

**A
DISCUSSION
ON
DOUBLE
WEAVE**

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COLONEL JOHN S. FISHBACK, LILY MILLS' WEAVING CONSULTANT

As a part of the increasing interest in decorative weaving there have been more requests for double weave instruction. Wall hangings, long bell pulls and luggage rack straps, are only a few of the uses being considered. The Venice Weavers Guild asked for a workshop on double weave and the following is from the notes made for this study group.

The simple term Double Weave can mean many techniques, so a brief listing of these possibilities should be of interest to all hand weavers. Perhaps the most simple double weave, and the least used by modern weavers, produces a double thickness of cloth. To visualize this, think of two of our four frames weaving a plain weave cloth and the other two frames a second plain weave cloth at the same time, and tied together as desired with the treadling. In this way it is possible to weave a double thick material for warmth, perhaps using wool for one side, or a cloth with different color on each side.

Two other possibilities with a harness of four frames are double width and a tubular cloth. At first glance the idea of weaving a piece of cloth twice the width of your loom, or a pillow cover without a seam, is attractive, but there is one drawback. In this method the weaving is in two layers of plain weave cloth, therefore, when the shuttle leaves one layer to start back across the other, even a slight draw-in will produce a vertical line that is quite noticeable when the material is off the loom. For some uses this may not be a problem but a weaver trying this for the first time should not be unhappy if a warp-wise line shows up where the weft turns the corner. Spreading the sleying a dent or two at the edge will often reduce this draw-in line.

We will not attempt to describe the elaborate double weave coverlet patterns, done on multi-harness looms in colonial days. Instead, we will devote the rest of this article to a type of double weave which produces attractive patterns on a four frame loom. However, before attempting a large wall hanging it might be well to practice the technique on the short narrow warp described below. The cartoon given for this sample shows 49 units of four ends each, for a total of 196 warp ends. Make the warp of alternating pairs of dark and light Lily Carpet Warp, or #5 Perle Cotton. Thread as shown in the following draft which also includes a suggested sinking shed tie-up. Being a double weave there must be more ends to the inch than for a single weave with the same yarn. Two ends to the dent in a 15 or 16 reed should be satisfactory for this practice sample.

There are three slightly different techniques for picking up the pattern in this weave. Two are called Finn Weave, one is

non-reversible and the other reversible. The third is called Mexican weave. Each has its good points, but to avoid confusion we will discuss only the non-reversible Finn Weave. If you are interested in Mexican or Reversible Finn Weave the directions may be found in several of the better known weaving books.

Assuming the warp is made and the loom dressed, let us now cover the steps required to pick up the pattern and weave the first row of pattern units in the cartoon. Treadles #1 & #6 are used when picking up pattern. #6 lowers pattern ends and raises background ends when preparing to weave with pattern weft. #1 lowers background ends and raises pattern ends when preparing to weave with the background weft. **Note** - To weave with light weft, pick up pattern with dark warp raised; to weave with dark weft, pick up pattern with light warp raised. For any double weave project a cartoon of the complete pattern should be made on cross section paper, each square representing a unit of 2 dark and 2 light warp ends. Each of these units is woven in two parts. To avoid errors, which are difficult to correct in any pick-up weave, the following check system is suggested. When the first half unit is finished make a diagonal line in the right hand square of that line in cartoon. When the second half of the unit is finished cross the first line with another line.

To begin a pattern unit use treadle #6 to raise the background warp and with pickup stick count and pick up the warp ends that make the background, skipping over those that make the pattern. To avoid a saw tooth edge (which is acceptable in reversible Finn Weave) add one pair of ends to each group picked up for background, and deduct one pair of ends from each pattern group skipped over.

Turn the pickup stick on edge against the reed, with beater forward, and insert second pickup stick in the shed back of reed. Then remove first stick from in front of reed. Press treadle #1, move pickup stick back and forth to clear shed and insert first stick (with care) in shed which has been made **under** second pickup stick. Then weave two picks with pattern weft, using treadles #4 then #5. The half unit is now finished, so mark with a diagonal line in first square at right edge of cartoon.

For the other two weft picks of this unit press treadle #1 which raises the pattern warp. Count and pick up the warp ends making the pattern and skip over those in the background. For this pickup follow the pattern when counting **without** adding or subtracting as in the first pickup. **An exception to this rule.** To avoid saw teeth where pattern becomes background it is necessary to anticipate the change. To secure a smooth

horizontal edge at these points make pickup of pattern warp units as usual **except** where the pattern will change to background in next unit. At such points skip over pattern warp as if the change had occurred.

When this pickup is completed turn stick against reed with beater forward. Insert second pickup stick in this shed back of reed and remove first stick. Press treadle #6,

move pickup stick back and forth to clear shed and insert first stick in shed which has been made **under** second stick. (Again with care) Then weave two picks with background weft using treadles #2 then #3. This completes the second half of the unit of four ends, shown as one line of squares across your pattern cartoon. Indicate at right edge by crossing the previous line.

Some random thoughts on double weave

If you have a choice of looms for this weave, take the one with the most space between the breast beam and heddles, because the pickup sheds do not open very wide on a small loom. Because of the manipulation of the warp, do not have it very tight. For a wall hanging you will find Size 3 Perle very satisfactory. When making your cartoon keep in mind that the two layers of this weave are separate, except at the points

where they are reversed with the pickup stick. For this reason most cartoons are designed with a simple border. After you have become familiar with the steps described in detail above, make a vertical list using one or two words to indicate each step. Mount this on your loom for easy reference as it is very important not to skip a step which may not be noticed until you have woven several lines of pattern. Good Weaving!

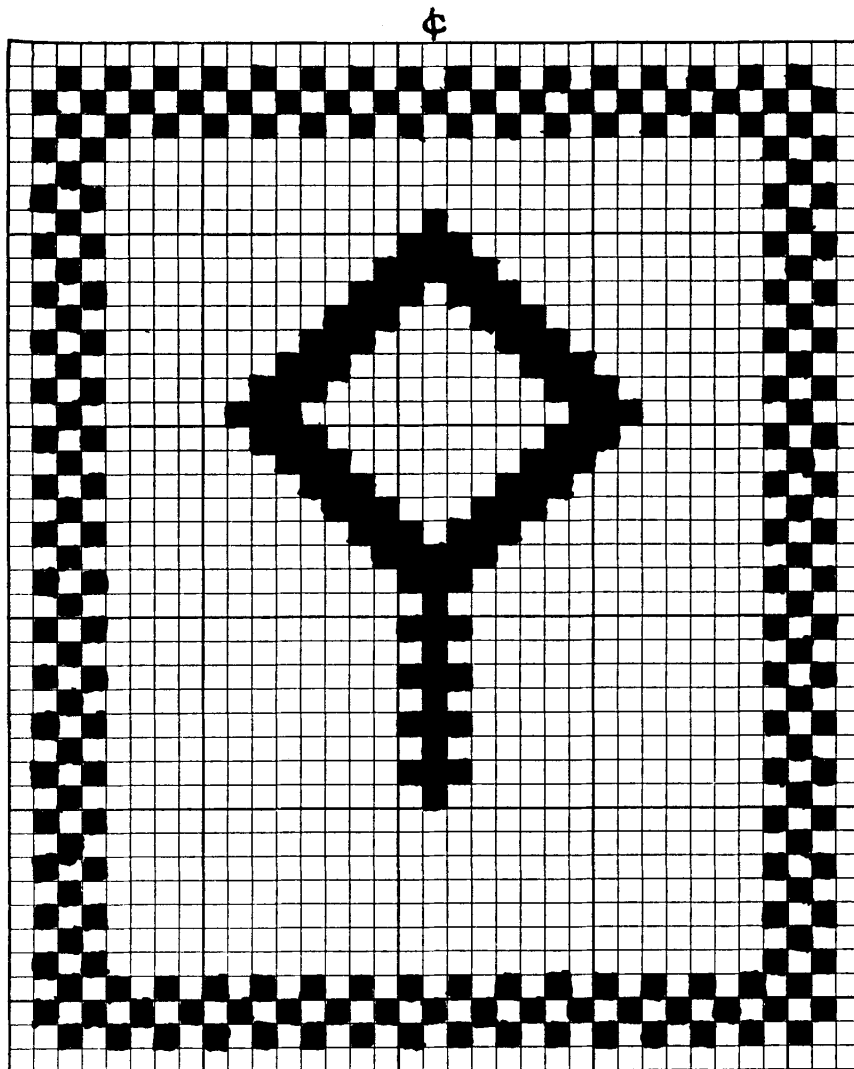
THREADING DRAFT

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L			L		*	*			1	
					6	5	4	3	2	1

Use this tie-up for light pattern and dark background.

Reverse this tie-up for dark pattern and light background.

Cartoon for practice sample of non-reversible Finn Weave





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