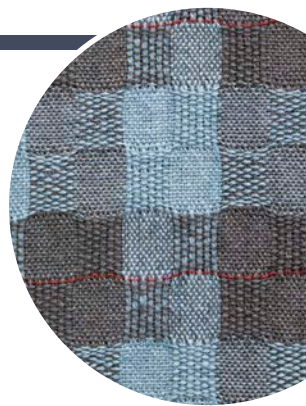






# Hargrove's Dinner Party

JOE WIXTED



## STRUCTURE

M's and O's.

## EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 18" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 3 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 8/2 cotton (3,360 yd/lb; Maurice Brassard), #101 Bianchi hand-dyed blue and #101 Bianchi hand-dyed gray, 1,944 yd each.

**Weft:** 8/2 cotton, #101 Bianchi hand-dyed blue, 1,600 yd; #101 Bianchi hand-dyed gray, 1,214 yd. 10/2 unmercerized white cotton (4,200 yd/lb; American Maid; Lunatic Fringe Yarns), hand-dyed red, 276 yd.

**Note:** All the yarns for this project were hand-dyed using natural dyes. See project intro below for more information. Good substitutes in commercially dyed yarns are 8/2 cotton (3,360 yd/lb; Maurice Brassard), #4274 Bleu Cobalt and #4275 Charcoal for the blue and gray, respectively, and 10/2 cotton (100% cotton; 4,200 yd/lb; Tubular Spectrum; Lunatic Fringe Yarns), #10 Red.

*As I weave, I enjoy thinking about the weavers who came before us. "Large Ms and Os" from John Hargrove's *The Weavers Draft Book and Clothiers Assistant* (published in 1792) is a simple draft that is still an enjoyable structure to weave in the twenty-first century.*

In my own act of homage, I wove a set of table linens with yarns dyed using eighteenth-century materials and methods. Logwood (produced from the heartwood of a tree native to southern Mexico and prized as a dyestuff since the sixteenth century) produced a purple or gray hue, indigo (in use as a dye since ancient times) provided the blues, and cochineal is responsible for the red accents. Cochineal is an insect native to the Americas that still gives us some of our modern red food dyes!

This project also demonstrates how small changes in your weft can alter the look of the fabric. I added a bright red accent pick between the blue and gray areas that make up most of the weft, just to see what would happen. You could even use multiple picks of red or a heavier weight of fiber to produce more clearly defined red ridges. As you weave this old pattern, please experiment as you think of the eighteenth-century weavers at their looms.

**I** Wind a warp of 432 ends 9 yd long by winding 12 alternating 36-end stripes of blue and gray. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 1. Centering for a weaving width of 18", sley 2 per dent in a 12-dent reed.

## WARP LENGTH

432 ends 9 yd long  
(allows 26" for take-up,  
34" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 24 epi (2/dent in  
a 12-dent reed).

**Weft:** about 21 ppi for  
the sections woven with  
8/2 cotton; about 24 ppi  
for those woven with  
10/2 cotton.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 18".

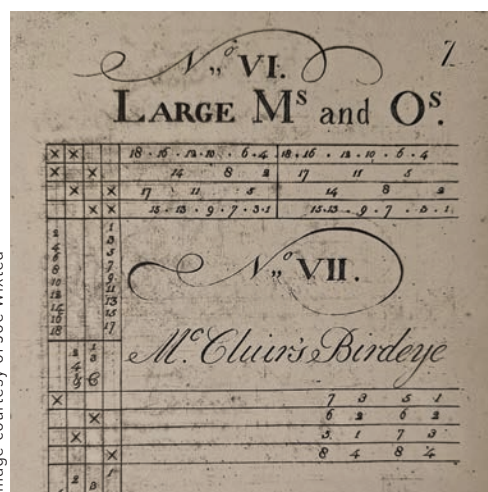
**Woven length:** (measured under tension on the loom) 264".

**Finished size:** (after hemming and wet-finishing) four napkins, 16" × 22" each; one napkin, 14" × 22"; and two runners, 16" × 70" each.

## Notes on Structure

Fabrics woven in M's and O's will shrink considerably in an uneven manner during wet-finishing, so the napkins in this project are woven as rectangles rather than squares.

Image courtesy of Joe Wixted



The original draft as published in John Hargrove's *The Weavers Draft Book and Clothiers Assistant*. Tom Knisely writes about how draft notations have changed over the years, as well as his process for interpreting old drafts such as this one, in *Notes from the Fell*, p. 14.



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# Interlocking Block Towels

REGINA MCINNES

## STRUCTURE

Summer and winter.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 20" weaving width; 14- or 12-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 28/1 line linen (100% linen; 7,342 yd/lb; Bockens), 1,704 yd.

**Background weft:** 28/1 line linen (100% linen; 7,342 yd/lb; Bockens), 448 yd.

**Pattern weft:** 22/2 cottolin (60% cotton/40% linen; 2,900 yd/lb; Venne), #4009 Gobelín and #5003 Peacock, 210 yd each.

**Note:** Regina used 28 Nel unbleached singles linen from her stash for the warp and background weft.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Cotton sewing thread for hems.

## WARP LENGTH

568 ends 3 yd long (allows 7" for take-up and 33" for loom waste for two towels; add 37" for each additional towel).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 28 epi (2/dent in a 14-dent reed or 2-2-3/dent in a 12-dent reed).

**Weft:** 20 ppi.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in reed:** 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".

**Woven length:** 68".

**Finished size:** two towels, 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 30" each.

*I'm always looking for ways to use some of my extensive stash of linen yarn. It is, however, tricky to use these cones in projects for Handwoven because I purchased a lot of it more than a decade ago—and it is not labeled. While researching similar yarns to suggest as substitutes, I've discovered the sheer number of yarns now available. Just as exciting, I find that the new yarns have better quality and consistency than the old ones.*

For this project, I struggled with my vintage singles linen yarn in the warp. It turned out to be rather hairy, which caused a lot of sticking during winding on and while weaving. If you'd like to try something other than the replacement singles warp yarn noted above, I suggest a fine unbleached double linen. I haven't tested this approach myself, but when combined with the thicker cottolin two-ply linen, it should give you a very similar result.

I was quite satisfied with the look and feel of the finished product. It is absorbent and surprisingly soft for a mostly linen cloth, and the summer and winter weave structure has loosened enough to achieve a soft hand.

The towels have the characteristic earthy background color of unbleached linen, and the blue patterning provides extra visual interest without taking over.

**1** Wind a warp of 568 ends 3 yd long. Warp your loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 1. Centering for a weaving width of 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", sley 2 per dent in a 14-dent reed or 2-2-3 per dent in a 12-dent reed.

### Notes on Structure

Four picks work together to form the summer and winter pattern. First, tie down shaft 1 with the pattern pick in a thicker yarn, followed by tabby 1 (shafts 1 and 2) with fine linen yarn; next, tie down shaft 2 with the same pattern pick in the thick yarn, followed by tabby 2 (shafts 3–8) in the fine yarn.

**2** Wind a bobbin with the background linen and another with the pattern cottolin. Spread the warp with scrap yarn.

**3** Weave 13 picks of plain weave with linen weft for the hem. Continue weaving, following the draft in Figure 1 for 8 repeats plus the balance, for about 32". End with 12 picks of plain weave in linen for the other hem.

**4** Weave a few picks with scrap yarn to separate, then repeat Step 3 for the second towel using the other pattern weft.





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# Alpaca in Your Lap Blanket

JEFF SMITH

## STRUCTURE

Twill.

## EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 37" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** Alpaca Fino (100% alpaca; 219 yd/100 g; AppleOak FibreWorks), Caramel, 1,085 yd.

**Weft:** Alpaca Fino, Caramel, 536 yd. Simply Alpaca Aran (100% alpaca; 246 yd/100 g; Knit Picks), Alton, 66 yd (see Weaving Tip).

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Temple (recommended).

## WARP LENGTH

434 ends 2½ yd long (includes floating selvedges; allows 5" for take-up, 30" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 12 epi (1/dent in a 12-dent reed).

**Weft:** 10 ppi.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 36¾".

### Woven length:

(measured under tension on the loom) 53".

**Finished size:** (after wet-finishing and hemming) 32" × 48" plus 6" fringe.

*My wife and I love to travel.* Not too long ago, we went to Peru to see Machu Picchu and the Andes. Beyond the beautiful scenery, what she loved most about the trip were the friendly alpacas. When we returned to our 60th-floor apartment overlooking the Brooklyn Bridge, she found that the winter winds made it too cold to nap in her chair by the window. So, I drew inspiration from the elevation-loving alpacas and wove a throw to keep her warm. I chose to celebrate the natural beauty of the animals she loved so much by using only undyed alpaca yarns.

There's a lot to love about alpaca yarn: it's light, soft, fuzzy, and beautiful, even in natural colors. But most of it is spun in a lofty, woolen style, intended for knitting. You can weave with lofty yarns such as this, but you'll need to be particularly careful in how you sley the reed, thread heddles, and advance the warp.

One of the choices to make in this relatively straightforward project is how to handle the pattern rows, which should be at least two threads thick. You can make two passes with a boat shuttle, or you can wind your weft double around a stick shuttle. You can even try plying together two lengths of pattern yarn to create a more distinctive textural stripe. Whatever approach you take, it's worth selecting two colors that contrast as much as my choices do, to highlight the pattern pick. And with the diverse shades that alpacas naturally grow, you have lots of gorgeous choices for your throw.

**1** Wind a warp of 434 ends 2½ yd long. Two of those ends will be used as floating selvedges. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 1. Centering for a weaving

## Weaving Tip

This project was designed using commonly available alpaca knitting yarns. These yarns are woolen-spun and quite lofty, which can cause challenges in some reeds. As an alternative, you can use a weaving-style alpaca yarn such as Galler Yarns' Heather Prime Alpaca (see Yarn Lab, p. 72) or Gist Yarn's Ode, but those options may change the hand of the resulting fabric.

width of 36¾", sley 1 per dent in a 12-dent reed. Sley the floating selvedges through empty dents on each side of the warp.

**2** Wind a bobbin with the Caramel weft. Wind a bobbin with Alton or wind a stick shuttle with a doubled strand. Leaving at least 6" of unwoven warp for fringe, spread the warp with scrap yarn.

**3** Using a length of Caramel 5 times the width of the warp, twine 1 row (see Figure 2). Then begin the pattern treadling in Caramel.





**4** For the darker patterning, weave 2 picks of Alton in the same shed (or weave 1 pick with a doubled strand of weft). **Note:** Because of the distance between pattern picks, Jeff recommends using separate lengths of yarn and tucking in the ends for each instance of pattern weft, rather than running the yarn up the selvages.

**5** Continue weaving following the draft in Figure 1 for about 53". End with 1 row of twining in Caramel, as you did at the beginning.

**6** Leaving at least 6" for fringe on both ends, remove the fabric from the loom. Knot each pair of warp ends with an overhand knot. Trim the fringe ends.

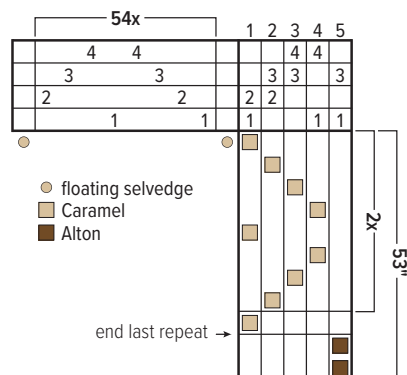
**7** Wet-finish in warm water by gently agitating and then leaving the throw to soak for 20 minutes. Lay flat to dry. ⇄

*JEFF SMITH is an artificial intelligence researcher and amateur shepherd. He weaves 800 feet in the air, overlooking Brooklyn.*

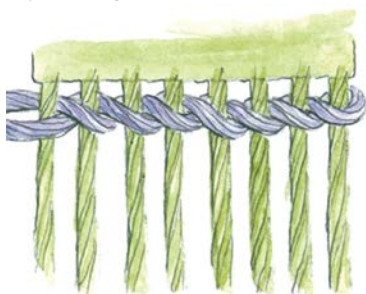
#### HEDDLE COUNT

Shaft 4	108
Shaft 3	108
Shaft 2	108
Shaft 1	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>

#### 1. DRAFT



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# Cozy Meets Functional: Heather Prime Alpaca

BY ANGELA K. SCHNEIDER



Photo courtesy of Galler Yarns

*“Prime” has several definitions. In the case of Galler Yarns’ Heather Prime Alpaca, it means first-rate or best quality. Soft, strong, and warm in rich, heathered colors, this yarn is a luxury.*

## THE YARN

**100% alpaca; 600 yd/8 oz hanks; Sunflower, Light Terracotta, Antique Rose, Dapple, Monet.**

Galler Yarns’ Heather Prime Alpaca is a smooth 3-ply 100% alpaca yarn. At 1,200 yards per pound and 16 wraps per inch, this fingering-weight yarn has just a hint of a soft halo and about 5% elasticity. The alpaca fiber used for Prime is dyed and blended before spinning, giving most of the

57 colors a heathered look. The results are colors that appear solid from afar but up close have more depth than a more uniformly dyed yarn. The range includes two true solids (the off-white Flurry and creamy Natural) and four marls in browns and blacks that have different-colored plies. Rich and earthy heathers fill out the line. I sampled five colors: Sunflower, Light Terracotta, Antique Rose,

Dapple (a cool gray), and Monet (a grayish blue with a hint of indigo).

The yarn comes in hefty 8-ounce (226-gram) hanks of 600 yards (549 meters) and requires winding into balls or cones before use. I found no slubs or knots in the five hanks I sampled. Winding was easy, but I had to split the large hanks into two balls on an average-size ball winder.

I finished the samples by gently handwashing in lukewarm water (except as noted), spinning out the water, and drying the pieces flat. The yarn blooms and softens with wet-finishing.

## Samples 1 and 2: Pin-loom plain weave, single and doubled yarn

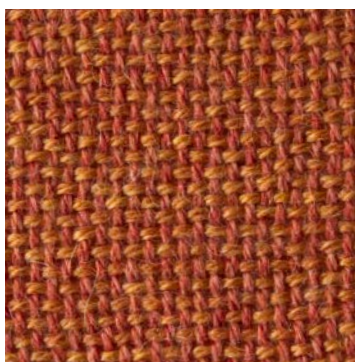
**Sample yarns:** Light Terracotta warp; Sunflower weft.

**Setts:** 8 epi, 8 ppi.

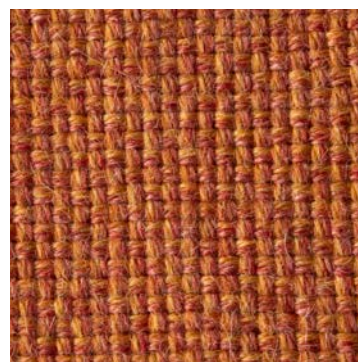
**Shrinkage:** 4% in width and length.

For the first sample, I grabbed a 6" square pin loom with a 3-pin configuration. See Jennifer Chapman’s Child’s Basketweave Capelet (Holiday 2021) or her Bauhaus Pillow (Winter 2024) in *Easy Weaving with Little Looms* for projects in this style. Weaving with a single strand of Heather Prime Alpaca is easy due to the elasticity of the yarn and the loose sett for this yarn weight. The fabric is soft and light, nice for delicate wearables, but it could snag or distort with rough handling.

Because 8 epi/ppi is a loose weave for this yarn weight, I also wove two samples with the yarn doubled. In one (not shown), I held the two yarns together, allowing them



Single yarn.



Doubled yarn.

to cross at will. In the sample shown here, I carefully wound the yarns side by side to prevent twisting, then I wove the last layer with each strand on its own weaving needle. Both samples have the same finished size. The cloth with the parallel yarns is effectively a basketweave at 16 epi/16 ppi. The two doubled-yarn swatches have almost the same feel, with a slightly stiffer cloth and flatter surface on the basketweave version. Both have a firm hand but are still soft and supple. These pin-loom squares would be perfect for joining and sculpting into a cuddly stuffed toy.

Photos by Matt Graves



Antique Rose/Light Terracotta on a rigid-heddle loom.



Monet/Dapple on a shaft loom.

### Sample 3: Plain weave

#### Rigid Heddle

*Sample yarns:* Antique Rose warp; Light Terracotta weft.

*Setts:* 10 epi, 10 ppi.

*Shrinkage:* Width, 4.6%; length 3%.

#### Shaft Loom

*Sample yarns:* Monet warp; Dapple weft.

*Setts:* Warp, 10 epi; weft, 11 ppi.

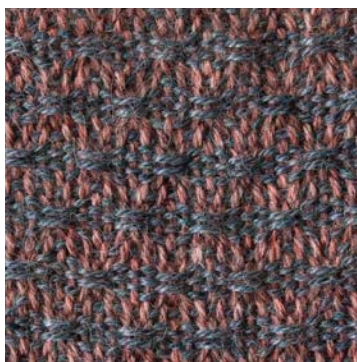
*Shrinkage:* Width, 3.4%; length, 6%.

I wove plain weave at 10 and 12.5 epi on a rigid-heddle loom. The elasticity of Heather Prime Alpaca works well with the rigid heddle, but abrasion from the heddle caused loose fibers to build up at the heddle holes. In the 12.5-dent heddle, this caused a sticky warp that occasionally required clearing the shed before throwing the shuttle. At 10 epi, there was less buildup of fiber at the heddle—enough to keep an eye on, but it didn't cause much trouble with the sheds. (There was no buildup of loose fiber at the heddles for the samples woven on a floor loom.)

The fabric at 12.5 epi was tight, causing the hairy alpaca to take on a rough feel. The 10 epi swatches from the rigid heddle and the shaft loom were just right—soft and supple, perfect for a scarf, lap blanket, or other light use.



Front.



Back.

### Sample 4: Rigid-heddle lace spots/warp floats

*Sample yarns:* Antique Rose warp; Monet weft.

*Setts:* 10 epi, 10 ppi.

*Shrinkage:* Width, 8.4%; length, 8.8%.

I used two pick-up sticks on the rigid-heddle loom to weave a pattern of warp-float lace spots at 10 and 12.5 epi. Once again, I preferred the 10 epi sample. The fabric is supple, with a raised texture from the floats. The yarn works easily with pick-up sticks.



### Sample 5: Rigid-heddle leno lace

*Sample yarns:* Antique Rose warp and weft.

*Setts:* 10 epi; 4 ppi in leno sections, 10 ppi in plain weave.

*Shrinkage:* Width, 4%; length, 10.7%.

For this sample, I wove bands of 1 x 1 and 2 x 2 cross leno separated by picks of plain weave. The warp was easy to manipulate into the crosses, and the fuzzy texture helps to hold the twisted warps in place. The yarn's halo softens but does not obscure the holes created by the leno. This is an excellent fabric for a warm but light shawl.



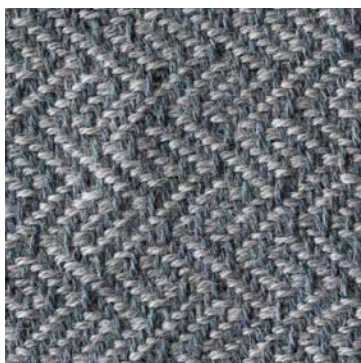
### Sample 6: Plain weave with deflected weft

*Sample yarns:* Antique Rose warp; Sunflower weft.

*Setts:* 10 epi; variable weft, average 7.5 ppi.

*Shrinkage:* Width, 4.1%; length, 8.7%.

Seeing how well Heather Prime Alpaca worked with the openwork of leno inspired me to try the next sample using a deflected weft. This sample is plain weave with the weft pressed into place with a wavy stick shuttle. With each pick, the shuttle moves over weft-wise a small amount to create the variation of tight and loose beat. The hairy surface of the yarn has enough grab to hold the undulating picks in place in a wavy pattern.



Unfulled.

### Sample 7: 8-shaft plaited twill

*Sample yarns:* Monet warp; Dapple weft.

*Setts:* 12 epi, 13 ppi.

*Shrinkage:* Width, 6¼%; length, 5.4%.

*Shrinkage after fulling:* Width, 18%; length, 14%.

I wove samples of 2/2 twill on an 8-shaft floor loom at 10, 12, and 15 epi. All are nice, with 12 being my favorite. This weight is ideal for scarves or other wearable accessories. The fabric is smooth with good definition of the twill pattern and a soft surface when wet-finished by gently handwashing and air-drying.

I wove an extra sample at 12 epi to throw in the washer and dryer with a load of laundry on the regular cycles. The alpaca swatch fullled, shrinking more in both directions and thickening to ¼". Fulling raised a deep nap on the cloth surface that feels wonderfully furry but obscures the twill pattern. If I were planning a fullled project, I'd machine wash but air-dry; the fabric was nicely fullled but retained better pattern definition and drape before tumble drying. The partially fullled fabric would make a heavy lap blanket or a comfortable chair pad for a naked weaving bench.



Fullled.



### Sample 8: 8-shaft 1/3 and 3/1 twill blocks

**Sample yarns:** Monet warp;  
Light Terracotta weft.

**Setts:** 12 epi, 13 ppi.

**Shrinkage:** Width, 7.1%; length, 11.9%.

**Setts:** 15 epi, 16 ppi.

**Shrinkage:** Width, 6.3%; length, 8.3%.

Next, I wove a twill swatch in 1/3 and 3/1 twill blocks in two setts. The unbalanced twill has a textured surface, with the Light Terracotta weft raised against the Monet warp. The fabric is appealing at both densities. At 12 epi (shown here), it is ideal for a warm, squishy scarf. At 15 epi, it is just right for sturdier use and would make a robust and stylish vest or jacket.



Front.



Back.

### Sample 9: Taqueté/4-end block weave

**Sample yarns:** Maysville 8/4 cotton carpet warp, ivory; Heather Prime Alpaca, Monet and Dapple wefts.

**Setts:** 10 epi, 96 ppi.


**Shrinkage:** Width, 6.3%; length, 1%.

For my final sample, I threaded an 8-shaft table loom with 8/4 cotton carpet warp and wove 4-end block weave with two weft colors. I packed the weft as densely as I could, and the softly spun yarn compressed to a whopping 96 ppi. The resulting fabric has crisp pattern definition and a very firm, fuzzy surface. Supple it is not; instead, it is very sturdy and thick. Rugs are not the first thing I think of when considering alpaca, but this weave would be the height of luxury underfoot.

Adding an 8/4 cotton tabby pick between the pairs of pattern weft turns this weave into polychrome summer and winter (not shown) at 34 ppi (about 11 tabby and 22 pattern). The alpaca creates a plush raised texture against the firm carpet-warp ground and is worth trying with other choices of tabby yarns.

#### FINAL THOUGHTS

Heather Prime Alpaca is an excellent choice for soft and warm wearables and comforting household décor such as blankets, pillows, or even rugs. Easy handling and a rich color range add to this yarn's appeal for designing a variety of projects. Multicraft practitioners will also appreciate its smooth

handling on the knitting needles and pleasant feel in knitted cloth. It works equally well in a range of fabrics from loose openwork to very dense, solid cloth. Next time you're looking for a yarn with softness, strength, and versatility, give Heather Prime Alpaca a try. 

**ANGELA K. SCHNEIDER** is the project editor for *Handwoven*. She enjoys weaving on all looms, with all weave structures, and following the ideas suggested by the cloth. Visit her online at [angelak.schneider.com](http://angelak.schneider.com).

## PROJECT DIRECTORY

Designer/Weaver	Project	Page	Structure	Shafts	Levels
Allen, Malynda	Celebration Romper*	77	Plain weave and M's and O's	8	AB, I, A
Chiu, Tien	Op Art Table Linens	46	Doubleweave	8	I, A
Crowder, Diane G.	Cascading Silk Blouse	54	Advancing twill	8	AB, I, A
Drummond, Natalie	Ikat and Ice Scarf	42	Plain weave with floats	4	I, A
Frisino, Tegan	Inspired by Indigo Pillows*	77	Overshot	4	AB, I, A
Lynde, Robin	Perpetual Pinwheels	34	Color-and-weave	8	AB, I, A
McInnes, Regina	Interlocking Block Towels	64	Summer and winter	8	AB, I, A
Ralston, Jeanne	Concentric Squares Scarf	50	Doubleweave	8	I, A
Smith, Jeff	Alpaca in Your Lap Blanket	68	Twill	4	All levels
Smith, Melanie	Natural Charm Dish Towels*	77	Twill	RH or 3	All levels
White, Cheryl	Bluebird Towels	22	Overshot	4	AB, I, A
Wixted, Joe	Hargrove's Dinner Party	60	M's and O's	4	AB, I, A

Levels indicate weaving skills, not sewing skills. AB = Advanced Beginner, I = Intermediate, A = Advanced. "All levels" includes very new weavers. RH = Rigid Heddle. \*This is a subscriber-exclusive project; see page 77 for more details.

## YARN SUPPLIERS

**AppleOak FibreWorks**, appleoakfibreworks.com (J. Smith 68).

**Comfortcloth Weaving**, comfortclothweaving.com (Frisino 77).

**Dharma Trading Co.**, dharmatrading.com (Crowder 54).

**Eugene Textile Center**, eugenetextilecenter.com (Allen 77, McInnes 64, Ralston 50).

**Georgia Yarn Company**, gayarn.com (White 22).

**Knit Picks**, knitpicks.com (J. Smith 68).

**Lone Star Loom Room**, lonestarloomroom.com (McInnes 64).

**Lunatic Fringe**, lunaticfringeyarns.com (Chiu 46, M. Smith 77, Wixted 60).

**Meridian Jacobs**, meridianjacobs.com (Lynde 34).

**Shiny Dime Fibers**, shinydimefibers.com (Drummond 42).

**WEBS**, yarn.com (Drummond 42, Ralston 50).

**The Woolery**, woolery.com (Wixted 60).

**Yarn Barn of Kansas**, yarnbarn-ks.com (Crowder 54, Ralston 50, M. Smith 77).

## FINISHING TECHNIQUES

**Twisting (or plying) the fringe**

Divide the number of threads for each fringe into two groups. Twist each group clockwise until it kinks. Bring both groups together and allow them to twist around each other counterclockwise (or twist in that direction). Secure the ends with an overhand knot. (Use the same method to make a plied cord by attaching one end to a stationary object.)

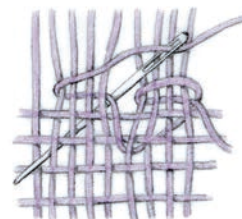
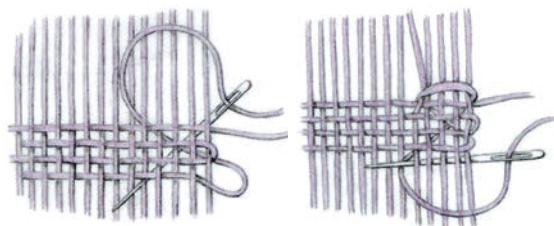
**Double (Italian) hemstitching**

Weave several picks of plain weave (or the basic structure of the piece), ending with the shuttle on the right side if you are right-handed, the left side if you are left-handed. Measure a length of weft four times the warp width, cut, and thread this tail into a blunt tapestry needle. Take the needle under a selected group of warp threads above the fell and bring the needle back to encircle the ends. Next, pass the needle under the same ends but come up two or more weft rows down from the fell. Then bring the needle back around the same group of ends below the fell. Repeat, encircling the next group of ends.

**Simple hemstitching**

Weave several picks of plain weave (or the basic structure of the piece), ending with the shuttle on the right side if you are right-handed, the left side if you are left-handed. Measure a length of weft three times the warp width and cut, leaving the measured length as a tail. Thread the tail into a blunt tapestry needle.

Take the needle under a selected group of ends above the fell and bring it up and back to the starting point, encircling the same group of ends. Pass the needle under the same group, bringing it out through the weaving two (or more) weft threads below the fell. Repeat for each group of ends across the fell. Needle-weave the tail into the selvedge and trim.







1

## Bonus Projects for *Handwoven* Subscribers

If you enjoyed this issue, head over to the *Handwoven* website for even more projects! Get your downloads now at [LT.Media/HWWI2024-Extras](https://LT.Media/HWWI2024-Extras).

### 1. Celebration Romper

MALYNDA ALLEN

The idea of making a special outfit for a new baby from handwoven fabric appealed to designer Malynnda Allen, who loves to weave and sew. This sweet romper is just right for a christening or wedding, or any other dress-up event.



2

### 2. Inspired by Indigo Pillows

TEGAN FRISINO

Lounge in style with this pair of lumbar pillows featuring designer Tegan Frisino's modern take on overshot. Her inspiration came from the process of indigo dyeing—the surface of an indigo vat ripples gently as fiber is lifted out of it, and that fiber dramatically changes color from green to deep blue as it's exposed to oxygen.

### 3. Natural Charm Dish Towels

MELANIE SMITH

The challenge: Create the look of 4-shaft twills using a rigid-heddle loom with an extra heddle—no fussy pick-up sticks required. After experimenting with threadings and treadlings, designer Melanie Smith wound up with four towel designs that only appear complicated. Her project also includes instructions for weaving them on a 3-shaft loom.



3



Web projects for *Handwoven* Winter 2024 can be found at [LT.Media/HWWI2024-Extras](https://LT.Media/HWWI2024-Extras).

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www.ceceswool.com

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### Fiber Kingdom

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fiberkingdom.com

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spinningroom.net

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Studio 256

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Studio256.online



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our mailing address:  
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(919) 260-9725  
[yadkinvalleyfibercenter.org](http://yadkinvalleyfibercenter.org)  
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**Little Hawk Yarns**  
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Roseburg, OR 97470  
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[www.littlehawk yarns.com](http://www.littlehawk yarns.com)

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Twist Knitting & Spinning**  
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Lahaska, PA 18938  
(215) 794-3020  
[twistknittingandspinning.com](http://twistknittingandspinning.com)

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**LoftyFiber**  
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864-810-4747  
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## TENNESSEE

**Smoky Mountain Spinnery**  
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**Sunshine Weaving and Fiber Arts**  
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615-440-2558  
[sunshineweaving.com](http://sunshineweaving.com)

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**Yarnivore**  
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San Antonio, TX 78231  
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[yarnivoresa.net](http://yarnivoresa.net)

## UTAH

**Needlepoint Joint**  
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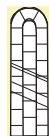
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**Icon Fiber Arts**  
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**Fiber Garden**  
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[grumpyginger.com.au/](http://grumpyginger.com.au/)

## CANADA



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+81-(0)86-995-9988  
[kakara-woolworks.com](http://kakara-woolworks.com)

## UNITED KINGDOM

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[www.georgeweil.com](http://www.georgeweil.com)

## Radical Weavers Limited

82 Murray Place  
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+44 1786 450416  
[radicalweavers.org](http://radicalweavers.org)

## The Handweavers Studio and Gallery

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[handweavers.co.uk](http://handweavers.co.uk)

## Weft Blown Ltd

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[info@weftblown.com](mailto:info@weftblown.com)

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# 'It was like calling an old friend and asking for a recipe'

*After asking you to share your experiences with Deborah Chandler's book *Learning to Weave*, we realized that this iconic resource was a vital part of so many weaving journeys. A small selection of your responses is printed here. Many thanks to all who took the time to write.*

—Handwoven editors

In 1994, my first loom came with Deborah's book. That particular loom was not for me, but I kept the book.

Last weekend, my husband said that we hadn't used the table loom in ages and asked for help getting a warp on it. Of course, weaving is like any other skill—set it down too long, and your brain gets fuzzy about how it all works. I will admit that I made a mess of it. But we made it through two scarves, and I wound another warp. At the same time, I pulled out Deborah's book and was able to remedy where I went wrong the first time.

Sure, there are internet tutorials, but because I'd learned to weave using Deborah's book, I knew that's where I would find the answers I needed. It was like calling an old friend and asking for a recipe.

—Holly Dumont

I wanted to learn to spin and weave when I was a young teen, but the teachers thought I didn't have the

attention span. It's been over 30 years now, and while I don't weave every day, it's still an important creative outlet for me.

Anyway, shout-out to Maggie Casey, who taught me to spin on her own time, and to the guy at the shop who let me rent a loom and a videotape of lessons, and to the group of ladies who were happy to include a teenager in their guild.

Who first suggested that I get *Learning to Weave*—the guy at the shop? Maggie? I don't remember, but it has been with me from the beginning. I could look at the instructions, scribble notes in the margins, and make progress on my own.

I *still* have that copy, and I *still* reference it! The warp calculations are invaluable, and it's always great to have reminders of the next step on hand.

Thanks so much, Deborah. You made a difference in a young teen's life!

—Loretta Armstrong

I'm a beginning weaver, and I came across this book by accident after purchasing my first floor loom.

I can tell you I use it every day! I wound my first solo warp a few weeks ago and kept the book by my side the whole time. And when I had my first crossed threads (one in the reed and one in the heddles), Deb helped me fix those as well!

—Terri Osborne

Your notes, love letters all, came in a great variety—short and long, from a similarly great variety of new and long-time-at-it weavers in the United States and abroad. I feel truly honored to have accompanied you on your paths to the joy that weaving brings (along with the frustration and hair-tearing-out parts that also come at times!).

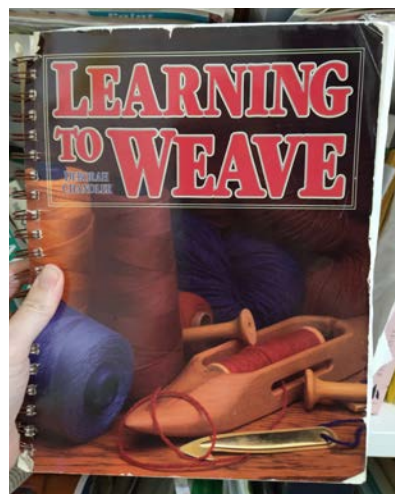


Photo courtesy of Loretta Armstrong

Loretta Armstrong still refers to her well-used copy of *Learning to Weave* when she needs a reminder of what to do next.

For those of you who said that you refer back to the book for reminders even many years in, I want to tell you that I do, too. For a few years, I was barely weaving. When I began again, two things surprised me the most—one was what my brain had forgotten, and the other was what my hands remembered. It was a common and wonderful experience to get to a point where I needed to remember what to do next, and while I was sitting there contemplating, my hands suddenly just went ahead and did it. Talk about muscle memory!

I recall a student I had many years ago. She said she planned to weave when she grew old so figured she'd better learn while she was young. That way when her short-term memory faded, she would retain weaving skills in her long-term memory. I admired her planning ahead.

Thanks again for writing and for weaving. I truly believe that weavers are the best people and make the world a better place.

Warmly,

—Deborah Chandler