

# SWATCH PAGE

## WAFFLE WEAVE

The waffle weave—which is woven with a point twill draft—is best described as to its structure by Mary Black . . . “the weave is characterized by long skips on the 4 sides of the square which has an indented center. Warp skips appear on the right and left of the square and weft skips at the top and the bottom. The length of the square diminishes with each weft shot. The center of the indentations shows a plain-weave structure.” The more harnesses on which the twill is threaded, the deeper the indentations. This article will chiefly discuss designing with the waffle weave.

### Materials and Uses

One can use novelty yarns, wool, cotton, and synthetics of various weights to weave waffle. This weave can be used in hangings, baby blankets, upholstery, and clothing (see discussion section), and if your experiment fails, in its traditional use as a dishcloth!

### Drafts

#### Four-Harness Waffle Weave (from Mary Black)

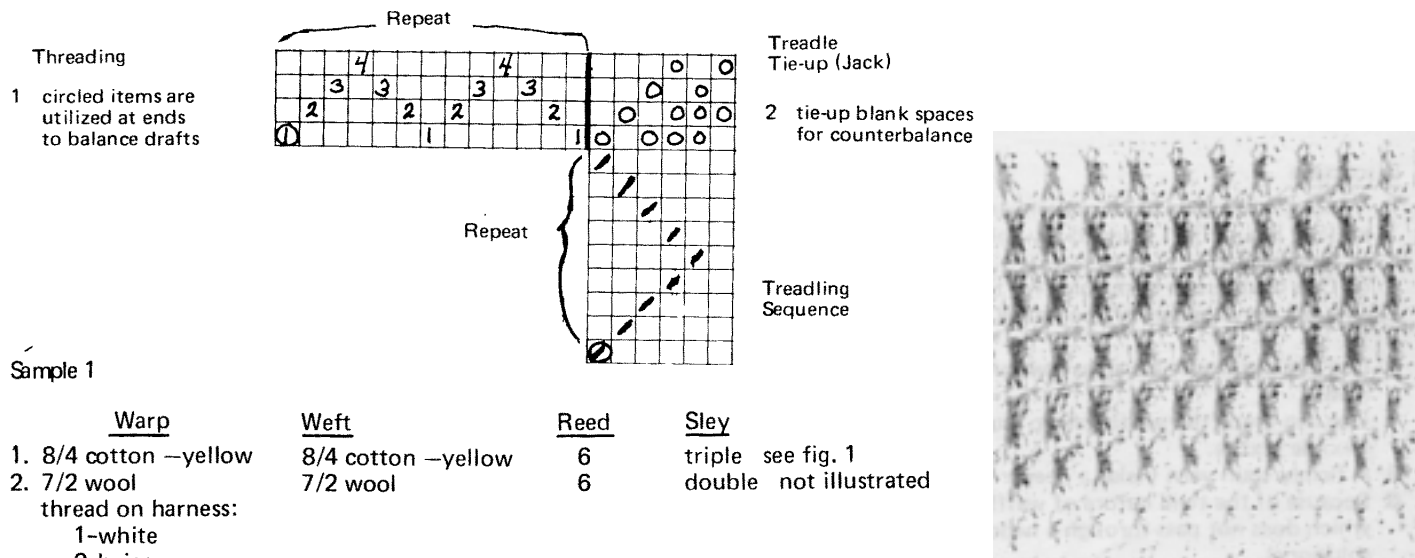
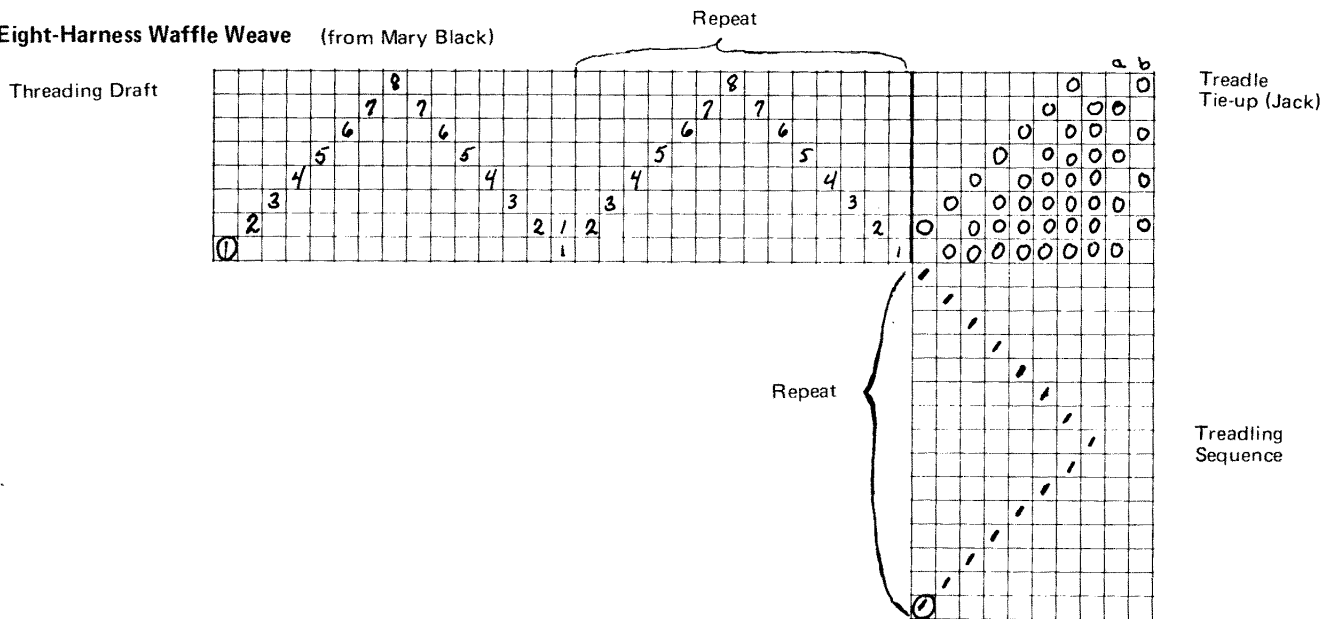


Figure 1. 4 Harness Waffle Weave.

#### Eight-Harness Waffle Weave (from Mary Black)



<u>Sample 2 Warp</u>	<u>Weft</u>	<u>Reed</u>	<u>Sley</u>
1. 8/4 cotton —yellow	8/4 cotton —yellow	6	3 see figure 2
2. 8/4 cotton	8/4 cotton	6	3 see figure 2
thread on harness:			
1—white			
2—yellow			
3—yellow orange			
4—orange			
5—red orange-orange			
6—red orange			
7—violet			
8—black			

Weft shots follow warp order

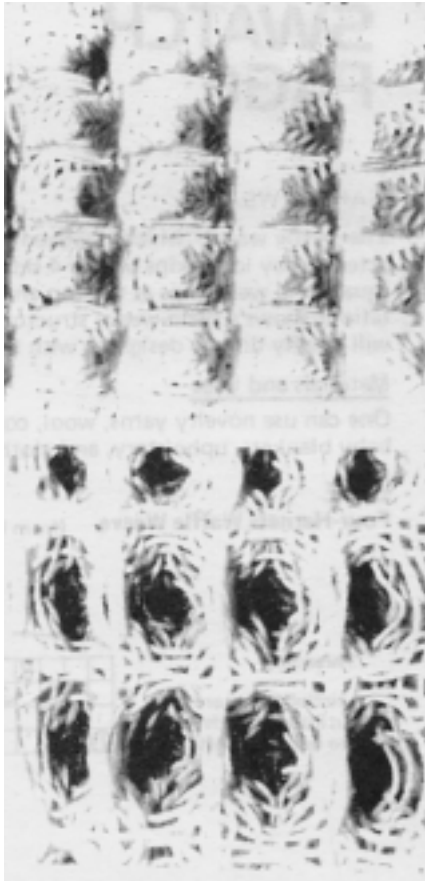


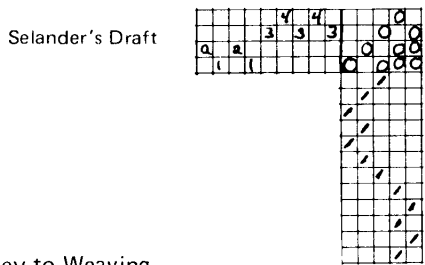
Figure 2. 8 Harness Waffle Weave. Warp and Weft same color.

<u>Sample 3 Warp</u>	<u>Weft</u>	<u>Reed</u>	<u>Sley</u>
Rayon novelty:	Rya wool—	8	(thread and sley 3 ends)
2 slub and	8 colors ranging on color		(as 1)
1 ratine-blue green	wheel from blue-green to		
designed by Betty Peter	violet		

Figure 3. 8 Harness Waffle Weave. Depth is enhanced by using darker colors toward the indentation.

Discussion

- Various interesting color experiments are possible with waffle weave.
  - (See Figure 3) I planned my colors so that the darkest colors were in the center of the indentation so that depth illusion is enhanced.
  - One could use a dark color for the weft or the warp on one side of each waffle square to increase a shadow-like illusion.
- One can vary the size of the waffle by changing the beat—the heavier the beat, the more the waffle will be compressed (See Figure 2).
- One can use fragile fibers as a warp by using a group of these as if they were one end through both the heddles and through the reed.
- One can drape the waffle fabric into sculptural pieces as Betty Peter has done. This is possible because waffle is an extremely flexible textile.
- A firmly spun yarn yields a deeper waffle than a softer fiber.
- Because of the twill nature of waffle, it is difficult to get a good edge. I would suggest either using a floating selvage (a thread which does not pass through a heddle but does pass through the reed, or leaving a weft fringe (see Collingwood for various other solutions).
- This fabric is reversible, but the indentation threads on side 1 become the border threads on side 2 and vice versa. Peggy Dokka utilized this in her “universal” baby blanket (from Helen Van Den Berg’s swatch class) which has blue borders on the waffle and a pink center thread on one side (boy side) and a pink border and a blue center thread on the other side (girl side).
- Malin Selander in Swedish Swatches-Red uses another waffle threading and treadling.



This results in a less indented textile more suitable for dress fabric and upholstery.

Bibliography

Black, M. A New Key to Weaving  
 Collingwood, P. The Techniques of Rug Weaving  
 Selander, M. Swedish Swatches-Red

Thanks to Peggy Dokka for showing me her universal Baby Blanket and to Betty Peter who has used the Waffle Weave for many magnificent hangings each of which display a great deal of inventiveness and exploration.

Have you any weaves or problems you’d like to see discussed in this column? Please call or write.

Happy Experimenting!  
 —Joy Rosner