

Bamboo Baby Blankets

in monk's belt

ROBIN LYNDE

Discovering a new yarn is like making a new friend. One of the first things I discovered about Bambu, a line of bamboo yarns, is how soft it is. When a friend requested a special blanket for her new great-nephew, I decided that weaving a bamboo baby blanket would be a perfect role for my new yarn friend. I designed the blanket using two colors of blue for her boy and then wove a second blanket in two hues of raspberry. Bambu comes in a wide range of colors—choose any pair for a baby blanket. Or what about a soft throw for a sunroom couch?

Bamboo is an ideal fiber for a baby blanket because no pesticides or fertilizers are used in its production. It's also breathable, warm yet lightweight, and easily laundered.

The yarn is available in two sizes: Bambu 12, with more than thirty-five colors, is slightly finer than 10/2 cotton. Bambu 7 is the same grist as 5/2 cotton and is available in over ninety-eight colors.

The draft and the yarns

A Handweaver's Pattern Book, by Marguerite Davison (see Resources) is one of my favorite sources for 4-shaft patterns. For the blankets, I adapted her Large Monk's Belt pattern.

Monk's belt relies on a tabby weft to form a plain-weave ground cloth while allowing a supplementary pattern weft to float over several threads to create the design. Bambu 12 works well for the warp and tabby weft because its appropriate sett of 30 ends per inch prevents the pattern-weft floats from being so long that they are impractical for a baby blanket. At three

times the thickness of Bambu 12, Bambu 7 is the perfect size for the pattern weft (this is similar to the relationship between 10/2 pearl cotton for warp and tabby weft and 3/2 pearl cotton for pattern weft).

Each blanket uses two different values of the same hue. One color is used when Block A forms the largest block in a checkerboard arrangement of the blocks, the other color when Block B is the largest block. The treadling in Figure 1, page 3, shows the blanket woven in two values of blue. For any pair of colors, substitute the darker for the darker blue, the lighter for the lighter blue. You can also change the size of the checkerboard sections by adding or subtracting threading repeats or treadling repeats (I removed one of the 6x repeats in the raspberry blanket except in the first and last checkerboard).

This is just the beginning of my new friendship with these lovely bamboo yarns. I have many more adventures planned for us!

Resources

Davison, Marguerite. "Large Monk's Belt." *A Handweaver's Pattern Book*. Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania: Marguerite Davison, 1944. p. 106.

Lynde, Robin. "A Bamboo Shawl in Shadow Weave." *Handwoven*, November/December 2006, pp. 32–34.



Buttercup and Sunflower



Cilantro and Mint



Conch and Coral



Crocus and Grape



Lite Lavender and Periwinkle

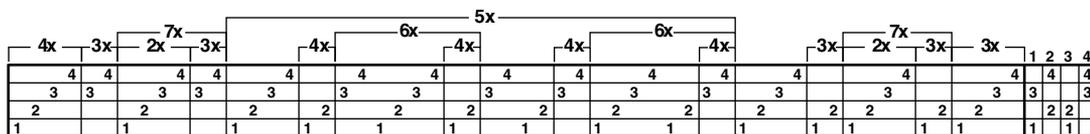


Robin Lynde of Vacaville, California, raises Jacob sheep and teaches spinning and weaving. Her barn is filled with spotted lambs.



STEPS FOR WEAVING THE BABY BLANKETS

1. Draft for baby blankets



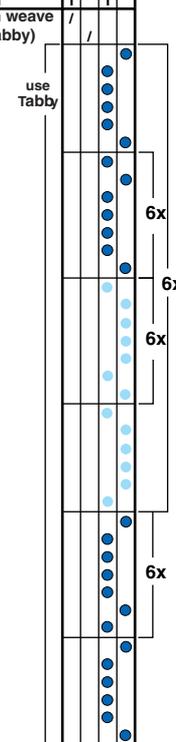
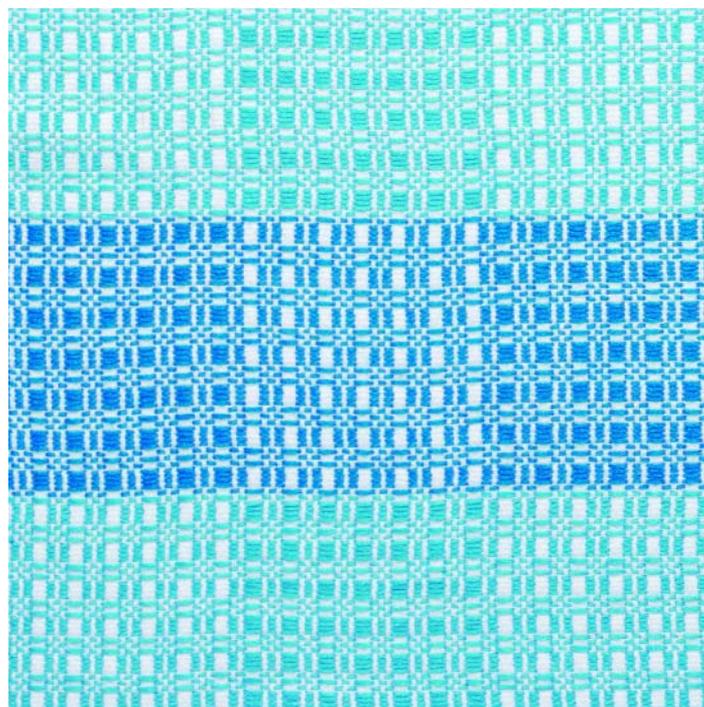
Step 1 Wind a warp of 1,200 ends $3\frac{3}{8}$ yd long for two baby blankets. (Add 52" to warp length for each additional blanket.) You can use your preferred warping method, but since there are a lot of ends, winding the warp in two or more chains is recommended. See Resources at www.handwovenmagazine.com for specific warping steps.

Step 2 Sley 3/dent in a 10-dent reed and thread the loom following the draft in Figure 1. (Because it is long, the threading is written in a very condensed form. You may wish to write it out in a more expanded form to follow as you thread.)

Step 3 Wind a bobbin with Rice Bambu 12 for the plain-weave and tabby weft, and a bobbin of each of the two colors of Bambu 7 you are using for the pattern weft.

Step 4 For each blanket: Weave 2" of plain weave for a hem with Bambu 12. Then weave the body of the blanket in your choice of colors following the treadling in Figure 1. "Use tabby" means to weave a tabby pick before every pattern pick, alternating treadles 1 and 2. When you change pattern-weft colors, bring weft tails around the edge thread

- pattern weft: Azurite Bambu 7
- pattern weft: Raspberry Bambu 7
- pattern weft: Aztec Blue Bambu 7
- pattern weft: Carnation Bambu 7
- / plain weave and tabby weft: Bambu 12, Rice
- / plain weave and tabby weft: Bambu 12, Rice



and back into the shed 2–3". End with 2" of plain weave with Bambu 12 for the second hem.

Step 5 Cut the fabric from the loom, cut apart the blankets, and secure raw edges with machine zigzagging or serging. For each hem, fold the plain-weave section in half to enclose the raw

edge, then fold again to the wrong side of the blanket so that no plain weave shows on the blanket's face. Sew hems by hand or machine.

Step 6 Machine wash in warm water on a gentle cycle with mild detergent. Machine dry, low. Press with a cool iron, using a press cloth. 

PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

Weave structure for baby blankets
Monk's belt.

Equipment

4-shaft loom, 40" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 3 shuttles.

Yarns

Warp: 100% bamboo (6,300 yd/lb, Bambu 12), Rice (010 Pale Neutral), 4,400 yd (11 $\frac{3}{16}$ oz).

Tabby weft: 100% bamboo (6,300 yd/lb, Bambu 12), Rice (010 Pale Neutral),

1,800 yd (4 $\frac{3}{8}$ oz).

Pattern weft: 100% bamboo (2,100 yd/lb, Bambu 7), Azurite (187 Deep Blue) and Raspberry (620 Dusky PuRed), 411 yd (3 $\frac{3}{8}$ oz) each; Aztec Blue (611 Middle Blue) and Carnation (919 Pale PuRed), 352 yd (2 $\frac{7}{10}$ oz) each.

Yarn sources

Bambu 12 and Bambu 7 are available from Cotton Clouds.

Warp order and length

1,200 ends $3\frac{3}{8}$ yd long (allows 7" for take-

up, 27" for loom waste). Add 52" to warp length for each additional blanket.

Warp and weft spacing

Warp: 30 epi (3/dent in a 10-dent reed).

Width in the reed: 40".

Weft: 28 ppi (14 ppi pattern; 14 ppi tabby). Woven length of each blanket (measured under tension on the loom): 49".

Finished dimensions

After washing, amounts produce two hemmed baby blankets 35" × 40" each.



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