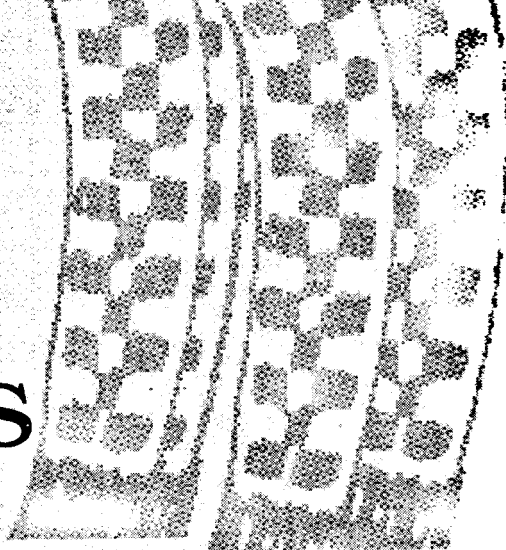


Woven Ribbons



Silken ribbons in many colours and patterns can be simply woven on a small inkle loom. This is a contemporary compact version of the loom, which was originally used to weave garters and drawstrings in the 17th and 18th century in Scotland and England.

Warping the Inkle Loom

NOTE: There is an option of two different warp lengths on this loom. (Diagram 2) In the following instructions, the shortest route was used. This produces a finished ribbon of about 90cms length. Every type of inkle loom should have a choice of warping routes.

Review of weaving process

Firstly the loom has warp threads wound onto it. The weft is then wound onto a shuttle. Then weaving commences by placing the weft thread to and fro through two different passageways in the warp. These two rows, continually repeated, produce a woven tape.

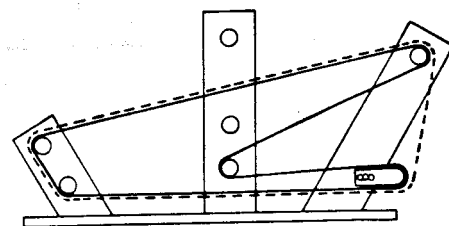


Diagram 2

Warping an inkle loom is not difficult, but if this is your first attempt, take your time and follow the directions carefully. Warping will soon become second nature and very quick. Before warping can begin, the tension device must be securely tightened. It should be tightened in a position that will provide slack on the threads when released. This is important because the weaving process tightens the warp threads as you weave. This tension device can be a moveable dowel or a block as shown (diagram 3).

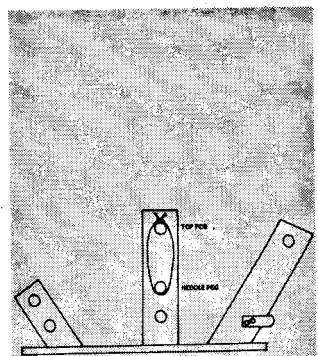


Diagram 1

Heddles are just loops of string. They are essential for the inkle loom to function. Use No. 20 crochet cotton or any strong fine string. Tie a length of cotton around the heddle peg and top peg as shown. Securely knot and trim the ends. For these ribbons you will need 12 heddles.

You will need

- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ A cardboard shuttle (see template on page 9) A small ruler
- ✓ Four skeins of embroidery thread such as Rajmahal, fine 20/2 silk thread or 3 ply perle cotton
- ✓ Sewing thread to match edge threads for the weft
- ✓ 12 string heddles, see diagram 1 for how to make these.

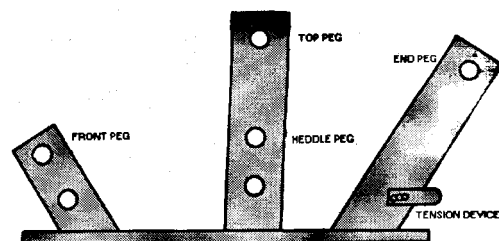


Diagram 3

READING A PATTERN DRAFT

By warping the inkle loom with a pre-designed arrangement of coloured threads many different patterns can be woven. A total of 25 threads are wound onto the inkle loom using one of the patterns here. Each symbol stands for a different colour. For example, the first six threads of pattern 1 are the same colour. Wind the coloured warps onto the loom following the pattern draft from left to right.

OPEN	■	■	■	◆	◆	◆	▼	▼	◆	◆	■	■	■	END
HEDDLE		■	■	■	▼	▼	▼	▼	+	+	+	■	■	

Pattern 1

OPEN	■	■	◆	◆	◆	+	▼	+	◆	◆	◆	■	■	END
HEDDLE		■	■	■	■	■	+	+	■	■	■	■	■	

Pattern 2

OPEN	■	■	■	◆	◆	◆	+	+	+	■	■	■	■	END
HEDDLE		■	■	■	+	+	+	+	◆	◆	◆	■	■	

Pattern 3

The Open Thread

Select the first threads for your ribbon in readiness to begin warping the loom. Follow the pattern draft above for the ribbon of your choice. For example, Ribbon 1 requires the first six threads to be the same colour. Place the loom in front of you with the pegs facing towards you. Anchor the end of the warp thread on the front peg with some tape. Guide the thread to between the top peg and the heddle peg of the loom, then proceed around the end peg, down around the tension device and back around to the front peg. Cut the thread and tie it to itself at the front peg. This completes the first round known as the *open thread*. (Diagram 4) Try to maintain an even and taut tension on the warp as you wind it.

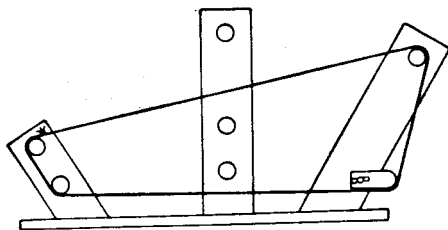


Diagram 4

THE HEDDLE THREAD

Every alternate thread must be anchored by a heddle. (See page 12). Begin as before by taping the end of the next thread to the front peg. Guide the thread up and over the top peg and hold it there while you attach a string heddle as seen in diagram 5. Continue over

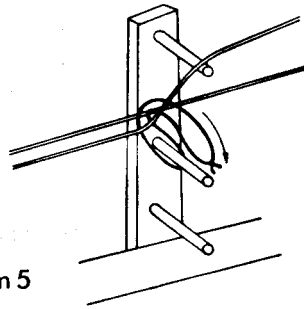


Diagram 5

the end peg, down around the tension device and back to the front peg as before. (Diagram 6) Tie this thread to itself again. (Note: do not encircle the front peg)

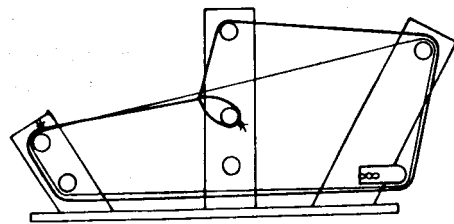


Diagram 6

Continue warping the loom in this manner, alternating open and heddle threads until the instructed number of threads (25 in total) have been wound on. When completed, place some tape over all the knots to secure them and stop them slipping.

CHANGING COLOURS

To change the colour of a warp thread simply tie the new colour to the previous one at the front peg. It is not strictly necessary to tie off each thread at the front peg if you are using the same colour thread each time. Once you feel confident, any warp thread can be

An Inking for Weaving

Continued from page 13

continuously wound onto the loom by continuing the warping around the front peg.

HOW TO OPERATE THE LOOM

The loom is now warped and ready to start weaving. The loom can now create the two weft passageways required for weaving. These passageways are referred to as *sheds*. There is the *up shed* and the *down shed*. It is a good idea to practise the operation of the two sheds before weaving begins.

The *up shed* is made by placing your hand behind the heddles and raising the open threads. (Diagram 7) This creates a shed (or passageway) in front of the heddles through which the weft can be passed from one side to the other. A small ruler can be inserted into the shed in front of the heddles and turned on its side to hold the shed clearly open.

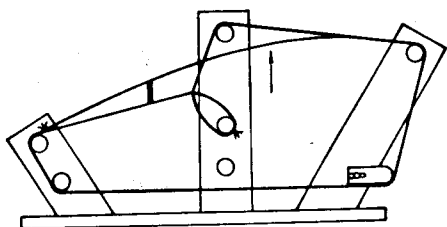


Diagram 7

The *down shed* is made by pressing down on the open threads behind the heddles, thus creating the alternate shed. (Diagram 8)

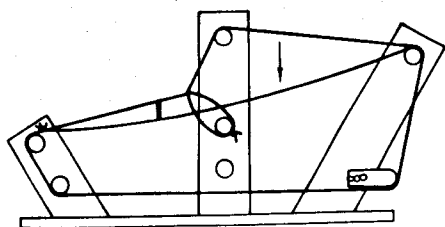


Diagram 8

TO WEAVE

Wind some weft thread onto a cardboard shuttle (See page 9 for template) Operate the *up shed* and pass the shuttle from right to left through the shed opening, leaving a tail of weft on the right. Operate the *down shed* and beat down on the first row with the tapered edge of the ruler. Pass the shuttle of weft thread through this opening. Continue operating the up and down sheds alternatively, and passing the shuttle through to form the woven tape. Remember to beat down on the previous row before inserting the weft to produce a neat weave. The warp threads should be very close together so that the weft is not noticeable.

TO PROGRESS THE WEAVING

The weaving process becomes difficult as the weaving nears the heddles. When this happens it is time to progress the weave and warp around the pegs so that weaving can again continue. Loosen the tension device so the warp is slack. Pull the weaving towards you and around the front peg until there is more warp to weave on. (Diagram 9)

Re-tighten the tension device. The tension device will gradually need to be released as the weaving progresses. Do not let the warp threads get too tight as they can damage the pegs on the loom.

TO COMPLETE

The weaving has progressed as far as possible when the beginning of the ribbon is just behind the heddles. Stop weaving and cut the ribbon from the loom through the unwoven warp. The ribbon can be glued and cut when dry to prevent fraying or the warp fringing can be trimmed and the ends wrapped. *

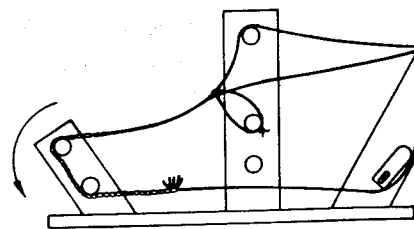


Diagram 9