



DIY Western Weaving

Weaving is a method of textile production in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads are interlaced at right angles to form a fabric or cloth.

Pioneer Clothing

Life in pioneer times was difficult. Pioneers spent most of their time working on the farm or in the house. Making new clothes took a long time, so they took care of the clothes they already had.

To make clothing sheep were sheared to get the wool needed for yarn. The wool was cleaned and spun into yarn. The yarn was used to weave clothing.

Making Your Loom

The LOOM is the structure you use to give your weave support and tension. Make the loom any size you want! Small looms are easier for children to handle. The yarn, scissors and needles can be changed as necessary to suit the age of the children. Young children need large plastic needles and thick yarn as it will be easier to handle.

Draw a line 1/2 inch in from the edge on every side of the loom. These are the guides and will make holding it a little easier.

Next draw the lines for the notches. In most cases these should be 1/4 inch apart. Start at the 1/2 inch line, and make marks every 1/4 inch (or your chosen width) all the way across the top and the bottom of the loom. Cut on the marks, stopping at the 1/2 inch line.

Learn How to Set Up the Loom

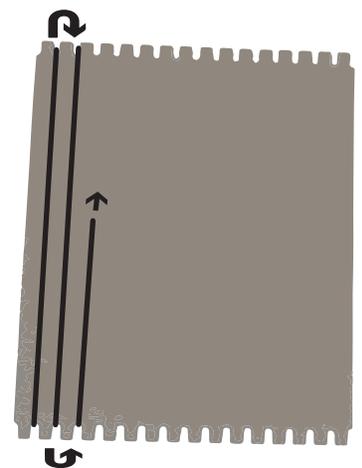
Start Weaving—WARP Thread

The WARP thread is strung over the loom vertically and holds the tension while you weave. It is the backbone of your weave. The WEFT thread is the thread that you weave between, around and all over the WARP threads.

Carry the thread down to the bottom left notch on the loom and pull it into that notch. Bring the thread back over to the front by bringing it up through the notch directly to the right of the leftmost bottom notch.

Continue doing this all the way across the loom. The front side of the loom will have yarn going vertically from notch to notch. The back side of the loom will have small segments of yarn looped around the notches. Leave a tail of the end of the yarn and also tape that to the back of the loom.

YOU'LL NEED:
Cardboard
Yarn
Yarn Needle
Scissors
Pencil



Now you are ready to weave.

WEFT thread is the decorative thread that is woven horizontally to create the finished product. Cut a length of yarn (shorter is easier to work with at first - no more than 2 feet) and thread the yarn through the needle. Make a knot so that it stays in the needle.

Use the needle to guide the yarn through the loom in an under-over pattern. (Under the first string, over the second, under the next, etc.) Once the needle has passed through all of the strings, pull the yarn through and leave a tail of a few inches at the end. Push the yarn up on the loom so that it's about 1/4 inch away from the notches.

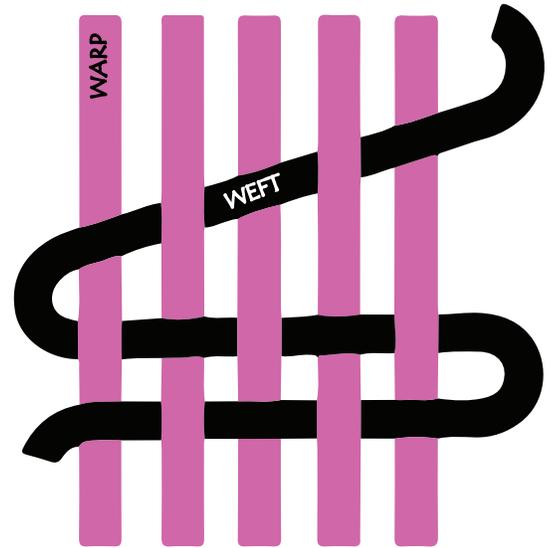
Bring the needle and yarn back through the loom from the side just exited—using an over-under pattern that's the opposite of the first line and pull the yarn through. (If the first line of yarn goes under the last string to the right, it needs to go over the last string to begin the second row.) Don't pull too hard on the yarn - or the strings on the loom will warp.

Push the second line of yarn up to meet the first.

Continue each row, alternating the over-under pattern, making sure not to pull the yarn too tight. Every few rows, it's a good idea to use your thumbs to push the yarn up the strings so that it looks nice and uniform.

At the end of a color, take it to one edge of the loom and leave a tail of a few inches hanging off to the side. Cut a length of yarn that is the same color or introduce a new color.

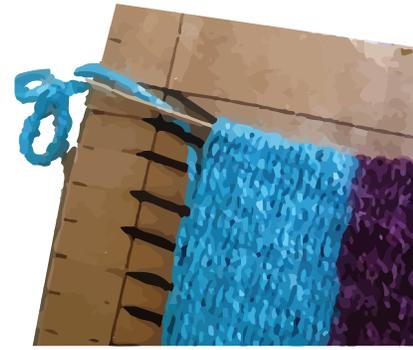
Take the new length of yarn, and insert it into the same side where the tail ends. Follow the same over-under rules as before. If the tail of the yarn ended going under the last string, start the new yarn going over it. Pull the yarn through and make sure to leave a tail at the end. Continue weaving as usual.



Fixing Yarn Ends

When using different yarn colors there will be yarn ends to tuck into the weaving with the needle.

Thread the end of the yarn through the needle. Insert the needle into the side of the weaving, on the outside edge of the string. Pull the needle through the edge of the weaving. Pull the yarn through, pull it tight, and cut off the end. Use your fingers to rub the edges of the weaving and make things look nice and neat.



Removing the Weaving from the Loom

Remove the tape from the long strings on the back of the loom. Release the top loops first, and then the bottom. Hold the weaving near the top, and pull up on the top loops.

Pull the string through the weaving, so that the bottom loops are brought up to be flush with the bottom of the weaving, and the top loops gain extra length.

Once the weaving is scooted down to the very bottom of the strings, you can cut the top loops in the middle and tie those off.

After tying off the loops, there will still be two long strings to fix. Bring the string over the first row of the weaving and then push it through the side. By looping it over the top row of the weaving, you keep the string from getting pulled completely out of the weaving.

Weaving Tips

Tie the yarn to the needle so it doesn't slip out while you weave. Use short lengths of yarn to avoid creating lots of knots.

Leave at least 1/4 inch of empty space at the top and bottom of your work. It'll make finishing your weaving much easier. Use your fingers to hold the last string on the loom while pulling the yarn through. This is prevent you from pulling the yarn too tightly and warping the strings. If you don't leave the yarn a little loose on the left and right strings on the loom, it can warp your work and change the shape.

Use your fingers to push your work up quite often. This makes the finished weaving look much cleaner and you'll be able to get more rows of yarn on your loom this way.

