

Tapestry Introduction Study Guide

October 2023

What is Tapestry Weaving?

Tapestry is a type of weft-faced (the warp does not show at all) 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.

Warp

Cotton Seine is typically recommended: 12/15 is the fattest, 12/9, 12/6, and 20/6 is the thinnest. Needs to be strong and non-elastic for beating. Can be linen or a worsted-spun wool with low elasticity and stickiness.

Weft

Wool yarns that aren't woolen spun (full of air, fluffy) are best at least to start. Use the correct size for sett. Start with the common 8 Sett for tapestry which is weft facing. Tapestry yarns, plied wool yarn that can be unplied to make weft bundles, thin yarns that combined can make a weft bundle. Rule of thumb: weft yarn or weft yarn bundle should fill the gap between your warp threads – not too thin or too thick.

Tools

Fork or tapestry beater, Shed stick, open shed rod, and tapestry needle and/or bobbins or butterflies.

Tapestry Terminology

- **Beater** – can be a fork or tapestry beater tool used to pack the weft tight
- **Bead** - "Bead" is the term for the way the weft interacts with the warp when it covers a single warp. The bead can be flat or more rounded— a more rounded bead requires more weft strands per pass! See Gist blog
- **Bubbling** – Method to ensure enough weft thread to cover warp without draw-in
- **Butterflies** –
- **Cartoon** – tapestry design is called a cartoon
- **Chinés** – mix of colors of dissimilar value and/or hue together on same bobbin to create color changes such as red and green, for color progressions
- **Hatching** – a method of tapestry weaving where two colors overlap each other to blend the colors, used frequently in tapestry for shading
- **Header** – how you start and end your tapestry weaving in order to take it off the loom without unraveling
- **Lice** – White warp spots
- **Mélanges** – mix of colors similar value and/or hue together on same bobbin to create color changes such as light and medium blue, to create a third color of similar value and/or hue
- **Open Shed Rod** – A thin rod such as a double-pointed knitting needle or something like a bamboo skewer to hold the pick for one of the two sheds
- **Pick** – One weft pass in same shed, a pick only covers every other warp

- **Pigtail** – A method to wrap a warp edge to secure the edge and place the weft tail to the back
- **Sequence** – One pick and then back again, covers every warp
- **Shed Stick** – A thin stick with rounded point used to pick and open the shed
- **Slit Tapestry** – Technique used in tapestry weaving that leaves an open slit between adjacent areas of color.

Online Introductory Course for \$39

- <https://rebeccamezoff.com/introduction-to-tapestry-weaving>
- Benefits:
 - Great introduction to the basics
 - You are able to watch an experienced tapestry artist perform the steps (and rewatch!)
 - Online course remains available for you to return and view as many times as you want

COSW Library Resource Books

- *Tapestry 101* and three other books on Tapestry by KatheTodd-Hooker (COSW Library)
- *The Complete Book of Tapestry Weaving* by Alec Pearson (COSW Library)
- *Some Notes about the Angiers Tapestries* by Rene Planchenault (COSW Library)
- *The Guide to Successful Tapestry Weaving (HGA)* by Nancy Harvey
- *Tapestry Weaving. A Comprehensive Study Guide* by Nancy Harvey

Deschutes Co. Library Resource Books

- *The Art of Tapestry Weaving: A Complete Guide to Mastering the Techniques for Making Images with Yarn* – By Rebecca Mezoff and Sarah C. Swett (Available via Deschutes Co. Library)
- *Tapestry Weaving, a Comprehensive Study Guide* – By Nancy Harvey (Available via Deschutes Co. Library)

Other Books

- *Tapestry Weaving* – By Kirsten Glasbrook
- *DIY Woven Art* – By Rachel Denbow
- *Anatomy of a Tapestry* – By Jean Pierre Larochette, Yadin Larochette

Article Resources

- *Tapestry weaving Techniques* – Schacht Spindle Company
[Tapestry Weaving Techniques and Weft-faced Color and Weave – Schacht Spindle Company](#)
- *Which yarns to use and why* – by Rebecca Mezoff
<https://rebeccamezoff.com/blog/2019/2/19/tapestry-yarns-which-are-good-and-why>
- *Tapestry Warp What Would You Choose* – Rebecca Mezoff
<https://rebeccamezoff.com/blog/2015/10/tapestry-warp-what-would-you-choose.html>
- *Warp Choice and Sett in Tapestry Weaving* – Gist article
https://www.gist yarn.com/blogs/how-to-weave/exploring-images-for-tapestry-weaving-with-array?utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Tapestry%20Weaving%20Blog%20Post%20by%20Tommye%20Scanlin&kx=fU5hBZy7bCXLiRj4FmJfNtstJSS9_XwL0_RKIP7HSdw%3D.Qv3KXW
- *Fringeless - Four selvage Warping* – Rebecca Mezoff

https://rebeccamezoff.com/fringeless/?mc_cid=649f350dbd&mc_eid=c423c3beda

- *The Space between Warps* - article on the American Tapestry website
<https://americantapestryalliance.org/tapestry-education/educational-articles-on-tapestry-weaving/the-space-between-the-warps/>
- *Weaving Tapestry Wall Hangings* – Gist Article
https://www.gistyarn.com/blogs/podcast/episode-71-weaving-wall-hangings-with-allyson-rousseau?utm_source=pinterest&utm_medium=social

- *Combining Tapestry and Rigid Heddle*
- [Weaving Hacks: Combining tapestry and rigid heddle loom techniques - UrbanGypZ](#)

Tutorials and YouTube Videos

- Can You Weave Tapestry on a Rigid Heddle Loom? By Kelly Casanova
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hCjFHE0XIM>
- Tapestry (Free Style) Weaving on the Rigid Heddle Loom by Kelly Casanova
 - Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFz1ORY3OTU>
 - Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sei1PgkeI3o>
 - Part 3: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tW_8p7pgJc
 - Part 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iecoUugQkqE>
- How to make butterflies
<https://rebeccamezoff.com/blog/2012/12/making-tapestry-butterflies.html>
- How to warp a wood frame loom with a heddle bar
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=symnYadIN7k>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKMZr1nMIak>
- How to warp Frame Looms for Different Setts by Rebecca Mezoff
https://schachtspindle.com/warping-frame-loom-for-different-setts/?mc_cid=7b73abcdea&mc_eid=1a8742c97d
- How to make a double-hitch knot for weaving
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60777ANf3uU>
- Introduction to Irregular Hatching by Rebecca Mezoff
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhattnmhhFQ>
- Weft interlock technique for tapestry weaving by Rebecca Mezoff
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwNVX3nPGc>
- Change the Shed – YouTube Videos by Rebecca Mezoff
https://rebeccamezoff.com/change-the-shed?mc_cid=b673ba71b1&mc_eid=72f88c367b
- Four selvedge tapestry by Sarah Swett and Rebecca Mezoff
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoolPoCqFTw>

Loom “Rabbit Hole” Options from \$20 to \$600

- *Use a Swatch loom initially if you have one*
- *Wood frames:*
 - *Schacht Loom - [Arras Tapestry Loom – Schacht Spindle Company](#)*
 - *Search for “tapestry weaving looms” on Amazon – several beginner options*
- *Mirrix brand – the Cadillac of Looms: <https://mirrixlooms.com/>*
- *DIY - Make your own*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dnkI3qdqhc>
 - <https://www.papernstitchblog.com/diy-weaving-loom/>
 - <https://www.afieldquidetoneedlework.com/blog/archives/10-2015>
 - <https://kneek.wordpress.com/2008/03/17/building-a-pvc-pipe-loom/amp/>
 -

Pinterest Ideas – Follow

- @RLFrommer – Tapestry
- @Raylenemk – Tapestry

Inspiration:

- <http://susanmartinmaffei.com/>
- <https://www.afieldguidetoneedlework.com/>
- <https://rebeccamezoff.com/>
- <https://crossingthreads.co/>
- <http://www.pampatriestudios.com/Pamindexa.html>

How to Sew Slits While on the Loom

Sew a slit if the slit is more than ½ inch in length. Sew the slit while on the loom while still weaving so you can manipulate the weft on the warp at the selvages in order to get an invisible seam.

Start by tying a thread (any color) to the warp at the bottom of the slit using a surgeon's knot. From the front on the right side, put the needle through a weft loop at the selvage and behind the warp thread. Scootch the warp loop on the left selvage down and use the needle to wrap the thread around the warp on the left. Repeat.

Leave the thread untied at the top of the slit until after you remove your tapestry from the loom in case you need to tighten it before tying down and hiding the thread ends.

