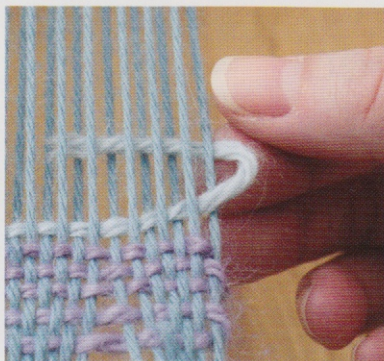
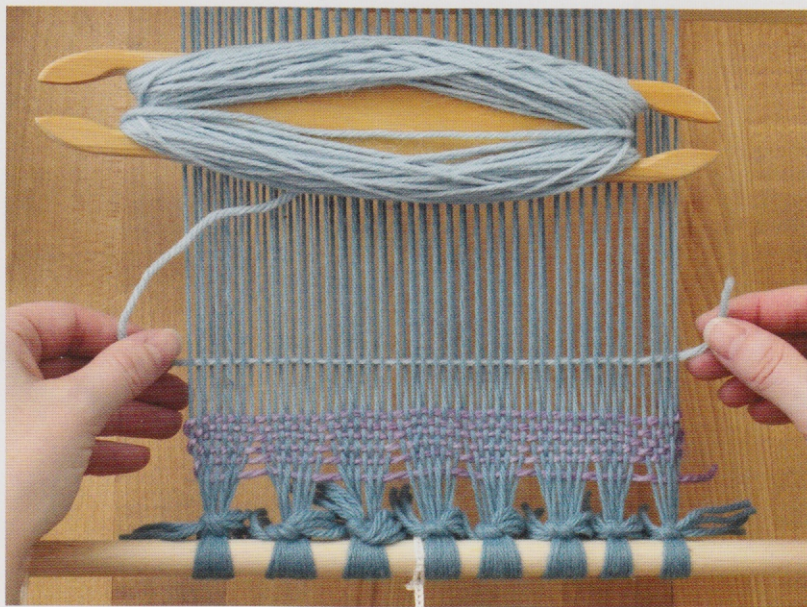


Finding Your Beat

To lay in your first weft thread, open a shed, insert your shuttle, and draw the thread all the way across the warp, leaving a tail of about 1 inch extending beyond the warp. Keeping the same shed open, wrap the tail around the first warp thread on the edge and lay in the tail parallel to the first weft thread. Beat and then close the shed. You are now weaving!

Happy weavers make happy cloth. It's important to establish a rhythm in weaving, because rhythm breeds consistency. In my opinion, the peaceful state when the warp and weft flow together is the best reason to weave. Cloth is a bonus.



Weaving the first pick. Insert the shuttle, leaving a 1-inch tail. Without changing the shed, wrap the tail around the first warp thread and tuck it into the shed next to the first warp pick (detail at left).

INSPIRATION

Throughout our history, humans have used music and song to keep a rhythm, whether it was rowing a Roman boat or harvesting crops. Similarly, many weavers use music to keep an even pace at the loom. Music not only lifts your spirits, but by encouraging you to move in an even and consistent way it can improve the consistency of your cloth. Production weaver Laura Fry uses music to inspire her work and keep her weaving lively; Nadine Sanders, the “Singing Weaver,” brings music into her work through song as well as inspiration.

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How to Use a Stick Shuttle

The simplest tools demand the most skill from the weaver, and stick shuttles are no exception. When you weave with a stick shuttle, you manually remove the weft from the shuttle, either by turning the shuttle or by popping the weft off the end. An easy mistake to make is either to take too much off the shuttle, and have extra weft getting in your way (a), or to take too little, and have the shuttle not make it across the warp (b). Here are tips for using a stick shuttle efficiently.

→ Choose a stick shuttle that is a couple of inches wider than your warp. This ensures that when you take one wrap of weft off the stick shuttle, it's enough to cross the entire warp, without being so much that you get tangled up.

→ Use the stick shuttle to tension the yarn (c).

→ Keep the shuttle in your hand as you beat and change sheds. The more time it spends in your hand, the less time you'll lose to putting the stick shuttle down and then picking it back up again. Seconds here and there add up surprisingly over the course of a long warp.

