

Weaving

a complete guide



Weaving with Card and Board Looms

Introduction:

The use of card and board looms forms an interesting introduction to the early stages of hand weaving. With this simple apparatus it is possible to study the fundamentals of design, use of colour in textiles and to produce an extensive range of articles which will be of great value to both the home craftworker and needlework class.

Handbags, table mats, decorative wall hangings, scarves, chokers, belts and napkin rings - once the basic principles of weaving are grasped, it is possible to make a tremendous range of useful and attractive articles with no more equipment than a needle, thread and a piece of cardboard.

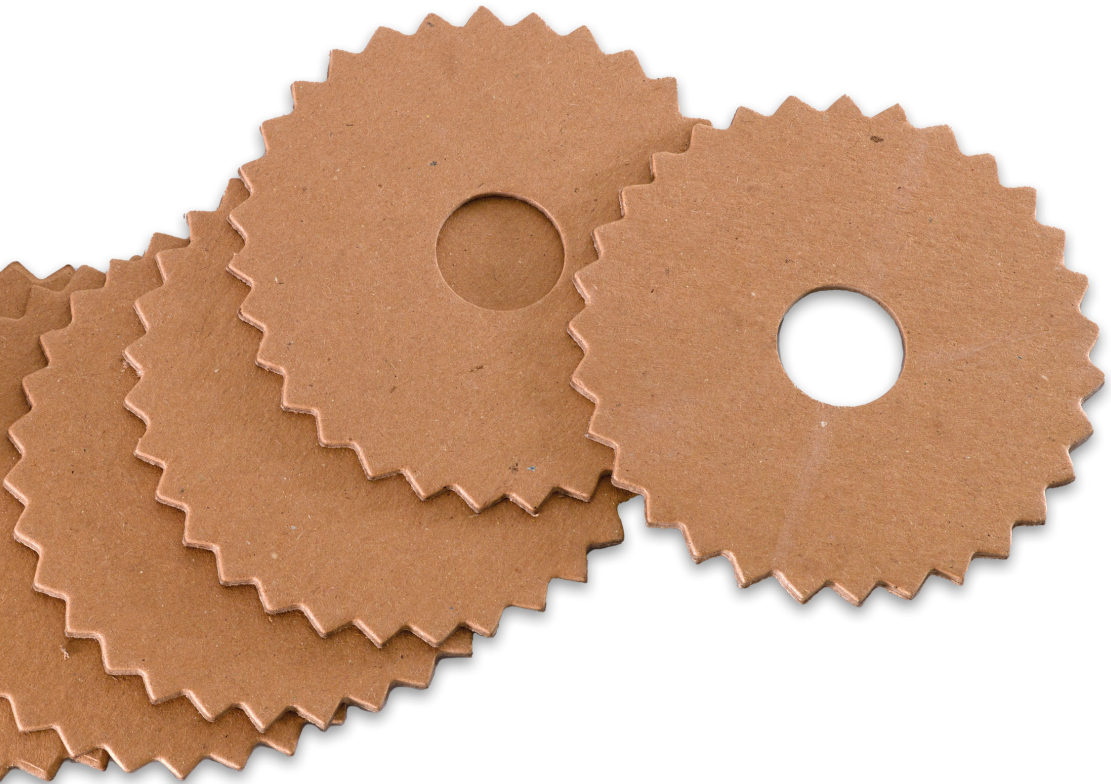
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You will need:

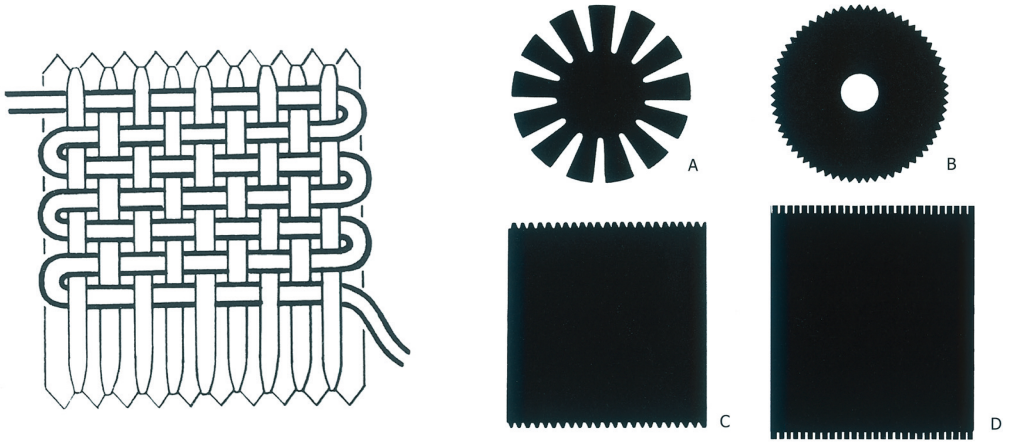
- 1 Cardboard loom
- 2 Scissors
- 3 Sticky tape
- 4 Yarn, ribbons, or raffia
- 5 Large plastic or metal weaving needles
- 6 Acrylic paint or collage materials



Types of card loom

Weaving

The WARP is a set of threads stretched taut and lying side by side. The WEFT is a single thread passed under and over the warp threads, usually at right angles. When the last warp thread is reached, the weft thread is worked back, normally going under where it went over before, and over where it went under. The process is continued, binding the warp together to form a fabric. This is the basis of all weaving.



You can make a simple loom out of almost anything, from a picture frame to a bed frame - all it has to do is hold the warp threads in a parallel position. For beginners, however, small card looms are an excellent, and certainly more convenient, introduction to the craft.

Round and Oval Weaving Cards, (A), require no needle, and the card itself forms the warp, being cut with deep serrations at regular intervals leaving sections which are bound with raffia or yarn to form small mats and baskets.

Round Serrated Cards, (B), introduce the use of warp threads.

Square and Oblong Serrated Cards, (C), are similar to the round serrated cards, but the use of the warp can be extended to give a greater range of colour texture and pattern. 12 serrations per 10cm.

Large Card Looms, (D), similar to (C) but with 9 notches per 10 cm, large card looms are suitable for weaving with thicker yarns.



Weaving Yarns

With card looms, wool, raffia, cotton yarn or thin twine are the most commonly used, although in fact you can weave with anything that comes in long thin strips.

Just for fun, and without worrying too much about finishing off, wind a long, strong thread firmly round and round a card or board loom. Secure the two ends with knots at the back and you have a warp. Now try weaving with strips of as many different materials as you can lay your hands on - braid, lace, suede, tinfoil, felt, cellophane, cut up clothing - thread them in and out of the warp with your fingers. Enjoy the feel of each contrasting material and the exciting fabric that grows before your eyes.

Throughout this leaflet, where raffia or wool is recommended, any similar synthetic raffia or knitting yarn may be used instead.

Card weaving

Weaving cards are the ideal way for young children to learn the basics of weaving, in that they introduce the general principle of the use of the weft thread. They are comfortable to handle, easy to weave, and when finished, make decorative and useful gifts.

Prepare the cards by sticking a covering to both sides of the centre section. This can be wallpaper or, for a more durable finish, self-adhesive plastic. Punch or pierce holes at regular intervals around the edges ready for the final binding - these should be about 2mm from the outer edge of the card.

Baskets and Bowls

These cards can be used to produce baskets and mats: For mats, simply weave onto the flat card spokes. For baskets, gently bend up the spoke sections to form a 3D basket shape before weaving.

1. As the cards form an integral part of the finished piece, and will be visible after your weaving is complete, it is usually a good idea to decorate the card to compliment your weaving. This can be achieved with paint, collage, decoupage or anything else you can imagine. Remember to cover both sides of the card!

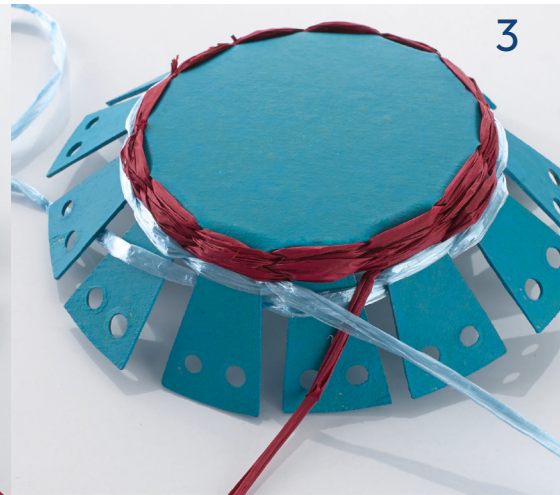
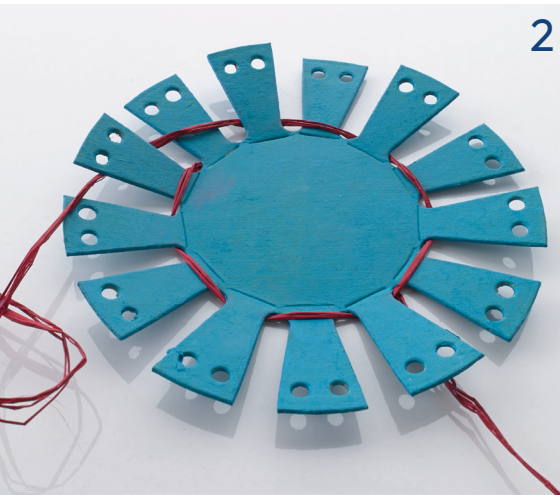
2. Cut a length of yarn (shorter is easier to work with at first - no more than 60cm) and begin to guide the yarn through the loom in an under-over pattern in a clockwise direction, leaving a tail of about 10cm on the outside of the basket. We will tidy this tail into the weaving later. Every few rows, it's a good idea to use your fingers to push the yarn towards the centre of the card so that it looks nice and uniform.

3. When you come to the end of your yarn, leave a tail of at least 10cm hanging on the outside of the basket, and start weaving with a new length of yarn, following the same directions as before. Continue weaving until you reach the edge of the basket.

4. Next, neaten up all of those yarn ends that are sticking out of our basket. Using a tapestry needle to tuck these away inside the weaving:

- Thread the end of the yarn through the needle.
- Insert the needle through your weaving, in between the weft threads
- Pull the needle through with the yarn, pull it tight, and cut off the end.

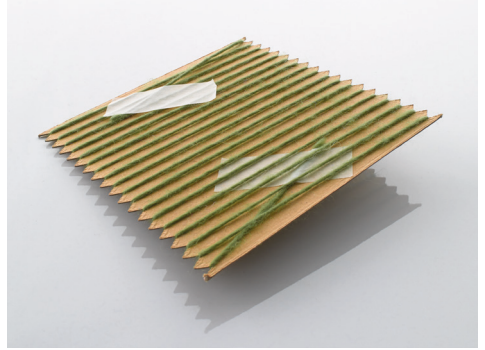
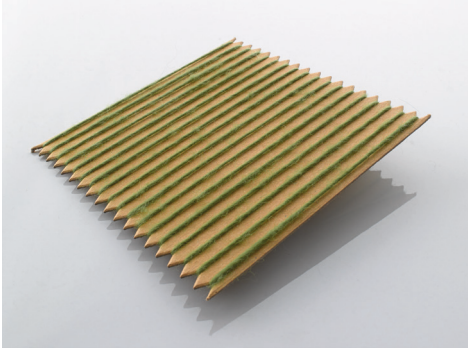
5. Round weaving cards have a series of punched holes in the top of the card. These holes are used to stitch along the top of the card to create a neat, decorative edge. Tuck these ends away using the same method as above.



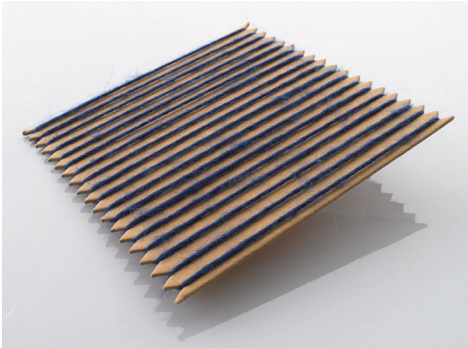
Using serrated card looms

Serrated card looms feature evenly spaced serrations to assist in winding the warp thread onto the loom. These cards do not play an integral part in the finished fabric, and therefore can be removed and reused again and again.

There are two methods that can be followed to set up warp threads. Each method informs how the final fabric will be finished:



Method 1: Wrap the warp thread around the front and back of the serrated card, securing both loose ends onto the back of the card with a length of sticky tape.

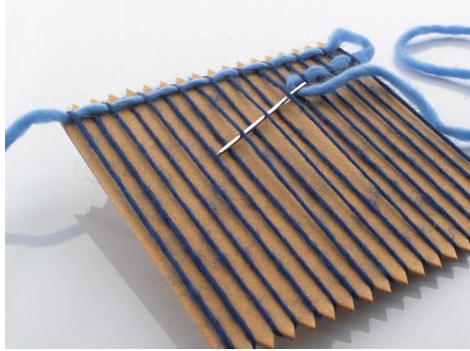


Method 2: Loop the warp threads around the serrations, resulting in vertical threads running down the front of the card, and small loops over the serrations on the back of the card. Again, loose ends can be secured onto the back of the card with sticky tape.

Begin Your Weaving

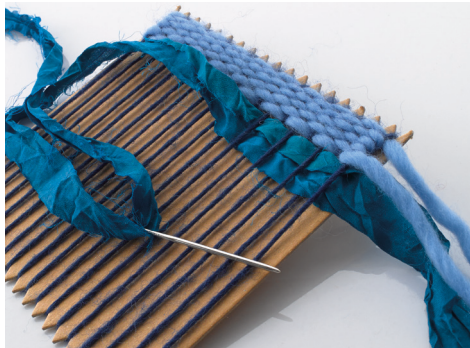
Cut a length of yarn and thread the yarn through a needle. You'll be using the needle to guide the yarn through the loom in an under-over pattern. (Under the first string, over the second, under the next, etc.) until the needle has passed through all of the strings. Pull the yarn through and leave a tail of around 10cm at the end.

Now begin to weave back again, using an under-over pattern that's the opposite of the line above (so if your first line of yarn goes under the last string, the next line down needs to start by going over the string). Every few rows, it's a good idea to use your fingers to push the yarn together so that it looks nice and uniform.



Introducing New Yarn

When you come to the end of your yarn, leave a tail of at least 10cm hanging out of the edge of the weaving. Take your new length of yarn, and insert it into the same side where your ending tail is. You'll be following the same under-over rules as before, so if the tail of the yarn ended going under the last string, you'll start your new yarn going over it. Continue weaving until the card has been filled up completely.



Neatening Up Weft Threads

Now we neaten up all of those yarn ends sticking out of the edges of the fabric. Use a needle to tuck these ends down into the sides of the weaving.

- Thread the end of the yarn through the needle.
- Following the direction of the warp, insert the needle down along the edge of the weaving, inbetween the weft threads.
- Pull the needle through with the yarn, pull it tight, and cut off the end.



Removing the Fabric From the Loom and Finishing

Now you have tidied up the weft threads, it's time to take the fabric off of the loom. If you followed method (1) to set up your warp threads, follow these directions to remove your weaving from the loom and finish your fabric:

- Turn the loom over, remove the sticky tape, and cut the warp threads across the centre
- Tie the warp threads together in pairs to secure your weaving in place

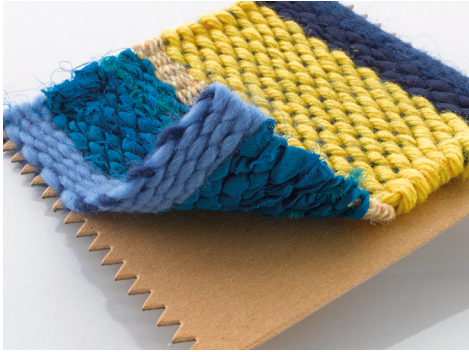


If you followed method (2) to set up your warp threads, follow these directions to remove your weaving from the loom and finish your fabric:

- Turn the loom over and remove the sticky tape. Carefully unhook the loops from the card serrations

- Thread the loose warp threads back into the weaving, threading the end of the yarn through in between the weft threads one line across from the edge of your weaving to secure it into the fabric.

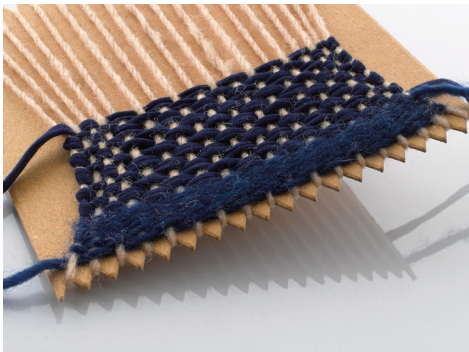
Gently tease out the fabric with your fingers to make the weft evenly spaced along the warp.



Handy tips

If your weft yarn is pulled too tight, it will begin to draw the warp yarns together, and your fabric may not lie flat when finished.

Use your fingers to hold the last warp thread on the loom while pulling the yarn through. This helps to prevent you from pulling the yarn too tightly and distorting your fabric. Guidelines drawn parallel to the first and last warp threads can help as a visual guide to check if the weft is being pulled too tight.



Round serrated mat looms

Round serrated mat cards are used to produce circular weaving where the card is integral to the weaving.

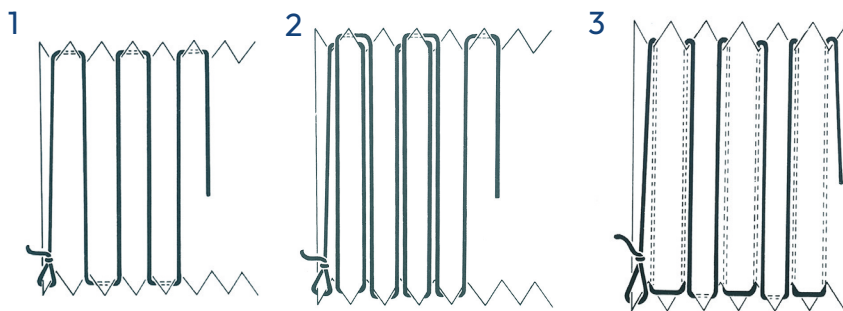
1. Decorate your card. As with the round and oval weaving cards, the card forms an integral part of the finished piece, and will be visible after your weaving is complete. It is usually a good idea to decorate the card to compliment your weaving. This can be achieved with paint, collage, decoupage or anything else you can imagine.
2. Set up your warp threads. Wind the warp thread around the edge of the card, between the serrations and through the centre hole, and continue in a clockwise direction until you come back to where you started. The two yarn ends can be tied together on the back of the card to secure the warp in place.
3. Begin your weaving. Starting at the centre, weave in and out of the warp threads following the same directions for weaving as serrated card looms. Introducing new yarn also follows the same procedure.
4. Finishing up. Follow the same directions as serrated card looms for neatening up weft threads.



Tapestry, plain and twill weaving

You can make almost anything on serrated card looms if you accept the limitations of size and the distance between serrations. Tapestry, plain and twill weave can be produced on one or both side of the cards.

These are dependent upon the different ways of winding the warp (see below images). The thicker the thread used for weft and warp, the easier it is to weave evenly and the quicker the results.



Tapestry Weave

A thick material where the warp is more widely spaced than the weft, so that the threads of the weft close up and completely cover the warp. Colour and texture can be introduced only into the weft, which enables all the possibilities of striped patterns to be explored.

Wind the warp around the serrated loom with just one thread to a serration as in image 1(above). This is a good weave for making doll's house mats, purses, small bags, etc - choose between cotton weaving yarn, raffia or thick wool for both warp and weft.

Plain Weave

This is also called Tabby Weave. It is created by having a similar distance between the threads of the warp as the weft. In this way, the design can be carried on both vertical and horizontal threads, so you can make checked and tartan patterns.

Use either cotton yarn or wool and pick the same material for warp and weft when making small scarves, place mats etc. Following image 2, wind the warp so that there are two threads to each serration. Thread the weft in the usual way picking up alternate individual threads.

Twill Weave

All the weaving covered so far has required the weft to weave in and out of alternate lines of warp. With twill weaving weft, stitches are dropped to make the warp or weft stand out. If this is done on following lines in a progressively staggered basis, a diagonal pattern will be created. For example, using a warp with a multiple of four, go under one, over three, to the end of the line. Return over one, under one, over three, under one and repeat. Next line: under one, over one, under one, over three, under one; repeat. Use squared paper to work out your own patterned.

For items such as bags, purses and braids, you may want to weave both sides of the card. Image 3, shows you how to set up the warp with either a single or double thread.

Further tips...

Whatever you are making and whichever weave you choose, ensure there is firm tension on the warp. Tie the two ends to the edge serrations and secure at the back with sticky tape.

Now that you've mastered the basics of weaving, it's time to get experimental! Try weaving with different materials, such as felt, raffia, tinfoil, plastic bags, wood, strips of fabric, lace and ribbon.

Beads and other embellishments can also compliment your weaving – try threading beads into the weft of your fabric as you create it, or threading them onto the fringe of your finished weaving. Additional fringe can also be added to the edge of your weaving, and secured with a larks head knot.



Card weaving supplies

Weaving Cards: Serrated ends available in packs of 10, in two sizes

Round Serrated Mat Cards: Available in packs of 10, in two sizes

Card Loom: Large card loom, available singular. 152mm diameter

Round Weaving Cards: In a pack of 10, 152mm diameter

Metal Weaving Needles: In a pack of 25, 200mm

Synthetic Raffia: Available in a range of bright colours, individually or as an assorted pack of 12, tightly wound up in a spool,

Natural Raffia: Available in coloured or natural undyed, 25g hanks

Sari Ribbon: Each 100g hank bundle is unique. Available in a range of colours

Acrylic Yarn: Available in a range of colours, 50g balls

Card Weaving Packs and Class Pack: Ideal for starters and small groups, containing everything you need to start simple projects



For more information on our range of
card weaving resources including looms,
raffia and tools, contact us via:

Call: **+44(0)116 269 7711**

Online: **www.dryadeducation.com**



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