

# 5 ■ BOARD LOOM WEAVING ■

This weaving style uses a simple introductory loom for children or beginners: it is easily and inexpensively constructed.

The humble board loom can be constructed from almost any rigid base. Two sheets of strong, corrugated cardboard glued together, with the ribs going different ways, will work well. Cardboard from grocery boxes or lightweight chipboard are other alternatives. All these materials are easy to obtain and you may already have these things on hand ready to make your first board loom. However, I recommend using 3 ply wood for a sturdy loom of the size suggested in the construction diagram (diagram 1). This will last longer and give good support to the warp threads. Little samples of board weaving can be made on smaller pieces of cardboard, to quickly assess the best colour combination or yarn for a project.

There is always a certain amount of shrinkage when the weaving is cut from the loom and washed, so allowance should always be made for this. When planning a woven project, add a little extra length and warp a few extra threads in the width.

## WARPING THE LOOM

**Tape** the beginning of the warp yarn to the back of the loom. Starting at the top of the loom on one side, begin winding the warp by placing the yarn firmly into the first top slit. Bring the warp yarn down to the corresponding slit on the bottom of the loom and place the yarn firmly into it (diagram 2).

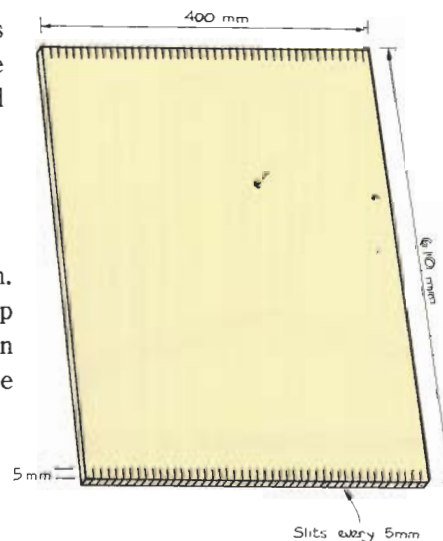


Diagram 2 Starting to warp the loom

## YOU WILL NEED

- Sticky tape
- A board loom
- A bodkin or safety pin
- A kitchen fork
- Scissors, tape measure
- Yarn

Diagram 1 Construction of a board loom in 3 ply wood



- 1 Cut the 3 ply board to given dimensions
- 2 Using a saw, cut 5mm slits at each end of the board at 5mm spacing



Diagram 3 Warping the loom

Take the yarn around the back of the loom, and up to the second top slit, next to the slit where the warping was begun. Place the yarn firmly into this slit and guide the warp down the front of the loom to the second bottom slit. Continue warping in this manner, as shown, until the desired width is reached (diagram 3). As you wind the yarn onto the board the tension should be firm but not so tight as to buckle the board. The warp threads should be lying flat on the board.

When the warping is complete, cut the yarn and tape the tail end to the back of the loom to secure it.

Two strands of yarn can also be placed into each slit to achieve a closer-woven sett. These are wound onto the loom together as one yarn in the warping method described. Each thread is then treated individually in the weaving process, by going under and over each thread in turn.

## WEAVING

Cut the weft yarn into lengths as described in the individual project directions. Thread the instructed number of yarn lengths through a bodkin or safety pin. Weave the first row in a plain weave (see pages 9–10), weaving under and over the warp threads. Go under all the *odd*-numbered warp threads on the first row. Check after every row that the weft lengths are not crossed or twisted around each other.

When the first row is completed, arrange the weft in an arc shape in the warp, by pushing the weft lengths upwards with the kitchen fork. This is *very important* as it allows an easing in the weft so it curves around each warp in a relaxed way. *Never* pull the weft straight across the weaving. The height of the arc is determined largely by experience, but a 70 millimetre ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  inch) height at the centre is a good height for this loom to begin with (diagram 4). If any problems arise in the weaving, try placing the weft with a higher arc, this will usually solve the problem.

When the weft arc is in place, use the kitchen fork to beat the weft into position. Firstly push down on the highest point of the arc, then on the two smaller arcs made on each side. Continue gently pushing the weft downwards to the bottom of the board. This completes the first row. (The kitchen fork is used as a weaving beater here. The term 'beater' implies force when placing the new weft into position, however this is not the case with board weaving. The fork should 'gently push' the weft not 'beat' it. A wide-toothed comb can also perform this task.)

Weave the second row in the same way as the first, but this time weave under all the *even*-numbered warp threads. Place the weft arc and gently beat the weft into position on top of the previous row of weaving.

Continue weaving in the same way until the required height is reached.

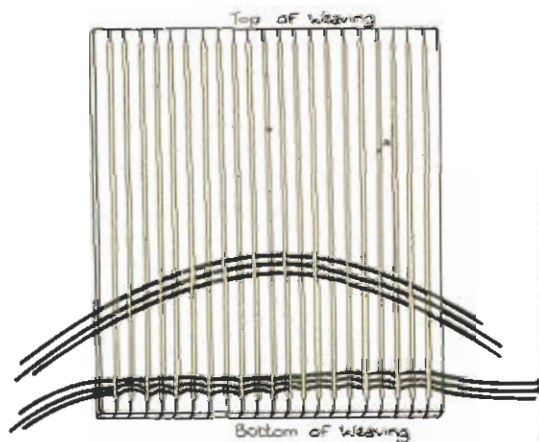


Diagram 4 Forming an arc with the weft

**Finishing off.** Turn the board loom over to the back and cut through the middle of the warp threads. Carefully remove the weaving from the slits. Finish as directed in the individual project instructions.

## QUICKER WEAVING

This weaving style can progress with a little more speed by using a device called a **shed stick**. Any ruler can serve this purpose. It is inserted into the warp threads by picking up all the odd-numbered warp threads and placing them on top of the ruler (diagram 5). When this has been done, turn the ruler on its edge to produce an opening in the warp called a **shed**. The weft yarn can then be quickly woven across to the other side. The ruler is then put back down so it is once again flat in the warp. Move the ruler to the top of the loom. The following row must always be woven manually with the bodkin. The ruler is then moved down the warp and turned on its edge to produce the next shed opening. Weaving continues in this manner, alternating a manually woven row with a shed-stick row.

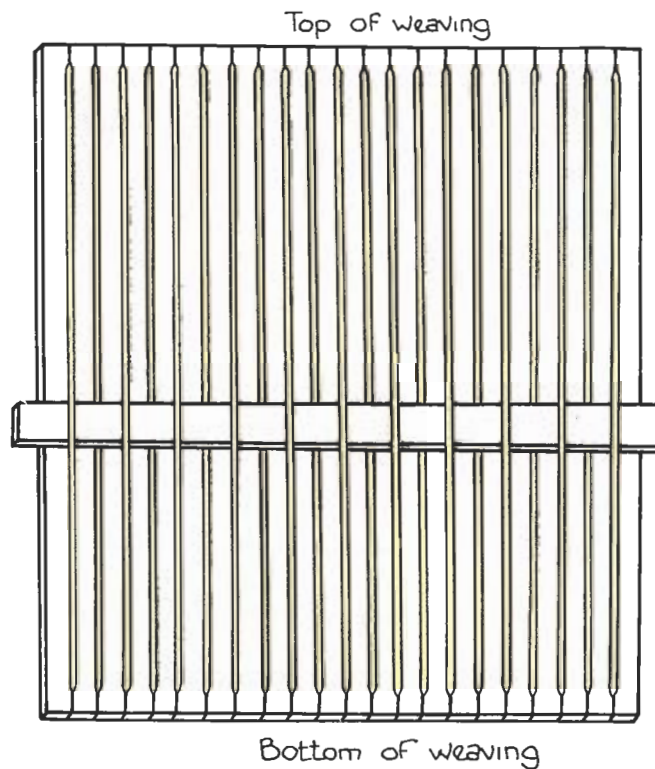
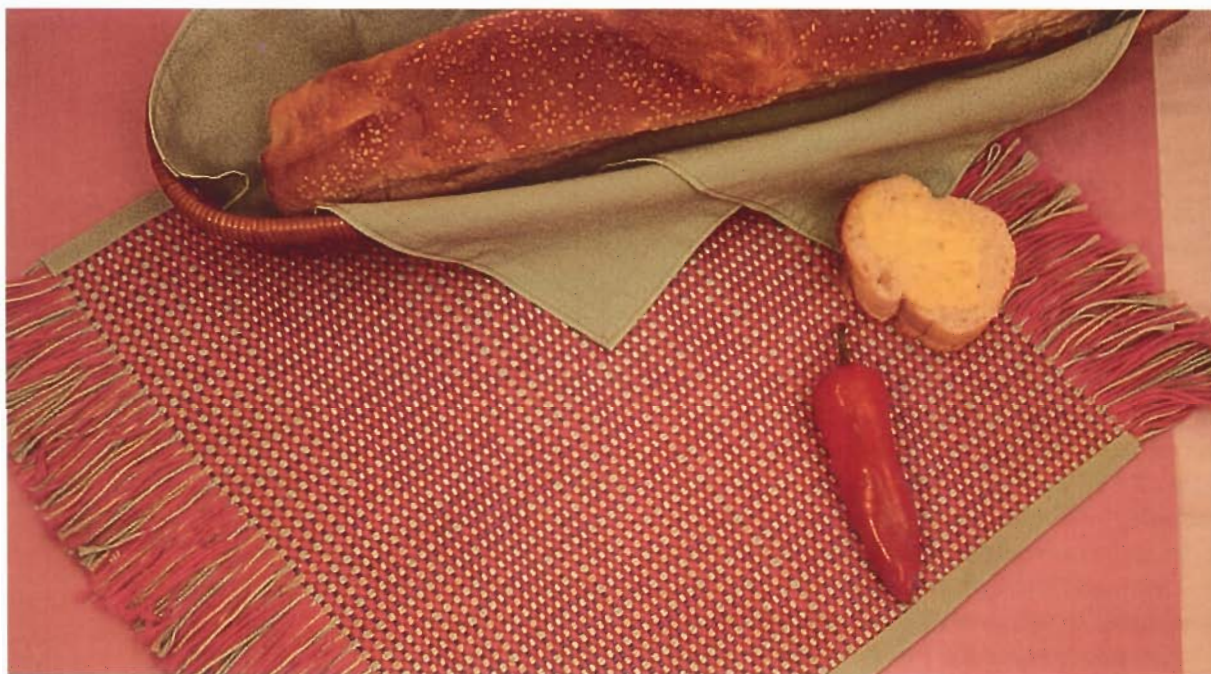


Diagram 5 A shed stick is inserted in the warp to speed the weaving

## □ CHEERY CASSEROLE MAT □



### YOU WILL NEED

One 50 gram (2 ounce) ball of 4 ply soft knitting cotton in each of the following five colours: blue, red, pink, blue-green and pastel khaki green

80 centimetres (32 inches) of matching bias, 50 millimetres (2 inches) wide

A bodkin or safety pin

A board loom

A kitchen fork

This woven mat is a good example of the interesting colour combinations possible in woven cloth and their effect. Here a red and blue warp is used with a green and pink weft, to make a beautiful, bright, cheery mat.

### FINISHED SIZE

295 × 340 millimetres ( $11\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$  inches), excluding 60 millimetre ( $2\frac{1}{4}$  inch) fringe

### WARPING

The red and blue yarn are used together as one thread when winding the warp. Following the warping instructions on pages 45–6, wind the red and blue yarn together onto the board loom. For neat results, make sure that the threads are not twisted around each other on the front side of the loom; it doesn't matter about the back. Both a red and a blue warp must be in each slit (diagram 1). Continue winding on the warp until the width measures 370 millimetres ( $14\frac{1}{2}$  inches).

### WEAVING

Each weft will consist of three strands of yarn. Each strand is 630 millimetres (25 inches) long. Cut three pink strands of weft this length for the first row.

Weave as described on pages 46–7. Begin by going under all the

**blue** warps with the pink weft (and over the red). The shed stick can be inserted under all the blue warps, if used. On the second row, use three strands of green-blue as the weft. Weave under all the **red** warps, making sure a red thread comes after a blue one each time (and over the blue warps).

The third row uses three pink threads and weaves under all the blue warps.

The fourth row uses three pastel khaki threads and weaves under all the red warps.

Repeat these four rows of weft colours until your work measures 390 millimetres (15 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches).

Cut the weaving from the loom as described in the general directions on page 47.

## MAKING UP

You will notice that both sides of the weaving are loosely formed. The first five or six threads at the side edges are waste threads. Using a straight machine stitch, sew a straight line between the warps inside these waste threads. Remove the waste warp threads from the weaving (diagram 2). Trim the fringes to 60 millimetres (2 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches).

Using a machine zigzag stitch, sew along the top and bottom ends, that is along the weft, of the weaving and trim all the warp ends (red and blue) very close to the cloth.

Hand wash the cloth in warm water with a little detergent. Allow to dry; it can be dried in a dryer.

Stitch the right side of the bias to the right side of the unfringed edges of the mat, 10 millimetres ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch) from the edges. Fold in the raw short ends to neaten. Press the binding away from the weaving. Fold the binding to the wrong side and turn a 10 millimetre ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch) hem along its edge. Neatly slipstitch the binding to the line of machine stitching. Bind the other edge in the same way (diagram 3). Press the finished mat with a damp cloth and hot iron.

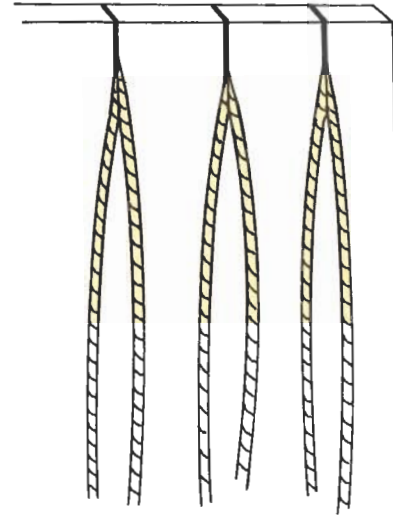


Diagram 1 Don't twist the two threads in warping the loom

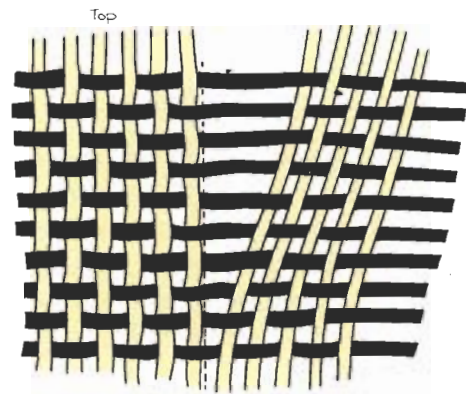


Diagram 2 Remove waste threads

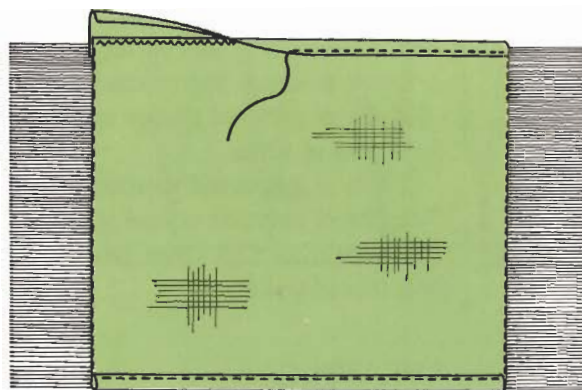


Diagram 3 Binding the mat

## □ WOVEN TABLE CENTRE □



### YOU WILL NEED

Two 50 gram (2 ounce) balls of white 4 ply or 5/2 perle (mercerized) cotton, such as Pellicano Perlato

Approximately 10 grams ( $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce) each of four shades of yellow in 4 ply or 5/2 perle (mercerized) cotton, for example, lemon, mustard, orange, gold

60 centimetres (24 inches) of matching bias, 50 millimetres (2 inches) wide

A bodkin or safety pin

A board loom

A kitchen fork

### FINISHED SIZE

200 millimetres  $\times$  250 millimetres ( $7\frac{3}{4}$   $\times$  10 inches) excluding 60 centimetre ( $2\frac{1}{4}$  inch) fringe

### WARPING

Use two threads of yarn together as one thread for warping: two strands of yarn must be in each slit (see pages 45–6). Several colours will be warped across the loom in this project and each end or new colour will need to be secured at the back of the loom by knotting the ends together. Warp across the loom in the following colour sequence:

5 slits of white (remember, this is 2 threads of white cotton in each of the first 5 slits on the top and 5 at the bottom)

2 slits of lemon and mustard together

2 slits of gold and orange together

\*4 slits of white

2 slits of lemon and mustard together

2 slits of gold and orange together\*

Repeat from \* to \* four times in total

5 slits of white

### WEAVING

Each weft will consist of four strands of yarn, each measuring 440

millimetres ( $17\frac{1}{2}$  inches) in length. Cut four strands of white for the first row and follow the general directions for weaving on pages 46–7. Make sure you weave under and over each of the individual warp threads (diagram 1). Keep the weft strands ordered and untwisted. Weave the wefts across in the following sequence:

\* 19 rows white

1 row lemon, 5 rows white, 1 row lemon, 5 rows white, 1 row lemon, 5 rows white, 1 row lemon\*

16 rows white

Repeat from \* to \*

19 rows white

The weaving should then measure 280 millimetres (11 inches) from the beginning.

Carefully cut the weaving from the loom as described in the general directions on page 47.

## MAKING UP

Follow the instructions for making up the casserole mat on page 49, but only allow three or four edge warps as waste threads. The number of warp waste threads is determined by how well the cloth sits at the edges. The idea is to achieve a neat, straight line down the warp for sewing a straight edge, so a few threads always need to be removed. The choice of yarn, the skill of the weaver and the tension all determine number of waste threads.

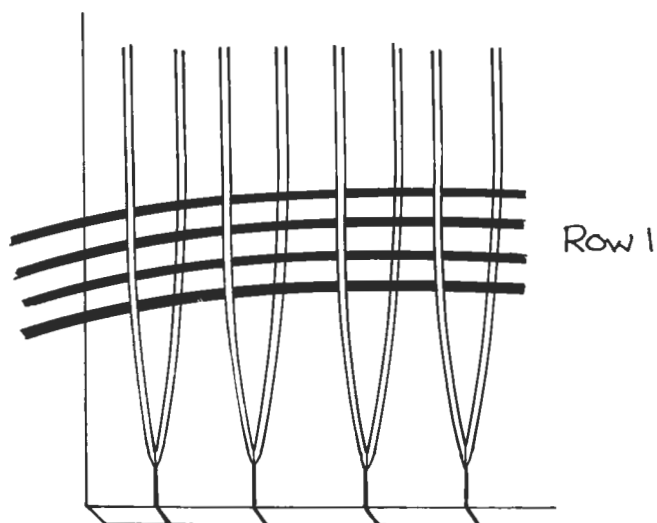


Diagram 1 Weave under and over each of the warp threads