

SWATCH PAGE

WARP PATTERN SYSTEM

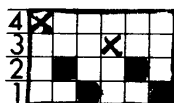
The warp is often considered the unchanging part of a piece of weaving—the weft, the place where the weaver can change the color or texture of the piece as weaving proceeds. However, one can vary the warp through the means of supplementary warps, warp brocade, or as Harriet Tidball calls it, the warp pattern system.

In this system, there is a tabby foundation with patterns formed by extra warp threads. These patterns may be used in stripes or over the entire fabric. One may form these patterns using any loom with 3 or more harnesses.

Threading

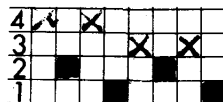
The basic threading can be as follows for a 4 harness loom (from Tidball 5):

Alternative 1—
X = threading on
pattern harness
■ = threading on
tabby harness



where the two tabbies are on harnesses 1 and 2 followed by a pattern threading yielding a 3 thread unit.

Alternative 2—



where each tabby is followed by a threading on a pattern harness yielding a 4 thread unit.

Each unit can be repeated in the threading as many times as one wishes.

It follows that with a multiharness loom, one can have $n-2$ = number pattern harnesses where n = number of harnesses on the loom and 2 = number of harnesses needed for tabby harnesses (see Regensteiner).

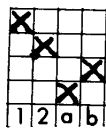
Sleying

One usually sleys a supplementary warp end in the same dent that the tabby warp end adjacent to it was sleyed. This counteracts the tendency of going to the underside of the fabric and not making as definite patterns on the topside. (Robin and Russ Handweavers.)

One can choose to beam, thread and sley the supplementary warp together with the foundation tabby warp, or separately. I prefer to do them separately, always remembering to slide my heddles in the correct places on the pattern harnesses when I am threading the foundation tabby warps.

Usually, the pattern warp yarn is a thicker yarn than that of the foundation tabby yarn.

Tie-Up and Treadling



pattern | tabby

To weave, raise the desired pattern harness(es) with the left foot and treadle alternately on the tabby a and b for the desired distance with the right foot. If the warp float becomes too long, one may tie it down by treadling a tabby alone. If only tabby is desired, the float will occur on the underneath side.

Beaming

There are actually 2 warps involved here—our foundation warp and our pattern warp. Since these 2 warps are used in differing rates or amounts, we can expect to have tension problems. These problems can be handled in varying ways:

1. beaming on 2 warp beams if your loom is so blessed, or
2. beaming the foundation warp on the warp beam and attaching weights to the warp chain(s) after threading, sleying, and tying onto the cloth stick. It is necessary to insure that the tension on all the supplementary warp chains be all the same. After some weaving, the weights will reach the back beam. In that case, the weights are moved further down the chain.

Weighing Techniques

Various weights can be used depending on the stretch, fragility and weight of your yarn. One can use soup cans, fishing sinkers, bottles filled with sand, socks (darned) filled with rocks or sand, clothespins, washers, or curtain weights. Regensteiner suggests and illustrates a slip knot to attach the weights to the chains. In some cases the weight of the warp chain itself will be enough to maintain the correct tension. Frey and Robin and Russ suggest beaming the foundation warp and supplementary warp together, and putting a lease stick between the two layers, pulling the lease stick down to the warp beam and putting a weight on each end and perhaps in the middle to keep the supplementary threads taut.

Please, please release your tension when leaving your weaving and put your weights on a chair so there is no pull on your warps, for these weights could stretch your warp permanently.

Pattern Suggestions

Various pattern suggestions and pictures showing of weighting of the supplementary warps can be seen in the publications listed in the Bibliography. It is hoped that you will design your own patterns from the basic threadings shown above.

Thanks

Thanks to Irene Wood for many valuable discussions on supplementary warps.

Bibliography

1. Frey, B. Pattern Weaving. Handweaver and Craftsman. Summer 1959. Vol. 10, No. 3. p. 9
2. Held, S. Weaving. Hot, Reinshart and Winston, 1973. p. 155
3. Regensteiner, E. Weaver's Study Course. Van Nostrand Reinhart. 1975
4. Robin and Russ Handweavers. Drafts and Designs. Vol. 16, No. 17. March 1974
5. Tidball, H. The Weaver's Book. MacMillan 1961
6. Tidball, H. Supplementary Warp Patterning. Shuttle Craft Guild Monograph. No. 17, 1966

Postscript

In the same Handweaver and Craftsman mentioned in the Bibliography is an article by Lois North—an 18th Century Weaving Puzzle. It discusses an entry in a ledger from the early 18th century which uses the name M's and O's for a draft which weaves as huck, barley corn or spot but not as M'S and O'S as we know it. A draft mentioned in the ledger called Sam'Il-Hough's Cap weaves as M'S and O's. The author suggests that the names were reversed somewhere in the period 1840-1930 and thus we should stop trying to find an M and an O in the present M'S and O'S where they aren't as I had tried to do in my swatch page on M's and O's. Thanks to Connie Magoffin for bringing this article to my attention.

Errata

On the Waffle Weave swatch page, the 8/4 cotton number 2 is sample 3 as shown in figure 3, and not the rayon novelty warp.

Happy Weaving and Experimenting

Joy Rosner