

# Questions and Answers

*Question:* What is meant by "patterns on opposites?" by "weaving on opposites?" Do they mean the same thing?

*Answer:* These phrases mean different things. Patterns are said to be "written on opposites" when one or more of the figures are written on two "opposite" sheds, so that they do not overlap by one thread as in the ordinary form of draft for overshot weaving. The "Monk's Belt" pattern is an example of a two-block pattern entirely "on opposites." The pattern weft makes floats either above or below the tabby foundation and there is no "half-tone." To produce this effect in patterns of more than two blocks it is necessary to use more than four harnesses. In weaving patterns of this order it is the usual practice not to treadle the small two-thread blocks that intervene between any two pattern blocks written on opposite sheds. Otherwise these patterns are woven in the same manner as other overshot patterns.

Four-block patterns on opposites are properly done on eight-harnesses, but may be written on four harnesses by a make-shift method in quite common use among the old-time weavers. The method results in certain inconsistencies and "accidentals" which are unavoidable, but these patterns have a sparkle and a special charm, nevertheless. Frequently among the old patterns one finds one in which a few blocks only are set on opposites. The well-known "Pine Bloom" pattern, for instance, owes its special charm to the use of this trick. The square "table" in this pattern is written on opposite sheds, and the blocks at the center of the star-figures are also on opposites. It is the accidentals that produce the pine-cone effect in this pattern.

"Weaving on opposites" is a different matter. Any overshot threading may be woven on opposites. Or any summer and winter weave pattern, for that matter. This method of weaving consists in throwing a weft shot in back-ground color, on the opposite shed, after each pattern shot. An occasional shot of tabby may or may not be used in this technique. The fabric produced is much heavier than an ordinary tabby and overshot fabric, and if the warp is set a little further apart than for ordinary weaving it will be entirely covered by the weft.

To illustrate: If the first pattern block of the pattern to be woven is on the 1-2 shed weave: 1-2, pattern color; 3-4 background color. Repeat till the block is square. If the block is a 2-3 pattern block weave 1-4 in background color. For a 3-4 pattern block weave 1-2 for background; and for a 1-4 pattern block weave the background shots on 2-3. If the pattern used contains any large blocks it is advisable to use a tabby shot also, after say every four shots of "opposites." This tabby is not visible in the result—or should not be—but it holds the warp-threads in correct position. Otherwise they are apt to bunch together and the fabric will be apt to wear badly.

In weaving on opposites it may be necessary to use a template to keep the fabric out to the width of the warp in the reed. Unless the weft is permitted to lie very loosely indeed the edges draw in badly.

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