



Beautiful Hand Woven Rugs:
Three Free Rug Patterns Plus Tips and Tricks for Successful Rug Weaving

WEAVING TODAY™

A Boundweave Rug

Slow weaving but soooo satisfying!

by Tom Knisely

Weavers who like weaving (as opposed to counting heddles, drafting, planning, ordering yarn, and warping) will love boundweave. Every part of the project goes quickly except the weaving. It's like taking a month for a vacation instead of a weekend—you can savor instead of rush.



From *Handwoven*, November/December 2010; pp. 34-35.

Many of us follow daily schedules that leave very little time for weaving, so we look for projects we can complete in the little free time we have. Here is a different way to look at time.

Warping the loom for weft-faced rugs is very fast. It's

the weaving that takes time, but it's the weaving that brings great satisfaction. Whenever you have a moment, you can spend it joyfully at your loom (no thinking or planning, only the rhythm of weaving, the feel of the weft, watching the growing pattern).

1 Wind a warp of 212 ends 2¼ yd long and prepare the loom using your preferred method following Figure 1. (See Project at a Glance on the next page for yarn information.) Centering for a width of 26¾", sley 3 ends in the first dent, *skip a dent, then sley 2 ends in the next dent. Repeat from *, ending with 3 ends in the last dent. (The ends in each dent go through a single heddle.) The floating selvages are wound separately and not beamed: Wind 8 ends 4 yd long. Place 4 ends in a separate dent on each side and weight heavily (I use C-clamps).

2 For each of the four weft colors, wind 2 strands together on the shuttle (wind from two ½ lb tubes). Allowing 12" for fringe, spread the warp with scrap yarn. Beginning and ending with 4 picks plain weave in Dark Brown, weave the rug following Figure 1, bubbling the weft as shown in Photo a and using a temple (stretcher) to prevent draw-in (see Tips). End with scrap yarn to prevent raveling.

3 Remove the rug from the loom. Prepare a Damascus edge on both ends of the rug as in Photo b, removing scrap yarn as you go. Then prepare a twisted fringe of 4 ends/fringe; secure with an overhand knot. Block and press the rug with hot iron and damp pressing cloth.

1. Weft-faced twill on a rosepath threading

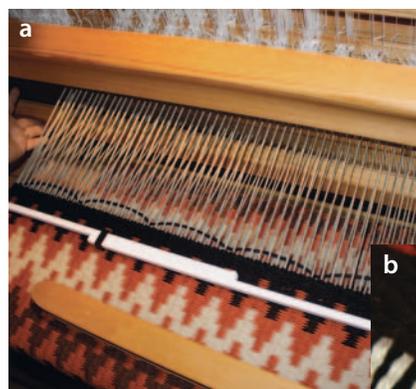
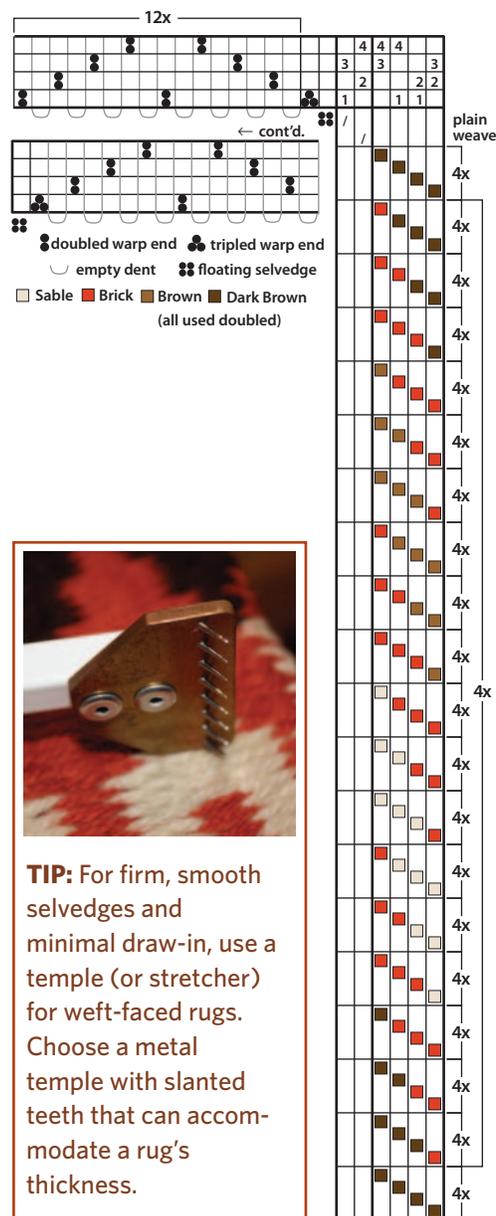
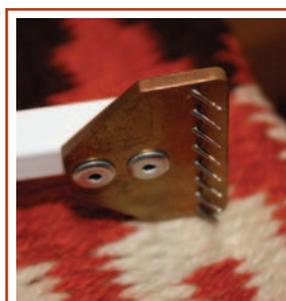


Photo a. Bubbling the weft to accommodate weft take-up.
Photo b. Working a Damascus edge before twisting.



TIP: For firm, smooth selvages and minimal draw-in, use a temple (or stretcher) for weft-faced rugs. Choose a metal temple with slanted teeth that can accommodate a rug's thickness.

PROJECT at-a-glance

Weave structure for rug

Weft-faced twill.

Equipment

4-shaft loom, 27" weaving width; 8-dent reed;
 4 ski or rug shuttles; metal temple.

Yarns

Warp: 8/5 linen rug warp, used doubled (500 yd/lb, The Mannings), natural, 513 yd.

Weft: 3-ply rug wool used doubled (578 yd/lb, The Mannings), Dark Brown, 380 yd; Brick, 975 yd; Brown and Sable, 325 yd each. (This yarn comes on ½ lb tubes.)

Warp order and length

212 ends 2¼ yd long (allows 4" for take-up, 35" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe). 8 ends 4 yd long for floating selvages.

Setts

Warp: 4 doubled epi (1 doubled end alternating with an empty dent in an 8-dent reed; first and last ends are tripled, floating selvages are quadrupled).

Weft: 28 doubled ppi.

Dimensions

Width in the reed: 26⅞". Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 42". Finished size after blocking: 24½" × 40" plus 6" fringe.

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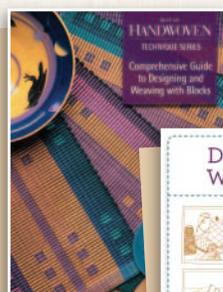


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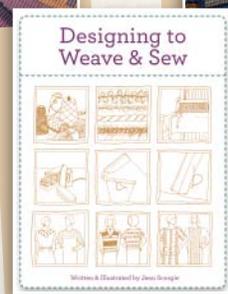
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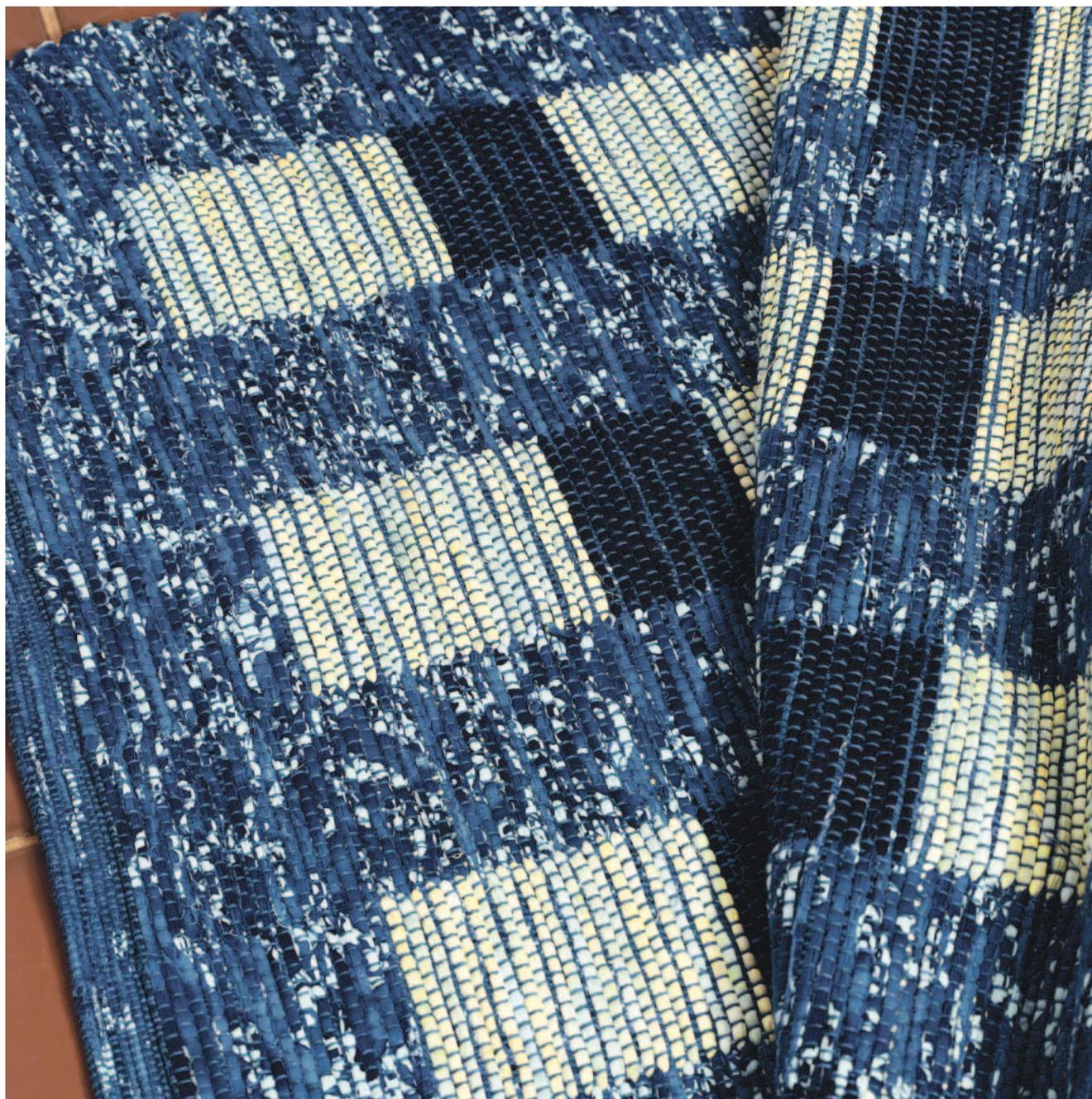
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Indonesian batik and a Swedish technique

by Debra Sharpee



From *Handwoven*, September/October 2008; pp. 34-36.

Weaving is a mostly solitary occupation, but we all use the ideas, materials, and techniques of weavers from around the world and across time. Indigo is one of the oldest dyestuffs, found in fabrics from uncounted cultures. The batik fabric that is cut into strips for the weft in this rug was dyed with indigo (batik is a dye technique used in many parts of Africa and Asia). When we weave, we are connected to weavers, spinners, and dyers everywhere.

The advantage to using a batik fabric for a rag weft is that in batiks, the dye is evenly distributed on both sides of the cloth. Since there is no “wrong” side, you do not have to worry about placing a batik rag weft carefully in the shed. Commercial batiks like the one used in this rug are available from quilting and fabric stores.

Resources

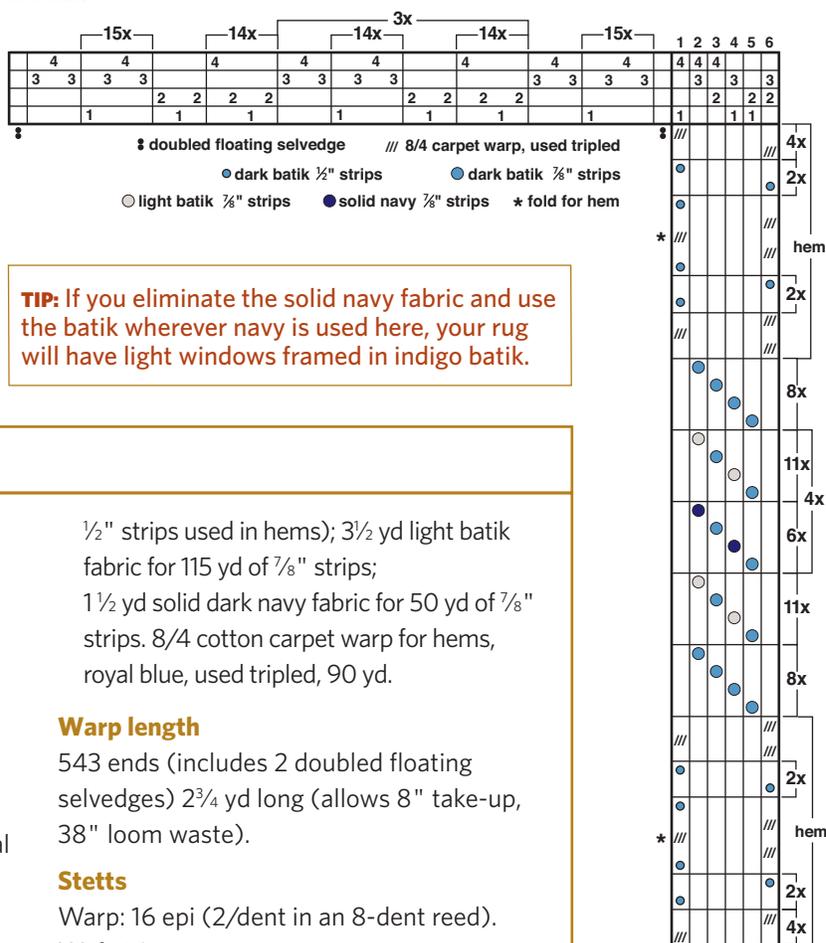
Krook, Inge. “From Rags to Riches.” *Handwoven*, May/June, 1983, pp. 32–37. 



Double Binding

The weave structure, usually called “double binding”, probably originated in Sweden. It is a 2-block, complementary-weft weave, threaded differently but behaving just like taqueté. In each block, one of two wefts appears on the face, the other on the back. The wefts can be the same or different colors; the colors are reversed on the back.

1. Draft



TIP: If you eliminate the solid navy fabric and use the batik wherever navy is used here, your rug will have light windows framed in indigo batik.

PROJECT at-a-glance

Weave structure

Double binding, a complementary weft structure (variation of taqueté).

Equipment

4-shaft loom, 34" weaving width; 8-dent reed; 2 rag shuttles, 1 boat shuttle for hems.

Yarns

Warp: 8/4 cotton carpet warp (1,680 yd/lb, Maysville, Great Northern Weaving), royal blue, 1,494 yd.

Weft: sheeting-weight fabric 44" wide: 6 yd dark batik for 251 yd of 7/8" strips (includes

1/2" strips used in hems); 3/2 yd light batik fabric for 115 yd of 7/8" strips; 1 1/2 yd solid dark navy fabric for 50 yd of 7/8" strips. 8/4 cotton carpet warp for hems, royal blue, used tripled, 90 yd.

Warp length

543 ends (includes 2 doubled floating selvedges) 2 3/4 yd long (allows 8" take-up, 38" loom waste).

Stetts

Warp: 16 epi (2/dent in an 8-dent reed).
Weft: 10 ppi.



- 1** Thread the loom following Figure 1 using your preferred warping method. Cut the fabric for the weft lengthwise into strips $\frac{7}{8}$ " wide. Trim off $\frac{3}{8}$ " from 21 yd of a $\frac{7}{8}$ " wide dark batik strip to make $\frac{1}{2}$ " strips for hems. Wind a bobbin with royal blue carpet warp and a rag shuttle with about 10 yd of the $\frac{1}{2}$ " strips.
- 2** Alternating treadles 1 and 6, weave a few picks in scrap yarn to spread the warp. Then weave the hem with the tripled carpet warp (make three passes of the shuttle through the same shed, taking the weft around the floating selvages to prevent unweaving) and the dark batik $\frac{1}{2}$ " strips as indicated in Figure 1. After completing the hem section, run a line of white glue along the first 2 picks and allow the glue to dry. (The glued picks will be enclosed in the hem.)
- 3** Wind the $\frac{7}{8}$ " strips of the dark batik fabric onto one rag shuttle and wind the other two colors onto the other rag shuttle as you need them. The two shuttles will alternate throughout. Weave the body of the rug

following Figure 1, beating firmly. To secure each weft in place: Throw the shuttle, keep the shed open, and beat. Press the beater firmly against the fell to lock the weft in place as you open the shed for the next pick. This technique will make a tightly woven rug without a lot of wear and tear on you or your loom. The batik fabric is similar enough on both sides that you do not need to worry about keeping the "right" side up in the shed—allow the fabric to twist as it goes in. End the rug with the second hem and spread glue on the last 2 picks as at the beginning.

- 4** Carefully cut the rug from the loom and machine zigzag raw edges. At each end: fold up the 8-pick section of tripled carpet warp and then fold again on the pick marked with an asterisk in the treadling. With an upholstery needle threaded with carpet warp, sew the start of the rug to the edge of the tripled rug warp by catching alternate warp threads from the hem and the start of the rug. 

After the rug workshop

by Martha Stanley

You're just home from the rug workshop, full of ideas and ready to weave your first rug. Stimulating images seem to be whirling around each other, colliding like bumper cars at a carnival. They are more like the noise from a crowd than a chorus in thrilling harmony. They're causing confusion, not focus. What to do? What to do!

Let's see if we can sort things out a bit. Some ideas can be put aside for a later project; still, too many seem too good. We want *everything* in this rug.

Weeding creative ideas

The process is a little like clearing out an old flower bed. The weeds are easy to eliminate—the dead things go, of course. But how do we deal with perennials which need pruning (some we did not really like anyway!) or volunteer annual seedlings?

We have to examine our responses to each. Which perennials do we consistently take better care of, add to bouquets of flowers, look at first as we emerge from the house? Which annuals remain the height we desire in that spot and spark the colors of their neighbors? In gardening, we discard many plants to retain those we care about and that harmonize with their neighbors by height, color, scent, texture You get the idea.

As new rug weavers, we need to start with tangibles, be they yarns, weave structures, textures, colors, shapes. Ideas can too easily become amorphous and escape their boundaries—that can come later.

Choosing a structure

How do you choose which of the rugs you admired in the workshop (or in *Handwoven*) to weave? You want to weave one of each! Practicality might dictate here: the amount of yarn you have in the number of colors

required, the number of shafts on your loom, the durability requirements of where the rug will go. Take a closer look at the examples. Which do you like best visually and texturally? Which of the samples that you tried in the workshop was most pleasurable to weave? Sometimes the best weaving we do in a sampler indicates what our bodies enjoy doing most. That is the place to begin.

Most people acknowledge that color is very subjective. I would extend this subjective quality to weave structures. When you find a weave you really like doing, be grateful. That is when your best work generally happens. Work with it until you have nothing more to say.

Think about scale

It is tempting to try to enlarge a successful sample into a full-sized rug. Everything is in such balance in the sample: the scale of the motifs is just right; the texture is distinct; the cloth is solid and firmly woven! When you expand the elements of a sample to a piece several feet wide, it is tempting to increase the number of repeats instead of enlarging the size of the motifs. A horizontal line of motifs in a sample suddenly looks like a stripe in the piece. A distinctive motif loses its discreteness.

The firmness of a sample can become diluted by beating with similar force over so much more width of warp. Either the cloth will be much less dense, or you will have to beat much harder. (That's why rug weavers weight their beaters.)

Simply adding to the width and weaving for a longer distance does not transform a great sample into a great rug. The sampler made a statement. The rug, too, needs to make a statement. It will be viewed from a greater distance, not while held in the hand.

From *Handwoven*, November/December 2001; pp. 36-37.



Clasped-hook slit wedge-weave rug,
4' x 6'



Tapestry-weave rug, 4' x 5'



Slit wedge-weave rug, 72'' x 46''

Learn about yourself

In the beginning, we don't know how we like to weave rugs yet. We may not know

- if we prefer selvedge-to-selvedge shuttle-throwing or working locally as is done with tapestry-type rugs
- if we are best at designing in advance or spontaneously as we go
- what subtleties in the cloth we like to look at while we weave
- what weaving speed our mind likes to be creative at (if the cloth is way ahead of the mind, that's a problem)
- how involved the hands want to be with the threads
- where the potential for surprise is for us, so we don't get bored with the cloth while we weave it.

Whether the first rug is enormously successful or awkward and mundane, it is only a starting point

for what lies ahead as we discover more about how we work. As we learn more about ourselves and our process, the cloth only gets better. We may not end up taking the path we planned, but it will be a better path, more personal, with more integrity, depth, and interest. The cloth becomes us—and we become the cloth.

I began as a production rug weaver. Peter Collingwood's *The Techniques of Rug Weaving* had just come out and he spoke *my* language. He was a production rug weaver—so naturally, that defined my path. He was caught up in shaft-switched rugs—that was for me too! I wove many shaft-switched rugs over the next three to four years, and then I found myself reflecting a bit on my process.

It took Collingwood two to three days to weave a 3' x 5' rug. It took me five days to weave a 32" x 5" rug. When I'd finish a rug, even though I had planned the design for the next one and had the colors already chosen, somehow I could not start the new one for several more days. It didn't just take loom time to weave a rug, it also took digesting or recovery time afterward. So I had to acknowledge that a rug did not

take me five days to weave, but maybe as many as ten. This fact shocked me. One of the benefits of shaft-switching was supposed to be that it was so quick!

I was also becoming aware that even after these three or four years of weaving shaft-switched rugs, my designs for them were not improving much. Maybe shaft switching was not “my” technique.

I started to wonder what would happen if I worked in other techniques, ones that took as long as my shaft-switching investment of ten days or even longer. Would there still be a gap between the end of one rug and the start of the next? The can of worms was open!

After exploring a number of other techniques with fairly ordinary results, I discovered something while rereading *The Techniques of Rug Weaving*. I did not react the same way to all the techniques. Each one, as I read about it, captured my intellectual attention as

I tried to understand it. But some also made my fingers start to tingle with eagerness. More of me than just my mind became involved as I read about them. They seemed to be calling me.

I now know that a technique in a sense chooses me, not the reverse. When one keeps hanging around my thoughts and does not go away, I need to try it. I’ve spent at least several years working with some techniques before we are done with each other. The rugs seem to get better as I continue exploring, learning how to show off better the special nuances of the technique. They become part of its signature, and its foibles become its assets.

Time working in the same technique is always well spent. It teaches me as I push it in newer directions, trying to get closer to the core of what it can really do. Look carefully for the parts of weaving that are trying to choose you. 



The image features a colorful woven rug with stripes of blue, purple, green, and orange. In the foreground, a white, textured rug border is visible. A magazine cover for 'HANDWOVEN' is placed on the left side of the rug. The cover has the title 'HANDWOVEN' in large white letters, the subtitle 'Say it with CLOTH' in yellow, and '10 SPECIAL PROJECTS' in orange. It also lists 'Celebrate', 'Communicate', and 'Commemorate' as project themes. A blue circular badge says 'STASH to SHROUD Page 61'. A yellow banner at the top right says 'LOOM Buyer's Guide BONUS'. The website 'www.rugtoday.com' is at the bottom.

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Getting Started with Warp Rep

by Tom Knisely



From *Handwoven*, January/February 2006; pp. 56-58.

Our word “rep” comes from the Swedish term “rip,” which describes the horizontal ridges produced in a cloth with a very closely sett warp and a thick weft. In addition to a delightfully smooth ribbed texture, through the use of color rep can produce a richly patterned cloth on as few as four shafts. This rug is a great project for teaching a beginner the joys of warp rep.

The structure of warp rep is plain weave. The pattern potential comes from the way colors are used in the warp. Two colors are threaded alternately on a pair of shafts. When one shaft is raised for a very thick weft and the other for a very thin weft, the color covering the thick weft shows on the face of the cloth. If the shaft order is reversed, the other color shows on the face.

Four blocks can be woven on four shafts. Although they can be any contrasting colors, if we call them dark (D) and light (L): in Block A, shaft 1 is threaded D, shaft 3L; B = 2D, 4L; C = 3D, 1L; D = 4D, 2L. Since they share shafts, Block C always weaves

dark when A weaves light and vice versa; D weaves dark when B weaves light and vice versa. The two alternating colors can change across the warp, however (the light colors change in this rug), to increase design complexity.

Yarns and setts for rep rugs

To determine the sett for a particular fiber, wind it around a ruler. The number of wraps in one inch is the sett to use for rep since the weft will be completely covered by the warp just like the ruler. Cotton carpet warp is a good choice for a first project: it is easy to use, produces a rug with a sturdy texture, and comes in many colors.

Densely sett warp threads can stick to each other and make it difficult to open a shed. Countermarch and counterbalance looms work best since they pull the threads apart. Jack looms used for rep must have shafts that are heavy enough not to float up with the threads on the raised shafts.

PROJECT at-a-glance

Weave structure for rugs

Warp rep.

Equipment

4-shaft loom, 30" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 1 boat shuttle, 1 rug or ski shuttle.

Yarns

Warp: 8/4 cotton carpet warp (1,680 yd/lb), Forest Green, 1,302 yd (122/5 oz); Gold, 378 yd (33/5 oz); KY Cardinal, 336 yd (31/5 oz); Burnt Orange and Copper, 252 yd (22/5 oz) each.

Weft: 8/4 cotton carpet warp (1,680 yd/lb), Forest Green, 390 yd (33/4 oz). Mop cotton (420 yd/lb), dark green, 165 yd (1 lb, 10 oz) or 8 strands of 8/2 cotton, bundled (3,360 yd/lb), dark green, 1,320 yd before bundling (1/3 lb).

Yarn sources

8/4 cotton carpet warp and mop cotton are available from The Mannings.

Warp order and length

720 ends 3½ yd long following Figure 2 (allows 15" for about 20% take-up and 37" for loom waste and sampling).

Warp and weft spacing

Warp: 24 epi (2/dent in a 12-dent reed). Width in the reed: 30".

Weft: 6 ppi (3 thin, 3 thick). Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 72".

Finished dimensions

Amounts produce one hemmed rug 30" × 58" including hems.

