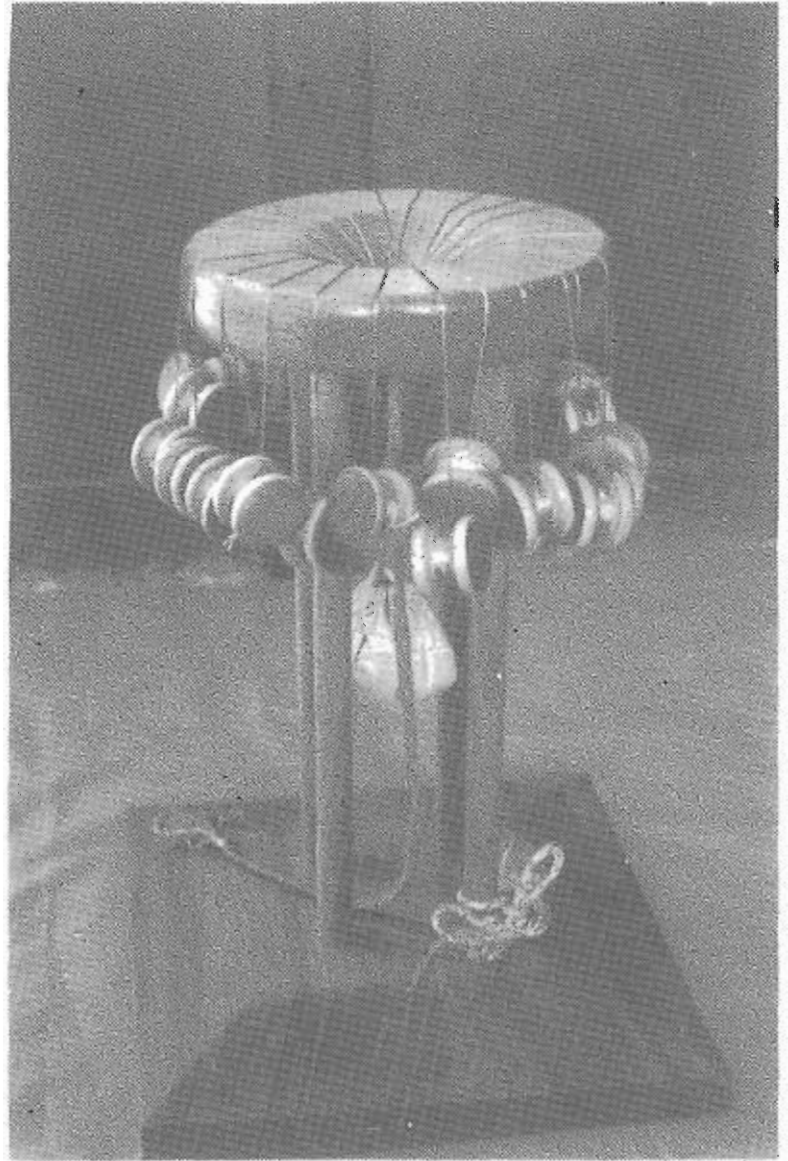


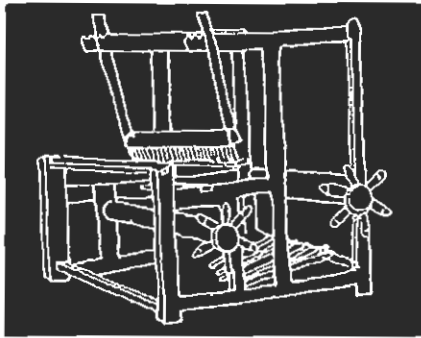
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# Weaver

# Curious



*A 'hands on' publication for Handweavers  
Spinners Dyers Braiders  
and other interested artists throughout Australasia*



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**The people of Hakata, Japan, say that a well woven belt "cries" as it is put on, and is really pleasant to wear. This "crying" is only present with a pure silk belt and the belt shows that it is of good quality by "crying".**

from Products of Fukuoka, 1989

FRONT COVER: A traditional *marudai* braiding stool with a *Kara uchi gumi* braid in progress. Learn how to make an improvised *marudai* and a braid on page 12.

**PUBLISHER and EDITOR**

Karen Madigan

**ILLUSTRATORS**

Karen and David Madigan

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

Earl Ingleby

Margaret Small

Alison Morton

Margaret Murray

Chris Jakku

Ann Shuttleworth

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All inquiries to:

Karen Madigan  
3 Paradise Close,  
OLD BAR 2430  
N S W Australia  
Ph:(065) 537 004  
FAX Service: (065) 537 967

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Karen Madigan

Dear weavers, spinners, dyers and braiders,

Due to changing personal circumstances and direction I am no longer able to afford the luxury of this publication.

I hope you have enjoyed the last 5 issues as I have enjoyed producing them.

Your support has been greatly appreciated but collectively we are not large enough support a financially independent venture such as this one.

Please continue to support any new initiative in the future within Australia or New Zealand as I have ensured that all advance subscriptions have been fully refunded. Nothing has been lost only gained from this venture.

I would like to particularly thank all contributing writers and advertisers to Curious Weaver.

I wish you all the best with your future journeys and adventures with the challenging craft of the loom.

Karen Madigan

CURIOS WEAVER back issues are still available:

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Issue 3 - \$5.00  
Issue 4 - \$5.50

**A NOTE ABOUT PROJECTS IN THIS PUBLICATION**

**METRIC AND IMPERIAL MEASUREMENTS:** Metric measurements are used throughout and where possible imperial conversions are included in brackets. EPC (Ends per centimetre) and EPI (Ends per inch) for the warp are both included. PPC (Picks per centimetre) and PPI (Picks per inch) for the weft are also included. Metric and imperial reed measurements are given where possible, but sometimes conversion may not be as accurate as required. Projects will specify what type of reed was used. Both measurements are provided because Australians use weaving literature, reeds and equipment from both metric and imperial systems.

**DRAFTS:** Threading drafts read from right to left and treadling drafts read from top to bottom. Threading repeats are indicated by brackets. Sometimes, smaller pattern repeats are shown within larger bracketed repeats. All tie-ups are for rising shed or jack looms. Each square in the tie-up with a

circle in it, indicates that the shaft referred to rises when the corresponding treadle is pressed. To convert the tie-up for a sinking shed or counterbalanced loom, tie the treadles to match the blank squares on the tie-up. To convert for a countermarch loom tie the lower lamms to correspond to the squares with circles in them and the upper lamms to the blank squares. For a table loom follow each square on the tie-up with a circle in it to select the shafts to rise.

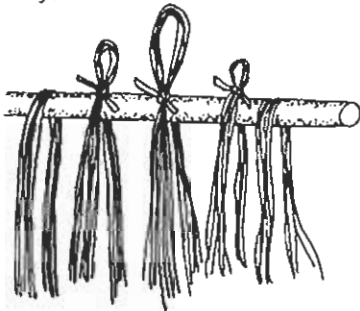
**WARP LENGTH:** The given warp length for each project includes the finished length of the project and an allowance for take up, shrinkage and a 70cm loom waste. Take up is the amount of warp used in the woven interlacing and shrinkage is the warp length lost in the finishing process. A 70cm floor loom waste is allowed for, but your loom may differ from this. A table loom, for example, requires less loom waste.



# Letters

Ideas please for 'warp pulling'! Simple staggered ikat designs are made by tying and anchoring sections of tie dyed warp at the back rod. My experiment of knotting didn't really work, as the design didn't stay in place.

*Jane Burman,  
Berry, NSW.*



Knotting the warps should convert



this design to this one.

There isn't a simple answer to this problem. The question of dressing the loom from back to front or front to back is raised. If the loom is threaded from front to back this problem does not arise as the warp is cut before reaching the back apron and the warp is pulled into the shape desired and attached in the normal manner. However, if the warp is first wound onto the back roller using the return loops to hold the warp in place there will always be problems as the warp will move around the apron stick

as different pressures are applied to raised threads. The choice of fibre can also affect this as wool will stretch and return to shape but linen will not. The weaving action of a counter balance or counter march loom will give a more even tension than a jack loom. Try the following:

- 1) Dress the loom from front to back.
- 2) Use a tensioning device (see Issue 4, page 3)
- 3) Don't use the return loops of the warp to attach it to the back apron rod.
- 4) Hope for the best.

*Earl Ingleby*

Hi Karen,  
Great mag, easy to read, not too complex and makes weaving look very interesting. I really enjoyed your feature on tapestry weaving as I have just woven off my first piece. I have made it into a purse for my cheque book and other pieces of paper which float around in my handbag. I have just started my next piece which I hope to make into a shoulder bag. Tapestry weaving is great because of the colour combinations and pattern freedom you have.

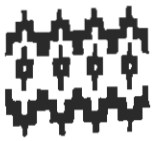
*Sharon Hollier  
Albany W A*

## Postcard from Convergence Portland USA

Dear Karen,

Convergence has just finished and I'm exhausted, but stimulated by lots of wonderful clothing, mostly multishafts. Silk is the fibre of the year. The commercial exhibitors must have sold tons of yarns and tops. Also lots of chenille dyed in great colours. Some good workshops and others not so good. 3 days in colour with Sharon Alderman (Handwoven writer) was really good.

Best wishes,  
*Margaret Small  
Armidale, NSW*



# Krokbragd on the Side

by Karen Madigan

**In 'turning' a draft the threading becomes the treadling and the treadling becomes the threading. ....'turning' is literally turning a draft plan around by 90 degrees.**

## HOW TO MODIFY THE INKLE LOOM

The inkle loom is a two shaft loom and needs to be modified to accommodate this three shaft technique.

The normal warping sequence is one fixed heddle thread alternating with an open, floating thread. Here a *third* open floating thread is added. As both of the open threads need to be independently operated they are attached to auxiliary heddles.

Following the colour order of the pattern draft, (diagram 1) warp the loom using one heddle thread followed by two open threads.

After warping is complete the auxiliary heddles are attached. The same heddles normally used on your inkle loom can be used. Loop a heddle around each of the first open threads and place them

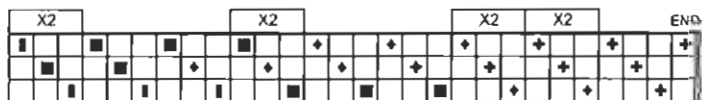
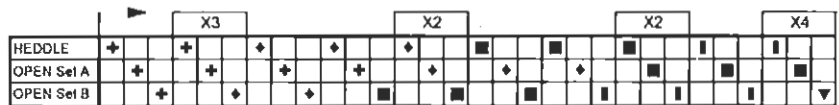
**E**xperienced weavers will be familiar with the three shaft, *west faced* weave called Krokbragd. This Norwegian weave uses several coloured wefts to produce a highly patterned textile often used in rugs.

The basis for its rich patterning is colour and the combination of colours chosen will greatly affect its look. With this in mind, this three shaft pattern can be 'turned' to make a warp faced pattern requiring only one shuttle of weft.

All of the colour changes will now be in the warp. This is simple on a four shaft loom, see page 5, but the inkle loom can be easily modified to weave these patterns and provides a quick introduction and sampling device into the technique.

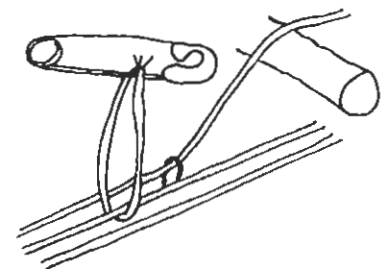
Krokbragd looks like a four shaft weave on one side but floats over three picks on the other.

KROKBRAGD PATTERN DRAFT



- Colour Key
- + Colour 1
  - ♦ Colour 2
  - Colour 3
  - ▣ Colour 4
  - ▼ Colour 5

**DIAGRAM 1:**  
Traditional Krokbragd pattern draft.



**DIAGRAM 2:**  
Loop a heddle around each of the first open threads.

on a large safety pin. Diagram 2.

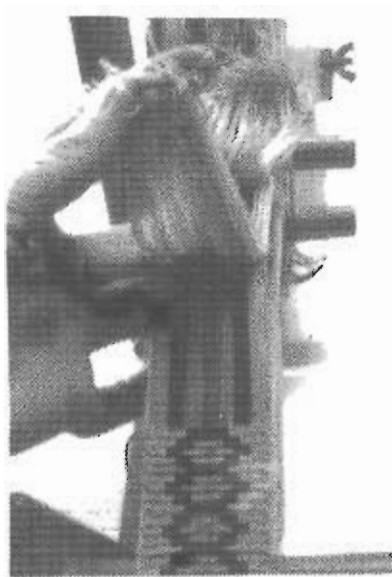
This will make it easy to lift the heddles. This set will be referred to as **SET A**.

Next, loop a heddle around each of the second open threads and again attach them to a safety pin. These will be **SET B**.



**'Turning' Krokbragd  
transforms a weft faced  
weave to a warp faced  
weave.**

**FOUR SHAFT LOOM PATTERNS FOR  
WARP FACED KROKBRAGD**



		X3			X2			X2			X4	X2			X2		X2	X2		
COLOUR 1	3	2	1	1												1		1	2	3
COLOUR 2			1	2	2	1	1							1	1	2	1		1	1
COLOUR 3					1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1			
COLOUR 4								1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
COLOUR 5											1									

**COLOUR ORDER FOR FOUR SHAFT LOOM**

Now the loom is set up to independently lift three sheds or combinations of these. Diagram 3.

**TO WEAVE**

For this sample there are three sheds as follows:

- 1) Push all of the floating threads down as in a normal down shed.
- 2) Lift SET A heddles.
- 3) Lift SET B heddles.

**SINGLE KROKBRAGD**

To weave single Krokbragd use the weaving sequence 1,2,1,3 repeat. Beat the weft firmly after each row. Diagram 4.

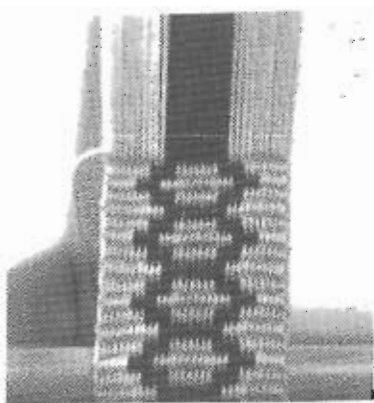
**DOUBLE KROKBRAGD**

To weave double Krokbragd use the sequence 3,1,3,1,2,1,2,1 repeat.

NOTE: Pellicano Perle Cotton (5/2) was used in this Krokbragd sample.

**DIAGRAM 3:**

The set up of the loom, with 2 sets of auxiliary heddles.



**DIAGRAM 4:**

Single warp faced krokbragd



Pattern draft for single warp faced Krokbragd.



Pattern draft for double warp faced krokbragd.

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References:

Anne Dixon, 1995, *The Inkle Loom - Think 90 Degrees*, Strands, Published by The Braid Society, Leicester.

Jane Patrick, (Ed.) *Handwoven Treasury*, 1989, Interweave Press, Colorado.



# Fibre Of The Gods

by Karen Madigan



**THE ALPACA**

**A**lpacas produce a rare, exotic and precious fibre. The Incas in South America domesticated the alpaca for its fine soft wool and it is often referred to as the "fibre of the gods".

Prior to the Spanish conquest in 1532, a special class of the Inca nobility were responsible for the alpaca husbandry and the development of exceptional fibre quality. Their breeding stock and knowledge was lost when the civilisation was destroyed and the animals were driven up into the high altitudes with its harsh climatic conditions and poor pastures. Threatened by extinction, the animals developed an extraordinary ability to tolerate these conditions - and survived.

Every year the Peruvians drive the Alpacas into villages such as Arequipa, where they shear and grade the wool for export. Today only three million animals survive worldwide and limited exports of animals have been allowed to the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

## **ALPACAS IN AUSTRALIA**

Alpaca history in Australia goes back to the last century. In 1858 Charles Ledger imported approximately 100 alpacas to Sydney. Unfortunately all of the animals died and commercial importation did not recommence until 1987. The first of these animals came from Chile but imports from Peru are now being established. Today there are approximately 11,000 alpacas in Australia.

Hundreds of alpaca owners and breeders throughout Australia are keen to develop herds to the legendary equivalent of the Inca civilisation.

As Australia has over two centuries of experience in breeding the finest wool in the world, alpaca breeders

are well placed to draw on this expertise for a similar record with alpacas.

## **ALPACA FIBRE**

The South American alpaca is closely related to the llama, guanaco and vicuna. It belongs to the Camelidae family and is related to the camel.

The fibre is lightweight, soft, strong and very warm. As the fibre structure is partially hollow it provides extra warmth. It is straighter and silkier than sheep's wool and textiles woven from it are often brushed to raise the nap similar to mohair fabric.



## FLEECES

Alpaca fleeces produce a high proportion of clean fibre after processing and an average clean alpaca fleece weighs about 3 kgs. Alpacas are shorn once a year in spring and yearly fleece growth can vary from 10 cms - 12 cms. A full fleece contains about 3 grades of fibre. The finest quality is found on the back, sides, shoulders and rump. The cost of this fibre varies, but is usually \$70-\$100 per kilo depending on quality. The fleece on the neck is graded next and the skirtings including the legs and underbelly last. The lowest grade contains very coarse fibres called "guard hairs" and is generally not suitable for yarn spinning but can be scoured and used as wadding, stuffing etc.

## COLOUR

Alpacas can sort into about 22 natural colours including white, camel, fawn, brown, grey and black. All of these shades can be blended at the carding or plying stage to further enhance colouring.

Multi coloured fleeces or 'fancies' are an opportunity for handspunners and weavers to develop interesting garments around this feature. It is also possible to buy the fleece from the same animal each year if you deal directly with the breeder. This repeat in colouring could be used as a marketing approach to sell a handspun or woven item. For example, a photo of the animal you use and a story of how the item is made could be included on the swing tag.

The natural white is easily dyed as a protein fibre and retains its natural lustre. Other dyeing techniques such as warp painting and space dyeing can also be applied.

Interestingly genetic colour inheritance in alpacas is not well understood as it is believed to have been by the Incas. For example, two white alpacas can produce a black cria (baby alpaca), making predictable colour breeding difficult!

## SPINNING

Spinning alpaca is similar to spinning sheep's wool, although a lighter touch is required to keep the air in the fibres. Little crimp and lanolin makes the fibre more challenging to spin, but the effort and practice is worthwhile.

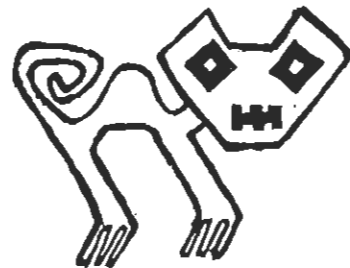
Alpaca can also be blended with up to 50% sheep's wool, mohair or silk. Blending with another fibre can economise on cost or introduce other fibre features into the yarn, for example, the alpaca fibre does not have the elastic quality of wool so it can be blended with wool to achieve this. Alpaca can be carded and spun as a woollen yarn or combed to create a worsted yarn. Try the long draw method of spinning or using a flicker to prepare the fibres. All of the traditional methods of spinning and fibre preparation can be used.

Many spinners and weavers haven't used Alpaca, but it is now readily available in Australia. Using a 'luxury' fibre such as Aussie alpaca increases the saleability and supports the price of our labour intensive textiles.

Special thanks to Libbie and Leger Tindall of Alderley House Alpacas, Bucketts Way, Stroud N S W, for assistance in the preparation of this article.

For further information on alpaca breeders in your state contact: Australian Alpaca Association Inc, P O Box 464, Brentford Square VIC 3131, (03) 9877 0778.

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References: Maril Stout, *About Alpacas*, Published by Alderley House Alpaca Stud, Stroud NSW

Dever, Joan. 1992, 'Spinning an Exotic Yarn', *Alpacas Australia*, Vol. 1, no. 4.

# CARDING and BLENDING

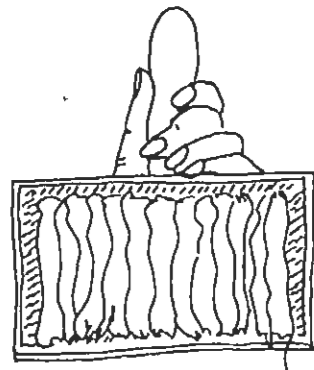
by Karen Madigan

**D**esigning a great yarn starts with creative and proper fibre preparation. Carding is the first step in the process of combing and organising the fibres ready to spin.

Carding produces a woollen yarn because the combed fibres are rolled into a *rolag* which traps the air and leaves the fibres lying in all directions. This preparation makes a lofty, warm yarn. If the matt of fibre is removed from the carders and spun as a ball instead of a *rolag* a semi-worsted style of yarn can be spun. This way the fibres are laying in a straight and parallel fashion which produces a stronger less elastic style of yarn.

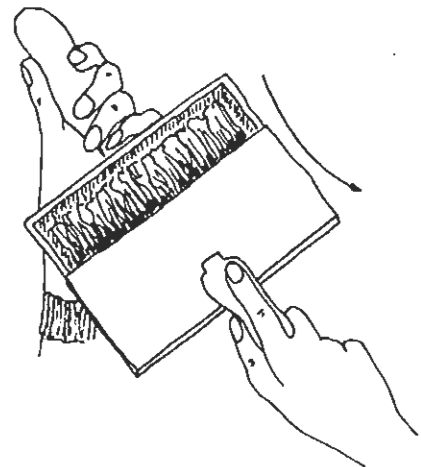
There are several ways of carding but the following method is easy and quick as it maintains the same grip on the carders throughout the process. The instructions are for right handed spinners, but left handers can reverse the instruction.

**"Designing a great yarn starts with creative and proper fibre preparation."**



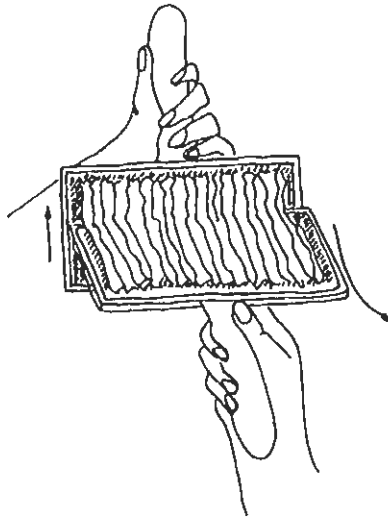
**Diagram 1: Loading the carder with fibre**

Lay one of the carders on your lap and grip it with your left hand as shown. Place some woollen fibre evenly across the teeth. Don't lay too much wool as the teeth will not comb through properly.



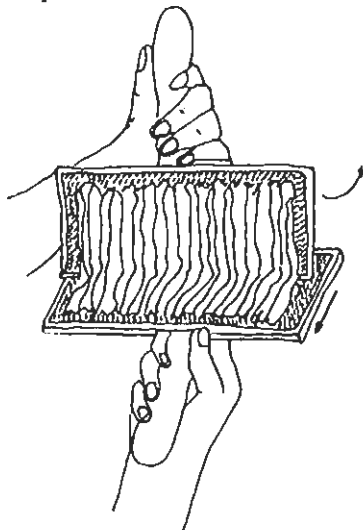
**Diagram 2: Combing the fibre**

Begin to stroke the woollen fibre with the other carder. Gently and lightly comb the fibres using a curving action. The teeth do not intermesh but lightly stroke each other.



**Diagram 3: To transfer all the fibres back to the left carder**

Place the front edge of the right carder to the back edge of the left one. The teeth on the left carder will pick up the wool from the right carder when you move it down as shown. You can now re-comb the fibres as in step 2.



**Diagram 4: To transfer the fibres from the left carder to the right carder.**

Remove the fibres from the teeth and make a roll or rolag by rolling the mat of fibres (batt). The batt can also be used as it is and produces a worsted style of yarn when spun. Many expert spindle spinners throughout the world use the fibre prepared in this way.



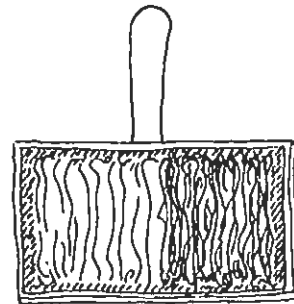
ROLAG



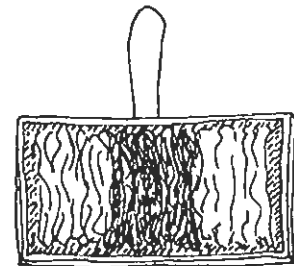
BATT

## MIXING AND BLENDING FIBRES AND COLOURS

Hand carding offers exciting yarn design adventures for spinners and weavers. At this stage colours or different fibres can be blended. Full blending will produce another colour, for example a red and blue blend will create a purple. A variegated blending will spin a multicoloured yarn. Additions of woollen flecks or clippings add textural and colour interest to a yarn. Diagram 5 shows how to place two different coloured fibres on the carders for blending. When the fibres are transferred the blending will automatically occur. The more it is combed the more thorough the blending will be. Diagram 6 shows how to lay a mixture of coloured fibres for a variegated yarn. This will maintain the position of the middle fibres in the carding so the resulting yarn will be multi-coloured.



**Diagram 5: Placing coloured fibres for a fully blended yarn preparation.**



**Diagram 6: Placing coloured fibres for a variegated yarn preparation.**

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# Colour and Weave

**Colour and weave is the way patterns form when a fixed combination of dark and light threads in the warp cross with the same (or another) in the weft.**

You can change weaving patterns into new designs by simply changing colour sequences in the warp and/or weft. This is called *Colour and weave*. Any twill pattern can be transformed to create different patterns.

This simple method of changing patterns is very safe for beginners as the actual structure of the textile remains the same i.e. The structure is weaveable and cohesive. The colours change the look of the pattern but not the structure of the weave.

In diagram 1, a 4 shaft batavia twill weave is shown using a dark coloured warp and light coloured weft. To vary this pattern, the easiest approach is to start by substituting the dark coloured warp with a one dark, one light sequence. Diagram 2 shows the result of this change. Remember that these two different patterns have identical threading, treadling and tie ups....only the colour sequence of warp and weft threads have changed.

To continue to experiment further, a sequence of two dark, two light could be used or any other variation. The weft colours do not necessarily have to be the same sequence as the warp threads, for example, a one dark, one light warp can be woven with an all dark weft. Many patterns can be woven on the one warp, which is a great advantage to weavers. The warp/weft sequence could be followed on one scarf then an all light weft on another and a dark weft on the next. Try mixing these ideas on the one scarf.

by Karen Madigan

## AN INTRODUCTION TO READING DRAFTS

### THREADING AND TIE UPS

The patterns on the opposite page contain all the information required for weavers to create a woven textile. There are many different methods for writing pattern drafts but they all follow the same principles, although they may not be arranged in the same way.

The top grid on each pattern is the **threading**. This is read from right to left. The first number is 4. This means that the first thread will be threaded through a heddle on shaft 4. The next number is 3 and this warp will be threaded through a heddle on shaft 3, and so on until all the warp ends are threaded on the four shafts.

The **tie up** is for a floor loom with a rising shed or jack type of loom. Each of the 4 treadles (one column for each treadle) will be tied to the shaft indicated with a circle. If you have a counterbalanced loom tie the treadles to the shafts that *don't* have a circle in them. If you have a countermarch loom tie the lower lamms to the shaft with the circles and the upper lamms to the shafts that don't have a circle in them.

### THE LIFT PLAN

To make it easier for table loom weavers I have included a lift plan at the side of each draft. This will mean that you will not have to convert the tie up for your use. Each column on the lift plan is allocated to a shaft (1-4) and the circles indicate which shafts will rise for each row of weaving. Starting at the top of the long grid there are two circles in the first and second column. This means that shafts 1 and 2 will need to be lifted to weave the first row. The second row has a circle in the second and third column therefore shafts 2 and 3 need to be lifted to weave the second row. The lift plan is followed, row by row, until the end where it can be repeated as many times as required to weave the patterned fabric.

### THE TREADLING

The **treadling** shows how to weave the cloth with a floor loom. Each black square indicates which treadle to depress by referring to the tie up above it. The treadling grid is read from top to bottom. The top row has a black square in the first column. This indicates that the first row is woven by pressing the treadle directly above it.

### THE DRAW DOWN

The **drawdown** or pattern is the result of the of the pattern draft. Changes to either threading, treadling or tie up will affect the drawdown and this is how weavers start to manipulate pattern structure to create unique and creative designs. A colour bar can also be included in a draft to indicate the placement of colours in a design.

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THREADING

	4			4		4			4		4			4		4			4		4	
2		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3
1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1

TIE-UP  
for floor  
looms

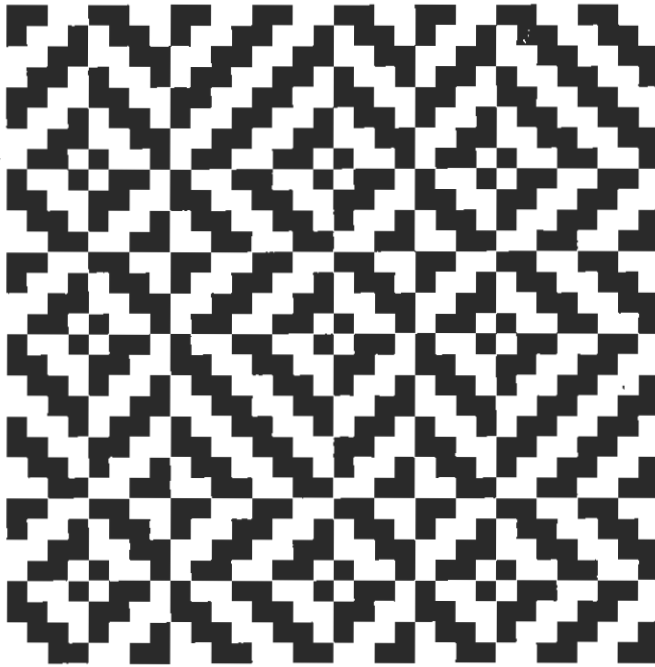


LIFT PLAN FOR TABLE  
LOOMS

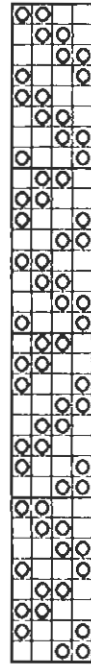


**DIAGRAM 1:**

4 shaft batavia  
pattern. Use a dark  
coloured warp and  
a light coloured  
weft.



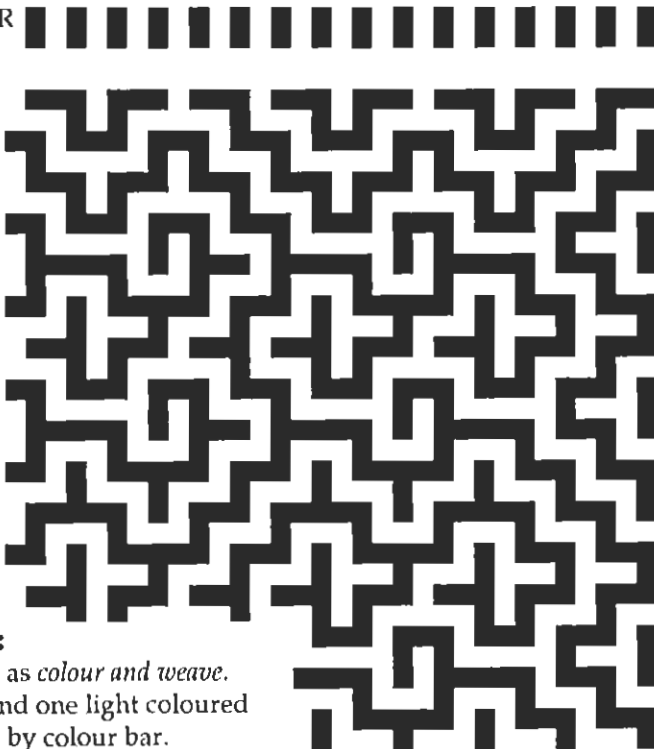
DRAWDOWN OR PATTERN



	4			4		4			4		4			4		4			4		4	
2		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3		3
1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1



COLOUR  
BAR



**DIAGRAM 2:**

4 shaft batavia as *colour and weave*.  
Use one dark and one light coloured  
warp as shown by colour bar.

# Kumihimo

## An Introduction to Japanese Braiding

by Alison Morton and Margaret Murray

Start braiding right away by following these great ideas for improvising a Japanese braiding loom. Alison and Margaret show you how.

The art of *Kumihimo* has been practised in Japan for twelve hundred years but it is only relatively recently that countries outside Asia have shown a practical interest in this type of braiding.

We know that about 2,000 years ago the Koreans were making silk braids and it was from this source, through China, that the Japanese developed some of the most complex and beautiful braids known. Braids of different shapes, textures and patterns were designed and used for the embellishment of clothing, religious insignia, theatrical costumes and Samurai armour. It has been said that new braids were developed to correspond with every change in Japanese social history.

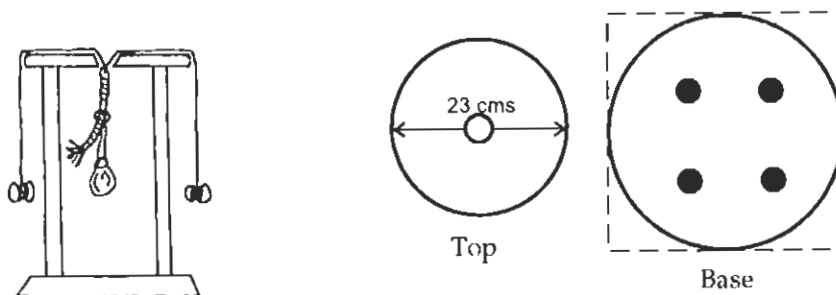
With the industrialisation of Japan in the late 19th century, machines replaced the work of the braider and it was not until the second half of the 20th century that there was a revival of interest in hand made braids in Japan. Elsewhere, enthusiasm for these braids has grown and now new and interesting braiding is practised in countries less tied than Japan to traditional braiding patterns and techniques.

At the Plant Craft Cottage in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, an article by Mary Dusenbury in 'In Celebration of the Curious Mind' encouraged us to investigate this beautiful craft.

In Japan four different braiding looms are used but we started, like most beginners, with a version of the *marudai* or round topped stand. Diagram 1 illustrates the elevation and plan of a *marudai* with bobbins, counterweight and braid in progress.

### Diagram 1:

Plan and elevation of *marudai* or round stand



At first, instead of the traditional wooden *marudai*, we used a kitchen stool with a hole drilled through its centre. Nuts and bolts were used for the bobbins and fishing sinkers for the counterweight. Another alternative to the traditional loom is suggested by Rodrick Owen in his book 'The Big Book of Sling and Rope Braids'. He describes a cardboard *marudai* with a round cardboard circle attached to a

cardboard panelled base. Weighted film canisters are used as bobbins.

Soon after we began to braid we found a wood-worker who delighted in making beautiful *marudai* and bobbins and we abandoned our kitchen stools, nuts, bolts and fishing sinkers. Initially we used fine mercerised cotton or linen yarns for the braids but gradually moved on to silk

and other yarns.

We hope that this article will inspire readers to investigate the pleasure of Japanese Kumihimo braiding. Many, many braiding patterns exist already but we are sure others are waiting to be discovered and put to new uses. We regret that we are unable to show the beauty and creativity of braiding created in Australia and overseas within this article.

# Narabi kaku yatsu gumi

or Paired, square, 8 bobbin braid

Using very basic equipment the following instructions create a simple braid with a long name - *Narabi kaku yatsu gumi*. This braid can make an attractive tied necklace.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

### Braiding stool

A wooden kitchen stool with a hole approximately 3.5 cms diameter at its centre.

### Bobbins

8 nuts and bolts (8 x 1.4 cms) with anchoring threads. A suitable anchoring thread can be made from a 40 cm length of medium weight crochet thread. Fold this in half and attach to the bobbin at mid point with a half hitch (diagram 2).

### Counterweight

Fishing sinkers or similar material approximately half of the combined weight of the bobbins.

### Bag for counterweights

A small drawstring bag to hold the counterweights.

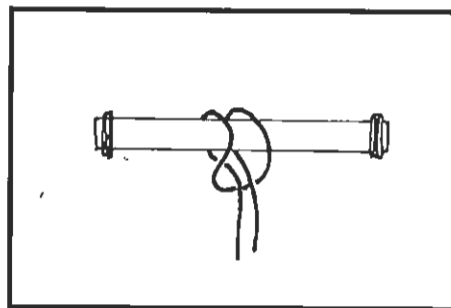
### Braiding threads

6 threads of fine mercerised cotton per bobbin. This braid looks attractive in a three colour pattern i.e. 4 bobbins in colour A, 2 bobbins in colour B and 2 bobbins in colour C.

## WARPING

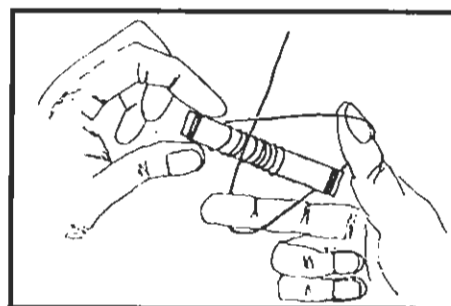
Firstly the braiding threads need to be cut ready to attach to the bobbins. Each thread must be twice the length of the finished braid. A warping board or two fixed dowels on a table can be used. Measure 6 threads of fine mercerised cotton for each of the 8 bobbins. Tie each group of six threads to the end of the anchoring thread, on each of the bobbins, using a single knot.

Wind the braiding threads around the bobbins leaving a tail of 35 cms. To make sure that the bobbins hang freely from the stool without unwinding, secure them with a simple hitch knot as shown in diagram 3 and 4.



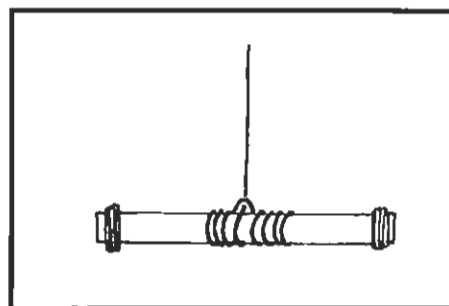
**Diagram 2:**

Attach anchoring thread to bobbin with a half hitch.



**Diagram 3:**

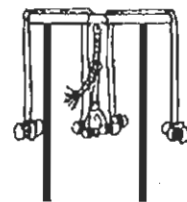
Secure each of the bobbins with a hitch knot to prevent them unwinding.



**Diagram 4:**

Hitch knot in place on bobbin.

Tie all of the tail ends of the braiding threads together in a single knot and pass it downwards through the hole in the centre of the stool. Attach the drawstring of the bag carrying the counterweights to the braiding threads with a simple half hitch (diagram 5).



**Diagram 5:**

The improvised *marudai* is ready to begin braiding.

## BRAIDING

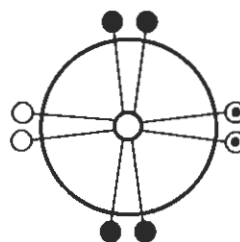
Place the bobbins in correct colour order around the stool (diagram 6). The large circle represents the top of the braiding stool and the small circles around it represent the bobbins with their threads.

Start braiding by moving the bobbins in the direction shown by the arrows in diagram 7, step 1. Use both hands at the same time to pick up and put down the bobbins. As the bobbins move they pass directly over the centre of the loom in a simple movement from one side of the loom to the opposite side. Complete steps 1-4 as shown and repeat this sequence until the required length has been braided.

During braiding the braiding threads may be lengthened by loosening the simple hitch knot and allowing the threads to unwind from the bobbins. It is essential to slide the counterweight up the braid, as the braid grows, to prevent the weight touching the floor. Otherwise the tension will be lost.

When braiding is finished remove the braid from the stool and from the bobbins. The braid ends may be finished simply by binding the woven part of the ends and allowing the remaining threads to form a tassel. Jewellery findings can also be attached.

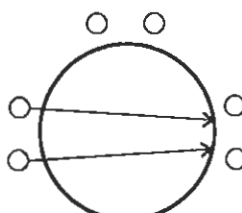
© Alison Morton and Margaret Murray, 1996



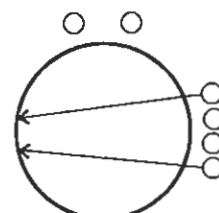
● Colour A  
○ Colour B  
⊙ Colour C

**Diagram 6:**

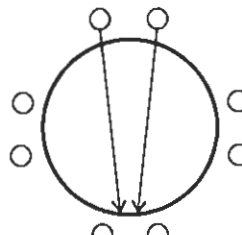
Place the bobbins around the stool in the correct colour order.



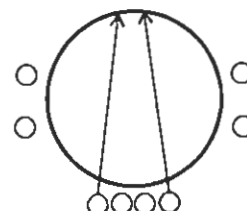
**STEP 1**



**STEP 2**



**STEP 3**



**STEP 4**

**Diagram 7:**

Braiding steps 1 - 4.

### Recommended books and references:

1991, Martin, Catherine, *Kumihimo*, Lark Books, Asheville.

Jaqui Carey, *Creative Kumihimo*

1995, Owen Rodrick, *The Big Book of String and Rope Braids*, Cassell, London.

(titled *Braids - 250 braids from Japan, Peru and Beyond in the USA*)

1993, *In Celebration of the Curious Mind*, Interweave Press, Colorado.

Books can be purchased from Mill Hill Books, Magnolia Books, Artisan Craft Books,

Continued interest and enthusiasm of braiders in Melbourne led to the formation of the Melbourne Kumihimo Group in 1992. This group of over 30 members meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Handweavers and Spinners rooms in the Meat Market Craft Centre, North Melbourne. Visitors are always welcome. This year an informative newsletter is being produced. Interested braiders, unable to attend meetings can become associate members for a small fee and receive regular newsletters. Many interstate braiders have joined us, and anyone interested in becoming a member or associate member should contact one of the convenors:

Lorraine Anderson (03) 9787 2773 or Catherine Warner (03) 9787 6315

Looms and bobbins can be obtained from: Ron Blyth (03) 9439 9483 or Bill Porter (058) 271 485



# Tapestry

The Soul of Weaving

## THE EDGE IN TAPESTRY

by Karen Madigan

The secret of straight even edges in tapestry is found within the woven structure itself. Every row of tapestry must be woven with enough ease to prevent drawing in of the tapestry's edges. On the other hand, too much ease creates bumps on the woven surface and can inadvertently increase the width of the tapestry.

### Arching, slanting and bubbling

There are several solutions to this problem. Arching, slanting and bubbling are traditional techniques used. Diagram 1-3. The weft is placed in the shed in one of the techniques shown and then beaten down to the fell of the weave with a fork. These solutions ensure that adequate ease is left in the weft. The larger the area to be woven with a single coloured weft the more critical the amount of ease required. Look at each row as it is woven. Does the weft gently curve around each warp end without distorting them in any way? Easing the weft in tapestry soon becomes natural with practice. ☛

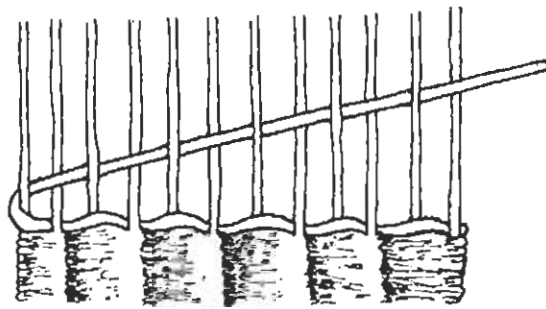


Diagram 1: Slanting the weft

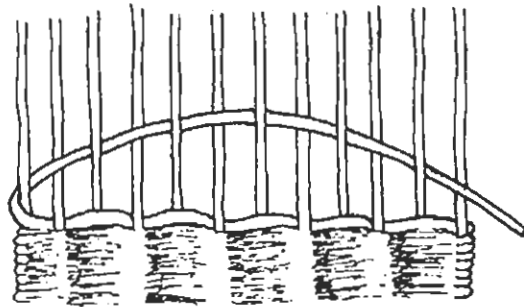


Diagram 2: Arching the weft

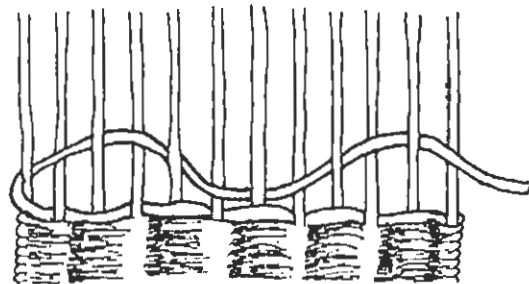


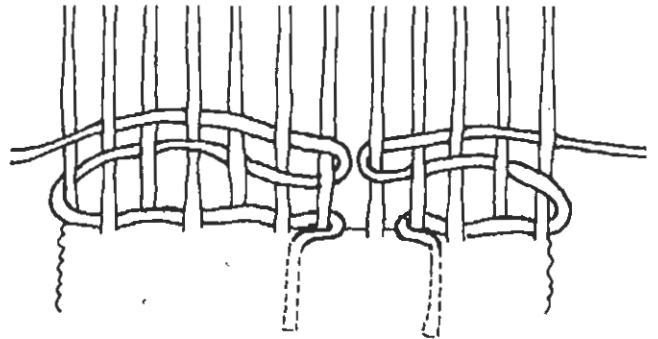
Diagram 3: Bubbling the weft

## THE EDGE IN TAPESTRY (Cont.)

### "Lazy Line" Technique

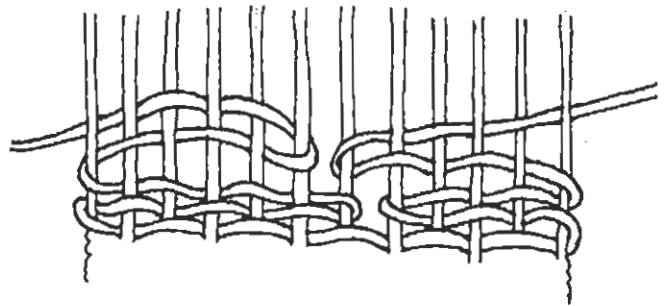
To avoid misjudgment of the ease required, large single coloured areas can and should be woven with more than one weft. This establishes the weft into several *relays* which weave back and forth from each other to complete the woven area. This technique is also known to the Navaho tapestry rug weavers as 'lazy line'. The line of the relays can be seen on close inspection of the tapestry but is unobtrusive and can provide a slight textural interest. The technique also enables the weaver to work in a smaller area, keeping the hands and arms in a better position.

Each line of tapestry weaving must be woven exactly the same as if it was woven with only one coloured warp, i.e. the under and over sequence must be correct along every row. All the wefts are woven in **opposite directions** in same shed. When they meet they are turned and woven away from each other to the selvedge, edge of the shape or to meet another weft relay. They are then woven back towards each other but progress one warp end to either left or right.



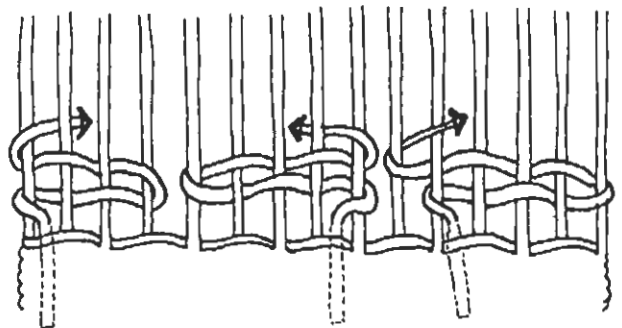
**Diagram 4:**

Weft relays. Two wefts weaving in opposite directions.



**Diagram 5:**

Next row in weft relay. The 'lazy line' is beginning to form. Each time the wefts meet they are stepped by one warp end.



**Diagram 6:**

Placing three weft relays in a tapestry.

© Karen Madigan 1996

# WEAVERS NOTEBOOK

by Margaret Small

**W**eavers workbooks are wonderful places. The notes, diagrams and patterns are kept for reference so previous patterns and samples can be repeated.

Margaret Small has shared one of her pages with us here. It is a double weave fabric with log cabin weave. The central block reverses so the back of the fabric is totally different from the front.

Margaret's design was inspired by Sandra Leinweber's article, 'Designing with Double-Weave blocks' in *Handwoven*, May/June 1992, page 51.

**WEAVE DESCRIPTION:** Double Weave.

**WARP YARN:** Bradford 2/12 cotton hand dyed with fibre reactive dyes such as Drimarene. Mauve, yellow and purple

**WEFT YARN:** Same type. Mauve, white and purple.

**REED USED:** 50/10 (or 12 dpi)

**SETT:** 20 ends to 1 cm

**SLEY:** 4/dent

**PICKS PER CENTIMETRE:** 18

**TOTAL WARP ENDS:** 576

**WIDTH IN REED:** 29.5 cms

**LENGTH OF WARP:** 2 metres

**WOVEN LENGTH:** 121.5 cms

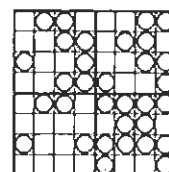
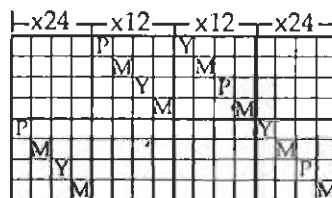
**WOVEN WIDTH:** 27 cms

**FINISHED DIMENSIONS:**

Length: 115.5 cms

Width: 26.5 cms

**SHRINKAGE:** 4.9% in length, 1.8% in width.

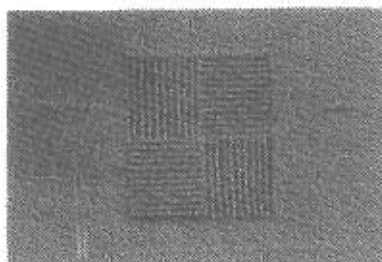
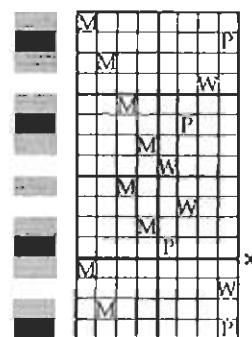


M - Mauve

P - Purple

Y - Yellow

W - White



**FINISHING METHOD:** Soak in warm soapy water for 1 hour then work by hand for 5 minutes. Air dry and press.

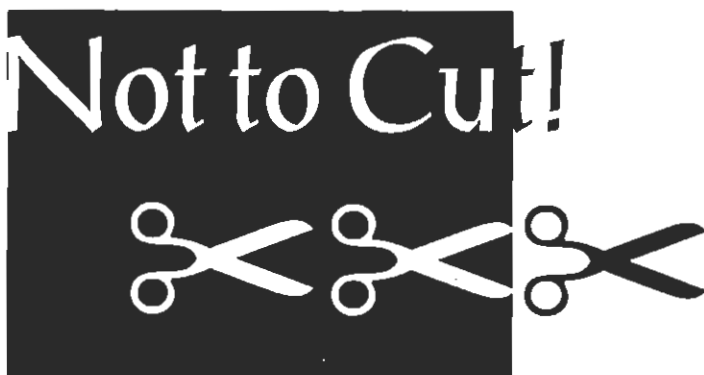
**COMMENTS:** I wove with the main log cabin design on top to reduce the possibility of errors. Block pockets can be stuffed with

wadding if desired while still on the loom. Stuff pockets after \* on draft. When you change blocks the stuffing is locked in. Fabric was designed for pot holders. \*

© Margaret Small is the convener of EIGHT PLUS!

# To Cut or Not to Cut!

by Chris Jakku



## TO CUT OR NOT TO CUT - THAT IS THE QUESTION

"How do weavers feel on this vexed question?"

In the past, handwoven clothing was made of rectangles and squares, and maybe a little shaping during the weaving process. Then it became O.K. to use commercial patterns (made for commercial fabrics) to construct handwoven fabric into garments. The purists were shocked and amazed! However, what is the feeling now? I have been along both roads, starting with the rectangles, going through the commercial patterns, but am now returning to the rectangle shapes again. Somehow, handwoven fabric, cut and spliced etc. into a commercial garment, just doesn't feel right.

How do other weavers approach this dilemma?

So once again narrow widths have got me. I have made this top various ways and solved a few hiccups with the original design seen in an old 'Handwoven' volume and date unknown, as it was borrowed from a friend.



## HANDWOVEN TOP

WARP: 24 EPI,(10 EPC) cotton 20/2.

WEFT: Same as warp or use yarns and setts of your choice.

WIDTH: 9" (23 cms) for size 14. Adjust for smaller or larger sizes.

WARP LENGTH: 144" (3.7 metres) plus loom allowance plus 10% shrinkage.

## TO WEAVE

Use threading or pattern and colours of your choice. I love plain 'weave and play' with colour. For example, three shades of blue/purple in the warp and one shade in the weft. Continue weaving until 144" or 3.7 metres are completed.

## CONSTRUCTION

Cut the fabric into the following panels:  
Two panels measuring 50" (128 cms) each.  
One panel measuring 24" (62 cms) for the back.  
One panel measuring 20" (52 cms) for the front.

The two 50" panels are the side panels, fold these in half. The shoulder will be on the fold. Hem (1/2" or 1.2 cms) the top of the back and front panel neatly.

Sew the front panel to each side on the side panels and do the same for the back panel. Make sure that the bottom edges of the top are even. Sew the side seams together leaving armhole gaps of 10" (25 cms). Hem armholes and neck (as these are selvages I just turn over 1/4" and handstitch). Hem the bottom edges of the top.

These instructions are for the basic pattern but decoration can be added to the front panel in the weaving process. For example, leno, Danish medallion, inlay etc. Embroidery and other hand stitching could be used when the garment is assembled. The garment can be made longer or shorter in length and the side panels can be left open 4" (10 cms) at each side to allow for larger hip lines! A decorative belt or braid can be used as a waist tie, for those with waists!

© Chris Jakku 1996

References: *Handwoven*, Published by Interweave Press, Colorado, USA.

# Looking at Other WEAVERS

by Earl Ingleby

**E**arl Ingleby has recently surveyed a group of 26 weavers from "8 PLUS". This group of avid weavers are distributed throughout Australia and have kindly shared their knowledge and work practices with us. The survey examined how weavers warp their looms.

## EQUIPMENT

### LOOMS

Most have more than one, the majority are countermarch, the others are jack looms (floor and table). There was one 8 shaft dobbie and one 24 shaft dobbie. None used a draw loom. Most countermarch looms used cord or texsolv heddles, some used metal. The majority use a ratchet for tensioning and all but two only use one backroller.

### WARPING

A small majority use a warping board, others a mill, only one used a sectional beam. A number indicated that they had a mill but seldom made use of it. There is an even split between one and two crosses when warping as there is between using single or multi threads with each pass. Most made separate colour warps for multi-coloured work except where random colour was used. Cords rather than sticks are the preferred means of securing the cross. Most use choker ties to secure the warp before dressing.

### DRESSING THE LOOM

All but four dressed the loom from

back to front (i.e. rolled onto back roller before threading). Some indicated that they went from front to back only with special warps. This in turn meant that the majority use a raddle, (most securing it to the back beam though some indicated that they secured it at the front). Most wound onto the back roller with leash sticks in place after looping the warp around the back apron stick. The separation of the warp on the back roller caused the most diverse replies to the survey. Sticks, paper, cardboard, corrugated cardboard and venetian blind slats being the most common means used.

### THREADING THE LOOM

When threading, most weavers started from the right with four indicating they started from the centre, only one from the left, the same was also indicated for sleying the reed. To the question "do you sley closer at the selvages?" most answered "some times or occasionally". The same with floating selvages. Only three weighted their selvages separately from the main warp. All tied rather than laced the warp to the front apron stick. All indicated that they normally dressed the loom by themselves.

## OTHER POINTS

Seven weavers indicated that they used computers for design purposes. Most used a variety of shuttles and most wound quills rather than bobbins for boat shuttles. Temples were seldom used. The majority have used or do use a spinning wheel. Most use both metric and imperial measurements. Most have a number of different count reeds.

## CONCLUSIONS

This survey was too small and too restricted to be considered comprehensive but it was, to the best of my knowledge, the first of its type to look at the subject from an Australian perspective. Five states were represented and there were no apparent regional differences. The results suggest that we are different from Europe and North America (I have no data from Asia) in a number of respects, and very similar in others. While the survey was small some observations can be made. The first and in my opinion the most important is that Australian weavers are more than willing to share their knowledge. *I would like to express my thanks to the "8 PLUS" members for their assistance.*

continued on page 23

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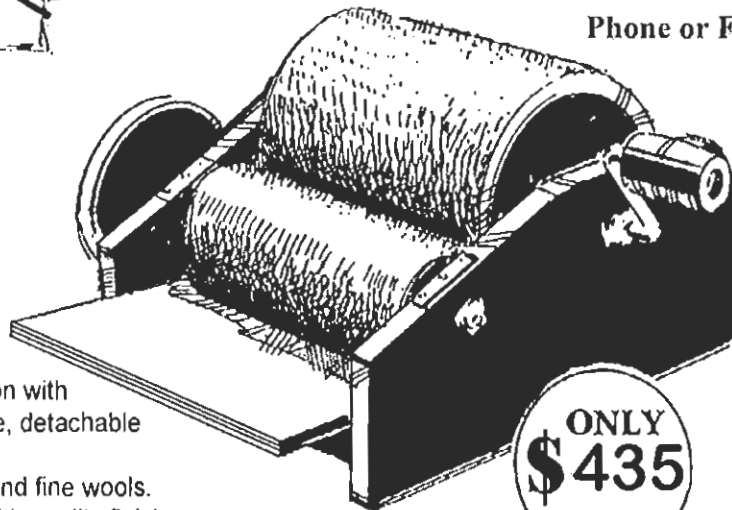
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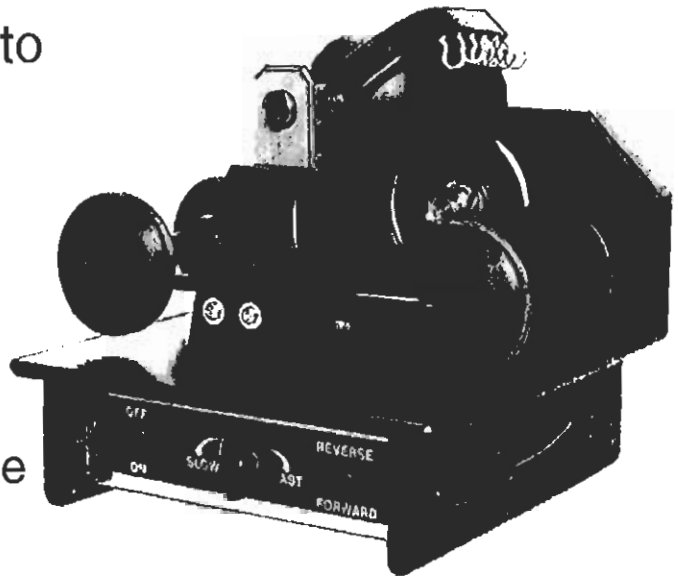
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### STEEL WEAVING REEDS

11.5 cms overall height 8.2 cms weaving height

dents per inch	8	10	12	15
18"	16.00	16.00	18.00	18.00
24"	20.00	22.00	22.00	22.00
30"	25.00	25.00	26.00	
36"	30.00	32.00	32.00	
42"		36.00	36.00	

Postage 1st reed \$7.00, then \$3.00 per reed

### Cotton Hanks-

5 hanks to a bundle of 1.1kg natural, 28/15 or 20/15 similar to a seine twine but softer. Suitable as a warp, \$24.00 post free.

100  
Stranded cotton

...in bundles of 100 skeins of embroidery threads, 50 assorted colours, 2 of each colour, colour fast, 8m skeins, suitable for weaving bookmarks, \$29.00 post free in Australia.

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# Reap the Flax

A Swedish Folk Dance

Now we will pull the ripe flax today,  
Hackle it well and spin, spin away,  
Then we will make our dresses and skirts,  
And gaily swing in dancing.

## CHORUS

Dunk, dunk, dunk, dunk, dunk,  
Loom treadle pounds, loom shuttle sounds,  
Dunk, dunk, dunk, dunk, dunk, dunk,  
All gaily swing in dancing.

Now all the flax we'll hackle today  
Then spin it well and weave, weave away,  
Then we will make our dresses and skirts,  
And gaily swing in dancing.

## CHORUS

Now we will spin our white thread today,  
Hackled so clean - we'll spin, spin away,  
Then we will make our dresses and skirts,  
And gaily swing in dancing.

## CHORUS

Now we will weave our linen today,  
Threads white and fine we'll weave, weave away,  
Then we will make our dresses and skirts,  
And gaily swing in dancing.

## CHORUS



## FIBERWORKS PCW

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Canada... Now available in Australia

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- Block substitution library for profile drafts
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2430 N S W Australia

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## Looking at Other Weavers, *cont. from page 18*

by Earl Ingleby

### EQUIPMENT

By the nature of the weavers surveyed all had at least one 8 shaft loom, all had more than one loom. The fact that none had a draw pattern or draw shaft loom suggests that two harness weavers are a rarity in Australia (This type of weaving is not uncommon overseas). The scarcity of dobby looms is regrettable but not surprising when the costs of such equipment is considered. Few use more than one back roller thus excluding many weaves that are common in both hand and power weaving (Terry, Velvet, Fustian, etc.). It also means that the capacity to use more than one

structure across the warp is limited (e.g. Honeycomb (waffle) with tabby borders). Ratchet tensioning means that most surveyed accept the fact that they must stop weaving and move to the back of the loom to advance the warp. The use of computers by weavers is quite small and doesn't reflect their use in the general public.

### WARPING

More weavers have access to warping mills here than overseas yet make less use of them. The use of two crosses in warping is not common overseas and perhaps reflects the predominance of

back to front dressing.

### DRESSING

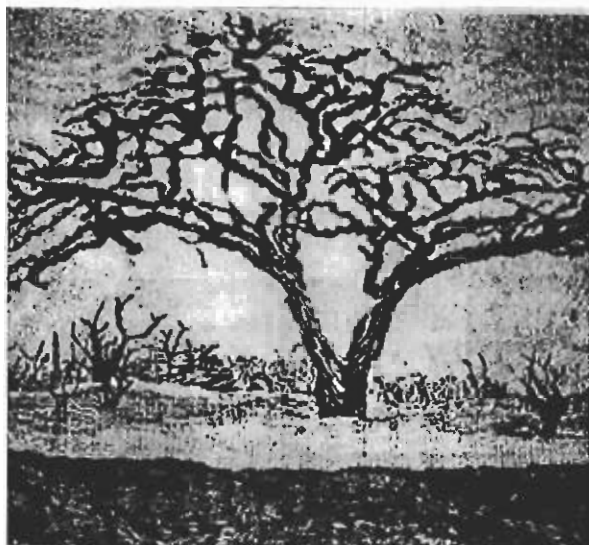
As far as those surveyed were concerned the "front to back" v "back to front" controversy that has raged overseas for decades has no counterpart in Australia. Back to front is IT. While there are a number of issues in the survey that have not been addressed I hope this report is of interest. Finally one last word, without the forum of Curious Weaver in which to publish this report it would not have been conducted.  
©Earl Ingleby July 1996

*Before the Rains* by Ann Shuttleworth

Textures of drought. Parched earth of a dried waterhole, with skeletal branches of giant acacia & stunted mopani trees in undyed wools stark against the sunbleached blue sky.

Handwoven and coiled design on cotton warp. Handspun natural Polworth coloured fleece, wool and mohair.

Height: 151 cms



# Weaver's Story

## ANN SHUTTLEWORTH - TAPESTRY WEAVER

Ann Shuttleworth is a tapestry weaver and fibre artist. Her work was exhibited in a solo exhibition in May at the Meat Market Craft Centre, North Melbourne. The exhibition, titled 'Kinematic Tranquillity', featured multi media fibre works - woven, felted, embroidered and applied. She is interested in tactile, textural tapestry techniques and says '...today the greatest compliment is for someone to walk up to one of my pieces and touch it because they can't stop themselves'.

"I came to Australia from Johannesburg, South Africa in January, 1988. This was a crucial time in my personal creative development. I'd learnt to weave cloth on a 4 shaft loom and was privileged to learn "modern" tapestry techniques with Eline Williams.

I use my own photographs as inspiration or use pencil sketches made *in situ* to design my tapestries. I spin and dye much of the fibre needed. They are woven on a timber frame suspended from solid screws on a wall. When I came to Australia I saw the tapestries made by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop for the new Parliament House. The World Tapestry Symposium was held in Melbourne in 1988 and I thought there would be a wonderfully rich creative environment in which to immerse myself. But no, what I weave isn't weaving I was told. Weave Australian and then ask about exhibiting. I couldn't comprehend how a city with such obvious talent could be so blinkered. I thus puttered on at home, ignoring what was being done around me.

I started playing on a tiny work surface in my kitchen, making felt. Not the traditional cotton and fleece sandwich but using plastic garden mesh suitable to grow climbers, topped by a garbage bag and then fine layers of fleece. Initially I applied my pictures but as my impatience grew at the tedium, I started to see if I could make the images directly in the felt - and was delighted to find I could.

Through word of mouth and growing interest in my work I am invited to give regular workshops throughout Victoria, including Artist in School for a few projects.

I've been developing hollow 3D sculptures in felt. In addition I've started to use up felt scraps by turning them into coils, to form felt baskets. I continue to demonstrate and teach groups when invited and feel very privileged with the friends I have made in this way and the places I have visited."

© Ann Shuttleworth 1996

# SUPPLIERS LISTING 1996

## EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

ISD codes are not included

NOBLE LOOMS	649 Marion Road, ASCOT PARK 5043 S A	(08) 276 1754	Australian looms, up to 16/24 shaft, dobbie and computer assisted
ERTOEL WHEELS	7/45 Vinter Avenue, CROYDON 3136 VIC	(03)9725 6253	Electric wheels, drum carders, Roberta wheels
INWOOD-SMITH MANUFACTURING	Lindsay Road, NORTH ROTHBURY 2335	(049) 387 536	Carders, spinners,
ARTY AND CRAFTY	P O Box 40, DAW PARK 5041 SA	(08) 277 3763	Looms, craft materials, reeds
ASHFORD AUSTRALIA	Snowy Mountains Hwy, COOMA 2630 NSW	1800 026 397	All Ashford wheels, looms and accessories
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GLENORA CRAFT	South Avondale Road, DAPTO 2530 NSW	(042) 615 099	Yarn, looms & equipment
MECCIA LOOMS, Cecile Falvey	P O Box 23, EAGLE HEIGHTS 4271 QLD	(075) 452 396	Aust. agent for Meccia Looms
HANDS ASHFORD	5 Normans Road, CHRISTCHURCH NZ	/	Ashford products, classes
JOHN GOODALL	57 Boundary Road, DROMANA 3936 VIC	(059) 872 696	Tapestry Looms

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COMMISSION DYERS PTY LTD	7 Pinn Street, ST MARYS 5042 S A	(08) 276 2844	All dyes, natural & synthetic, chemicals etc
KRAFT COLOUR	Fac 11/72-74 Chifley Drive, PRESTON 3072 VIC	(03) 9484 4303	Dyes
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GAYWOOL	Noramunga Road, DEVENISH 3726 VIC	(057) 641 363	Gaywool dyes, hand dyed yarn
BATIK OETORO	203 Avoca Street, RANDWICK 2031 NSW	(02) 398 6201	Dyes, Chemicals

## YARNS, FIBRES, CARDING

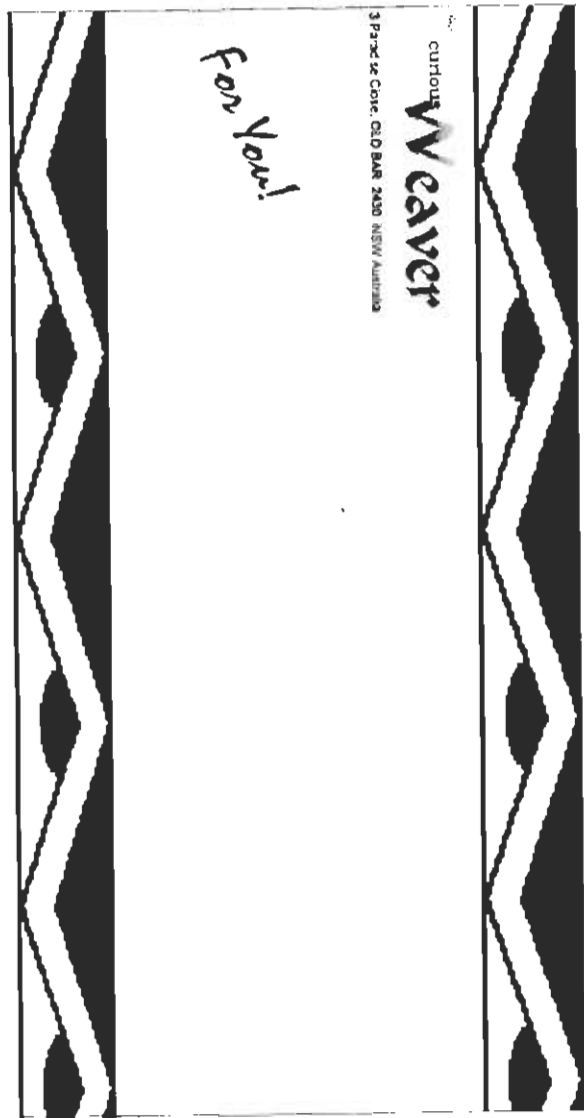
BENDIGO WOOLLEN MILLS	Lansell Street, BENDIGO 3550 VIC	(054) 42 4600	2 & 3 ply wools. Mohair and alpaca yarns
RAJMAHAL	Fosterville Road, BAGSHOT EAST 3551 VIC	(054) 488 551	Embroidery thread, sisha mirrors, tassel kits
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EDITH AND THIELMA	P O Box 73, KENTHURST 2156 NSW	(02)9871 2027	Carding service, equipment
FIBRE FLAIR	Main Road, WAIKANA E NZ	04-293-6035	Yarn, looms, wheels, books
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KAREN MADIGAN	3 Paradise Close, OLD BAR 2430 NSW	(065) 537 004	Agent for FIBERWORKS PCW
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MILL HILL BOOKS	P O Box 80, MALENY 4552 QLD	(074) 94 2081	Books on all textile arts
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OYSTER BAY PAPER CRAFTS	4 Tiranna Place, OYSTER BAY 2225	(02) 9528 5008	Framing cards
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