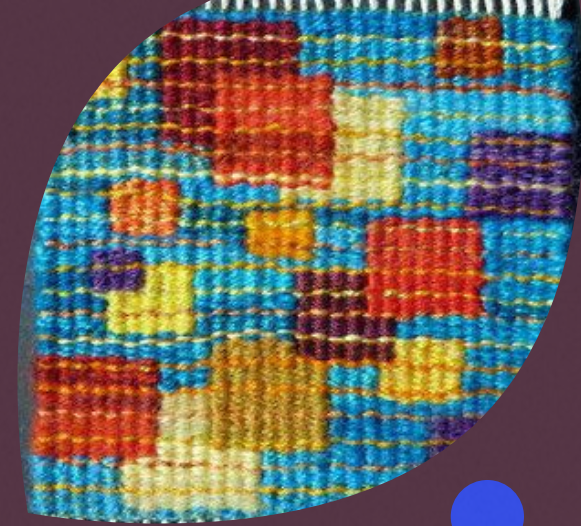


Tapestry Weaving

- *Inventive Weaving on a Little Loom* by Syne Mitchell
- Tapestry - Chapter 5 pp 166-172



Facilitator: Raylene Keating

What is Tapestry Weaving?

- Tapestry is a type of weft-faced (the warp does not show) weaving where the wefts are generally discontinuous (they do not go from selvedge to selvedge).
- Often likened to painting a picture with yarn, a tapestry is commonly pictorial – either more realistic or abstract.
- Tapestry is a more fragile weave - most often used for wall hangings
- Tapestry weaving – two styles
 - Similar to laying bricks – one row at a time
 - Build up method – building up areas at different rates *

* Be careful not to box yourself in when using this method



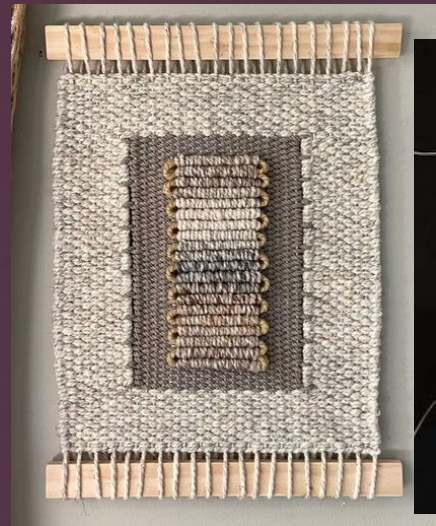
Tapestry Examples



From Very Small and Modern



To Very Large and Traditional



From Simpler Designs



To Complex

Looms



- Loom qualifications for tapestry
 - Ability to hold and keep tight tension
 - Ability to tighten tension further if needed preferred
 - 8 dent or sett recommended
 - Optional – shedding device (to hold one or both sheds open)
- Looms - can be small to large, simple to complex, from \$ to \$\$\$
 - The longer the loom, the easier it is to manipulate the warp when weaving

Can you weave tapestry on a Rigid Heddle Loom? Yes ...

- Great option until you are sure tapestry weaving is your thing
- Heddle makes opening a shed easy instead of threading weft each time
- But: when making longer pieces, unable to see it all (rolls on front beam)
- Challenge: Keeping strong, consistent tension due to wider shed



Tapestry Tools

- Yarn Needles (2-3)
 - Susan Bates 5" Weaving Needle recommended
 - Some prefer using a Bent Tapestry needle
- Shed stick – Schacht shed stick, Bamboo skewer can also work

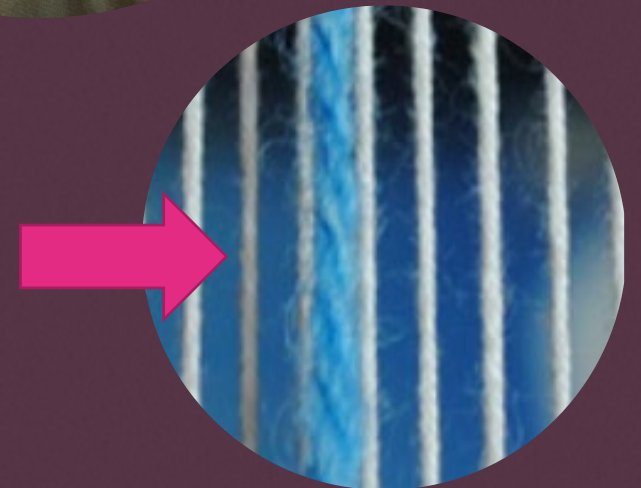
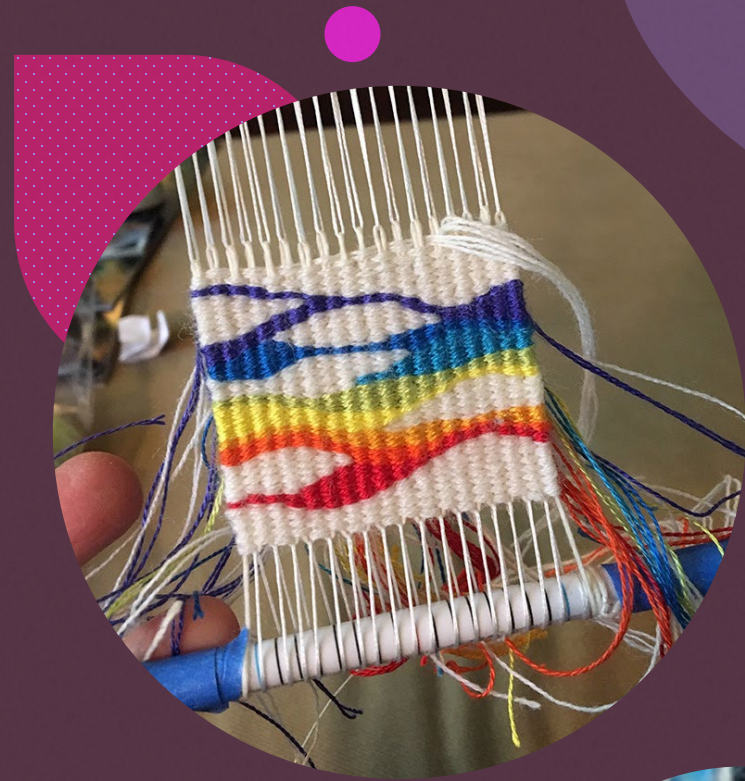


- Tapestry fork/beater made for tapestry weaving (or a dinner fork)
- Tapestry bobbins or make butterflies



What Yarns to Use?

- Warp and Header Recommendations:
 - 12/6 or 12/9 Cotton Seine Twine are ideal
 - Cotton, linen, worsted spun wool also work
 - Thickness of warp will give a smoother or bumpier look
 - Basically, use strong yarn that doesn't have any give
- Weft Recommendations
 - Weft yarn should be thick enough to fill in gap between warp threads
 - Typically, NOT knitting yarns which are soft & squishy
 - Use a firm yarn that is not:
 - Lofty – as these yarns pack in too much
 - Stretchy – should not have a lot of end-to-end stretch
 - Long wool spun worsted yarns with luster are good!
 - Thin yarns you can use multiples of in a weft bundle
 - See Study Guide resources for more info



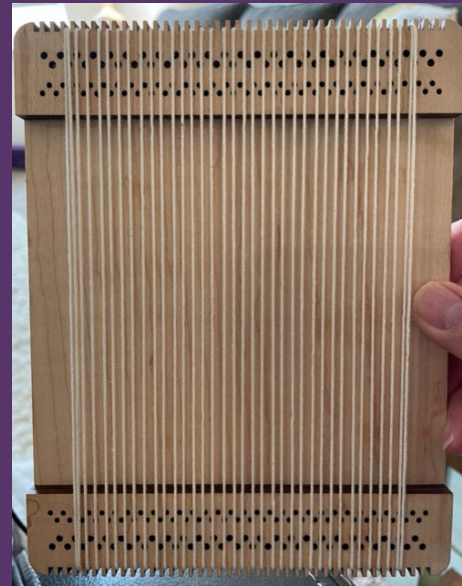
Warping

- Double-thread selvages if using 12/6 or 12/9 cotton seine
- Key to remember when warping – warp tension needs to be even

Examples:

1. Double-threaded selvages with 12/9 cotton seine twine on my Swatch Maker
2. Warped craft loom purchased on Amazon – double-threading each peg to get a correct 8 sett
3. Warped w/8 sett on an Ashford Sample-It Rigid Heddle Loom using cotton seine 12/9 with double-threaded selvages

RH NOTE: use heddle only enough to open shed for shed stick



Making Your Header

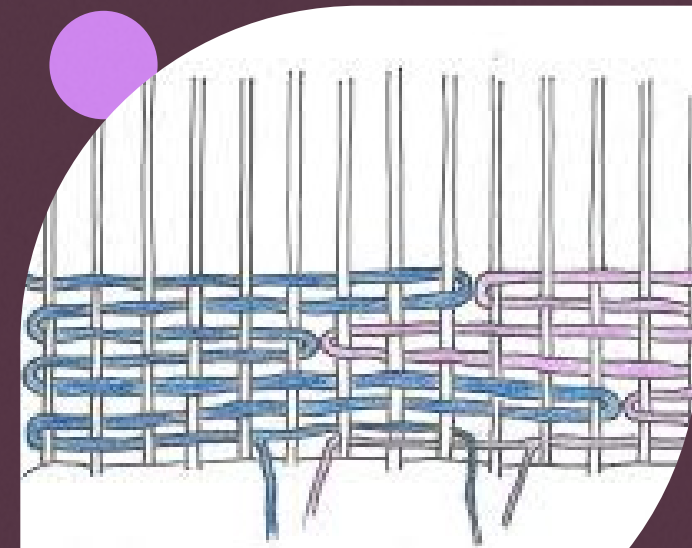
- A “header” is how you start and end a tapestry
 - Purpose: Provide a strong edge to beat against and that will hold when taking the tapestry off the loom
 - Use warp thread ideal but can use weft
- Examples
 - Double half hitch knot with 3 rows plain weave
 - Two rows of Soumak
 - Do you want to use the warp ends to braid?

NOTE: There are 3 and 4 selvage methods as well



Weaving

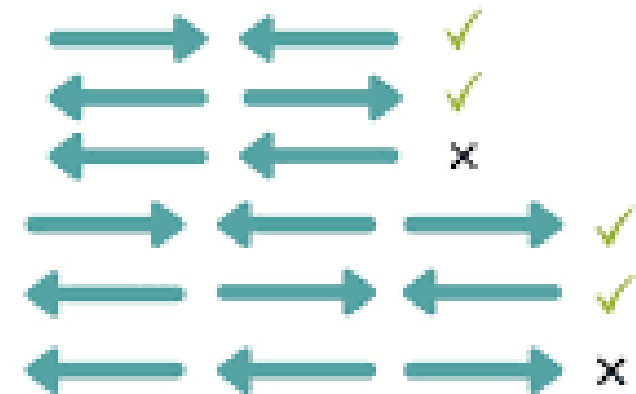
- KEY CONCEPT: “Meet and Separate”
 - Use even if the weft is the same color across
 - Reason: Better weft tension for covering the warp
 - Start in center with 2 yarns weaving away from each other, next row weave toward each other
 - Change where the meets happen every row when weaving same weft color
- SELVAGES
 - Tapestry results in a LOT more selvages
 - Every Meet and Separate has selvages
 - Snug the yarn at the selvage how you want it and bubble rest
- BEATING
 - Choice of yarn is biggest determiner of hiding warp
 - Don't beat too hard at first – slides the header



Weaving *continued* ...

- Changing Yarns:
 - Meet two weft yarns in the middle, tuck 2-3" tails behind
 - Can use a long yarn divided in half to create two weft ends going in opposite directions
- Weft Bundles
 - Yarns that together are right size for single weft pass
 - Splice plies – but be careful to keep integrity
 - Use a yarn like Gist Array that requires 3 threads for single weft
- Using Bobbins
 - Pass ball end in
 - Point is for beating!

Discontinuous Weft



Always Meet and Separate.

Never Weave In The Same Direction.

It's Ok To Start In The Middle Of Your Weaving.

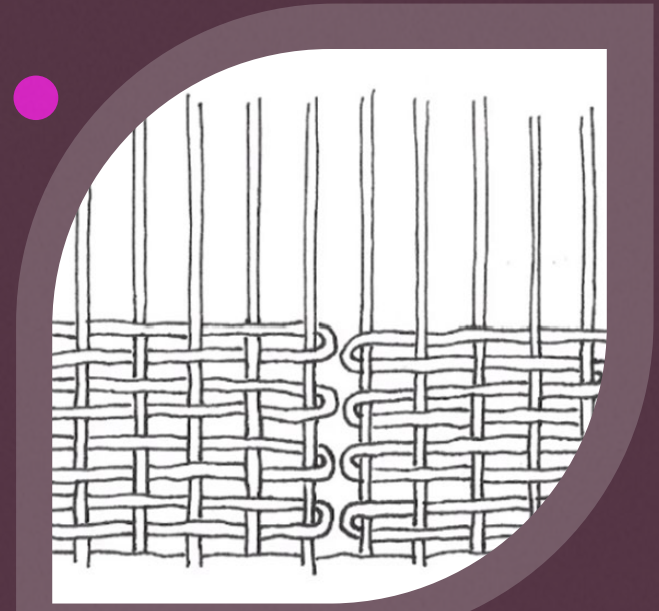
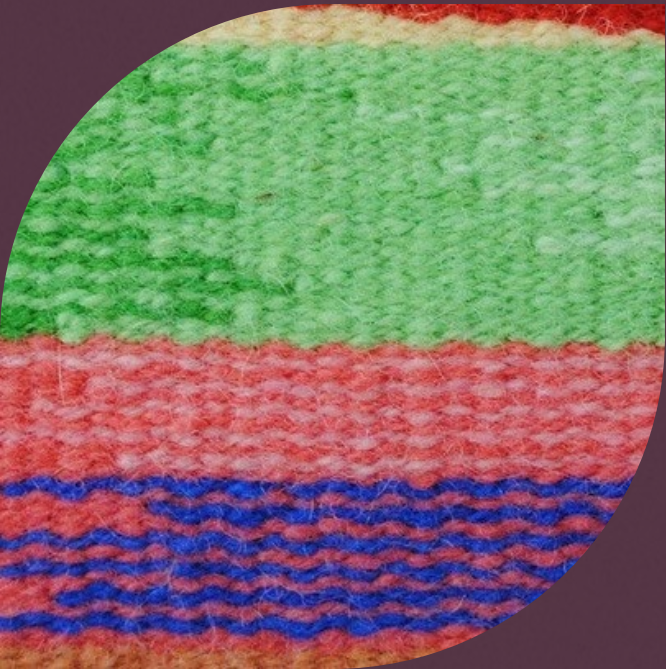
Weaving *continued* ...

- Weaving is easier with longer warp yarns to manipulate
- What to Use When for Weft
 - **Fingers or a tapestry needle** for small looms like the Swatch Maker
 - **Shuttle sticks** work great for larger looms when using same yarn for larger sections
 - **Butterflies** are worth it when you have multiple small amounts of color
 - **Bobbins** are easier to use when you have longer warp threads
 - big end first for weft threading
 - Pointed end for beating
- What to Use for Beating
 - Fork is ideal for smaller areas and looms
 - Pointed end of bobbin
 - Tapestry beater for larger looms with larger areas of weft to beat

Weaving Techniques

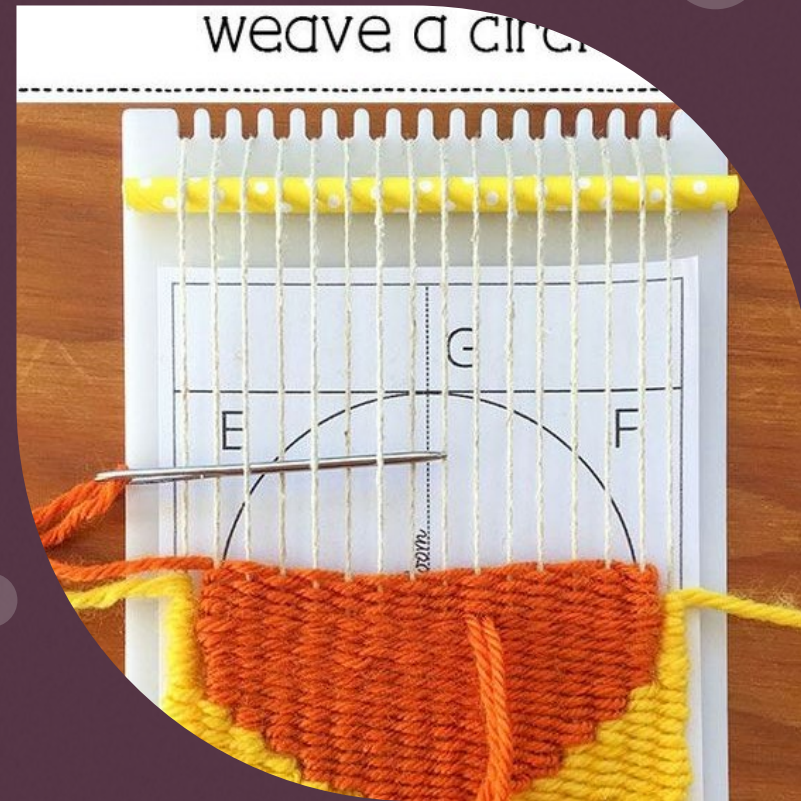
- Hatching
 - Commonly used in tapestry for shading
 - Irregular hatching overlaps sequences of weft to blend colors in an irregular fashion
- Wavy Lines and Pick and Pick

- Slit Tapestry
 - Weaving such as different color blocks results in slits that need to be sewn together after they are woven if longer than .5"
 - Can sew together while on the loom or after your piece is off the loom



Cartoons

- A Tapestry Cartoon is an outline of the basic shapes in a pattern you want to weave.
- OR You can create your own adhoc tapestry pattern as you weave which doesn't require a cartoon to follow.

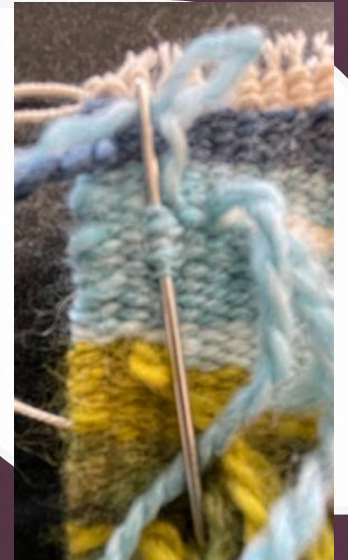
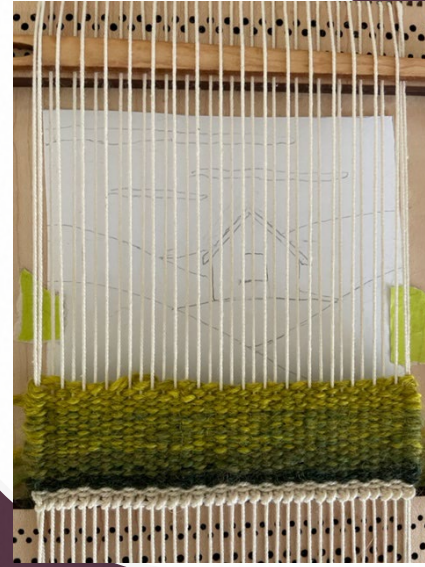


Learnings – 1st Piece

- When weaving with a cartoon, keep in mind the weft scrunches down every time you beat – so you are likely not as far as you think
- Meet and Separate becomes a challenge to figure out when dropping and adding colors, drop and add “butterflies” (weft threads)
- Hiding the ends requires splitting the weft bundle or plies and weaving each in separately



Experienced the limitation of number of colors even with these bundles



Learnings – 2nd Piece

- Kindle cover in our *Inventive Weaving* book
 - Used Ashford Sample It Rigid Heddle
 - Started with wool warp, changed to cotton seine
 - Create cartoon to consider the number of warp threads per each square
 - Gave up on the star! Too difficult for a beginner
- Weft yarns thickness consideration
 - had to build up extra weft passes for the yellow & red which were a bit finer than the green
- Slit salvages important
 - Don't hide thread ends until off the loom
- Lots of warp and weft ends to finish!



Learnings – 2nd Piece Finished

- Shrinkage Learnings
 - Width did not shrink – slightly wider than when on the loom
 - Length DID shrink – by 3.5”
- Thankfully, I had a smaller Kindle that fits



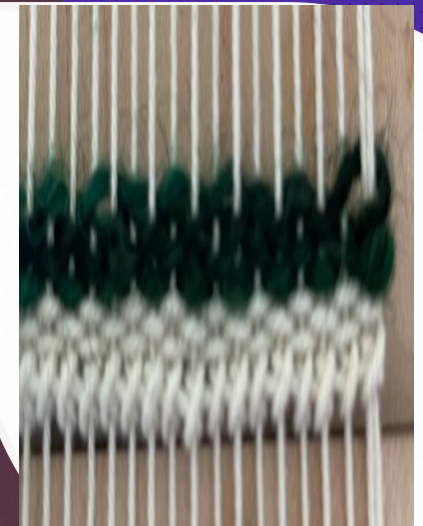
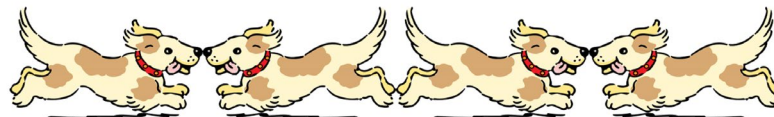
Common Issues

Lice = Little spots of warp showing – Causes:

- #1 - Not making bubbles big enough
- Weft yarns sharing same shed
- Can be yarn used
- Not beating hard enough

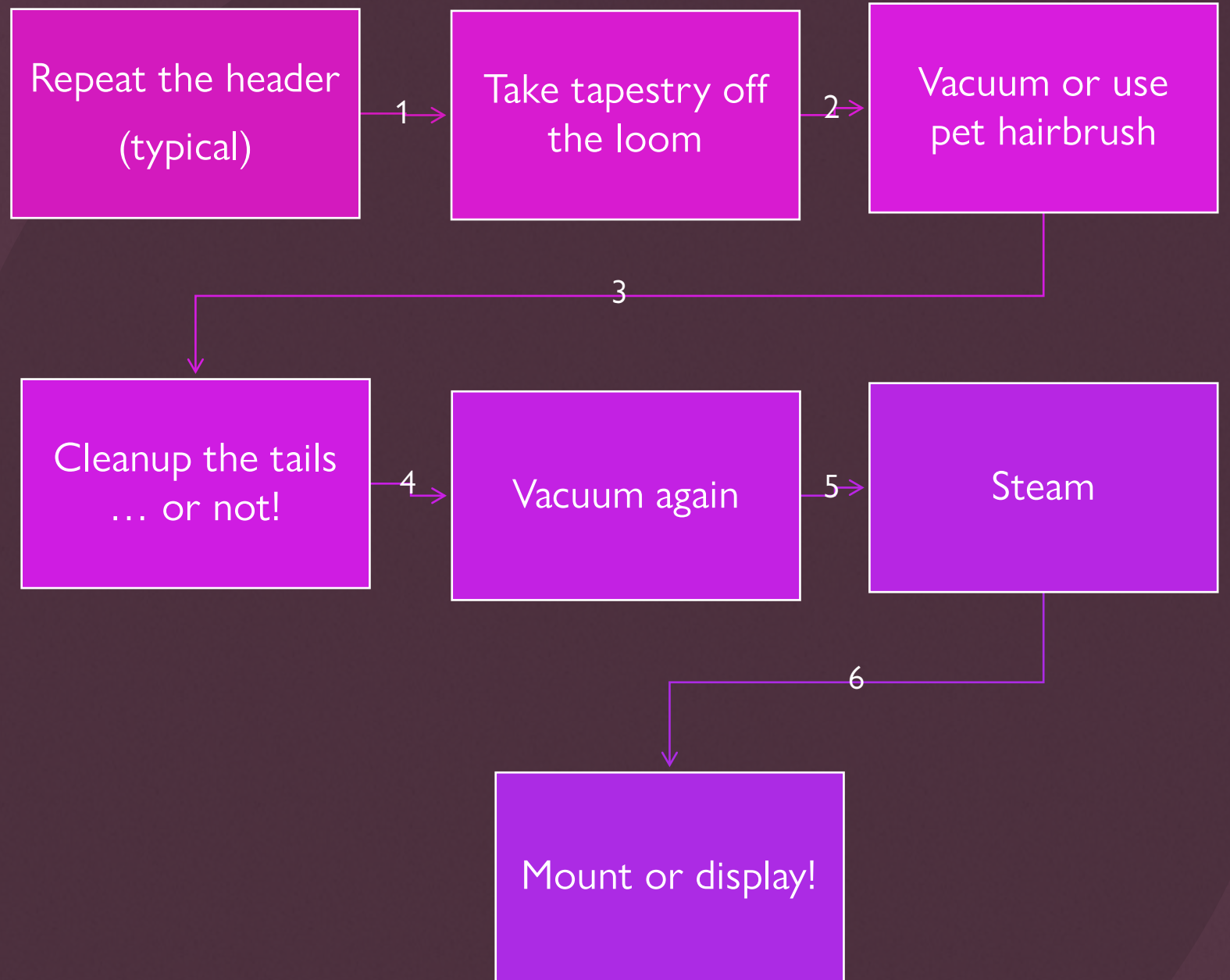
- **Four issues that trip people up the most and how to address:**

1. Not waiting for the popped-up warp
 - The warp that looks like you didn't cover it WILL be covered in the next pick
2. Not finishing your sequence (two pics)
 - think "there and back again" over and over again to cover all warp threads
3. Not using meet and separate (European style tapestry)
 - Weft yarns must be woven head-to-head or tail-to-tail in order to have only one weft thread in each shed
4. Not bubbling enough - bubble more than you think



Finishing Steps

Syne Mitchell recommended wet-finishing ... Rebecca Mezoff does not with vacuuming preferred!



More Examples



Resources Discussion

Wool Town in Bend

- Lamb's Pride yarn
- Some weaving books
- Tapestry looms

- Books in our Guild Library & Co. Libraries

See Tapestry Study Guide for
Additional Resources

