

Hand-Painted Rayon Bouclé Scarf Warp

Instructions / Suggestions

You will need a Rigid Heddle Loom with a 10 dent heddle bar that weaves at least 9" wide, or a floor or table loom with a 10 dent reed. Or you can weave this warp at 8 ends / inch, which will make a looser, wider fabric. You may want to drop out a few ends.



This hand-painted 92-thread warp should be set at 10 ends per inch. It is wound from American-made rayon bouclé yarn, and hand-dyed with fiber-reactive dyes. It is long enough to weave a scarf at least five feet long (measured on-loom, before shrinkage), using the loom waste for fringe. The final length will vary somewhat according to your loom waste (extra unwoven length required), beat, and finishing method.

It doesn't matter which of the two warp chains goes on the right or left, or which way up or down they are flipped. The two skeins provided for weft are also hand-dyed (same yarn), and won't match each other exactly. You may wish to alternate ten-twelve inch sections from each throughout the length of the scarf.

We suggest doubling the outside two threads on either side for selvedge. If you do, your warp will be slightly less than 9 inches wide. If you don't, the warp will be slightly wider.

Twenty weavers asked to explain their warping techniques would respond with twenty different methods. Each of us likes her own way best, and we have our particular rituals to get the warp tensioned, threaded, and tied on. Here are some suggestions, but do feel free to proceed in any way that's comfortable for you.

If you have never warped your loom using a pre-wound warp chain, here are a few helpful hints. A cross, or figure eight, has been wound at one end of each chain. That cross has been carefully tied off to maintain the exact order of the threads. As the threads are wound on the warping board a loop is formed at the cross end. To put this warp on your Rigid Heddle loom you will pass each loop, in cross order, through the slots and attach them to the back beam or apron rod. Exactly how the warp loops are attached to the apron rod will depend on the loom you have. Each brand of rigid heddle loom is configured slightly differently.

Many looms attach the apron rods to the beam with cords. Some do it in a way that makes it easy to slide the rods in and out of the ties. The Kromski Harp even gives you a "Warp Helper" to hold the apron rod in position while you slip the loops on. Some brands have holes in the rods with cords attaching them in such a way that it's impossible to slip the loops on to the rod without untying them from the beam. In that case you can untie all but one tie, slip the loops on and reattach the apron rod. Beka Looms have plastic pegs imbedded the back beam. Instead of slipping the loops on to a rod you simply hook them onto the pegs. If you are unclear on how your loom works we suggest you check your owner's manual.

Most rigid heddle books suggest holding the cross in your hand as you choose the correct loop to thread, as dictated by the cross. This works great until the door bell rings or the baby knocks over a glass of juice. If you use your stick shuttles as lease (cross) sticks to hold the cross it leaves both of your hands free to manipulate threads. We tie the shuttles on to the front of the loom to secure the cross.

Start by attaching loops of sturdy cord to each side of the loom. Make sure that they are not tied to the back beam or you won't be able to wind on the warp. A knot about 4 inches in front of the heddle bar will keep the shuttles from slipping too far back as you wind. The strings need to be close enough together to lock into the ends of the shuttles so you might have to pass them through the heddle. Tie the holding cords to the front beam.

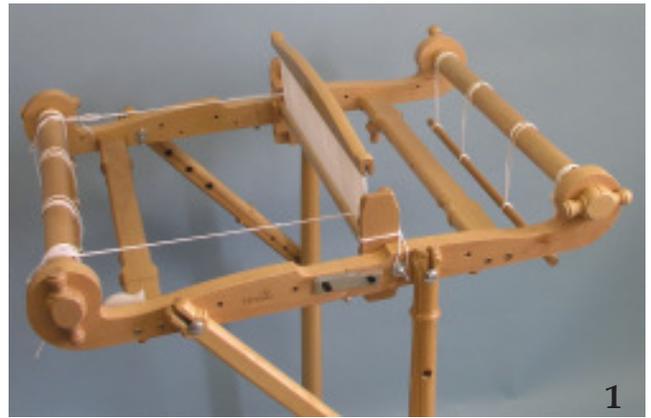
(picture 1)

Open up the cross on one chain with your hand and pass one shuttle into each opening. Repeat with the second chain

(pictures 2 & 3)

Let the cords weave over and under the notched ends of the shuttles holding them in place.

(picture 4)

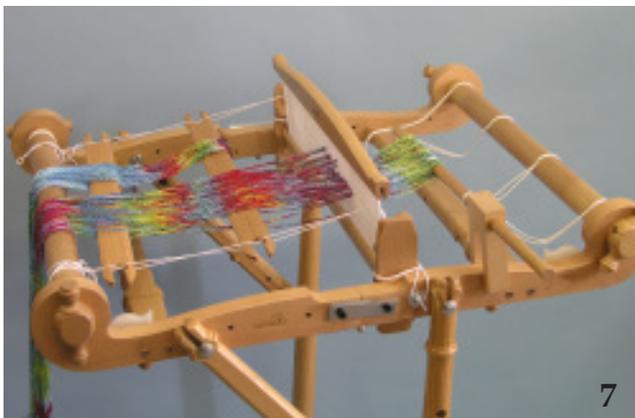




After the shuttles are secured remove the 5 cross ties from one of the warp chains. Do not untie the remaining ties on the length of the warp yet.

Locate the first pair of threads and pass it through the slot that is $4\frac{3}{8}$ " from center. Remember you want your warp to be centered on the loom. It doesn't matter if you work right to left, left to right, or center out.

(pictures 5 & 6)



Pay special attention to how you loop the threads onto the back apron rod, and try to keep the threads properly aligned so that the color areas stay where they were when dyed. Continue threading. Don't forget to reattach the apron rod cords in their proper places as you work across.

(picture 7)



Thread the second warp chain just as you did the first.

(picture 8)



After you have all the threads through the heddle slots, make sure that the apron rod and warp beam are secured. Tug gently on the warp, holding the whole warp chain, to realign the threads before you start winding on.

(picture 9)



Don't comb through the warp with your fingers as you wind on; combing moves the threads away from their dyed position. One snagged out-of-alignment thread can change the whole look of the piece. Grab each warp chain in turn, and pull it tight all together. A good shake and pull will straighten everything out. Start to wind the warp onto the back beam. Feed in pieces of paper as you go to keep the layers of warp threads from cutting into the ones below. Use fairly heavy paper; brown bags or wrapping paper work well. Cut the pieces a little bit wider than the warp, and up to about 18 inches long. Remove the security ties on the warp as you come to them.

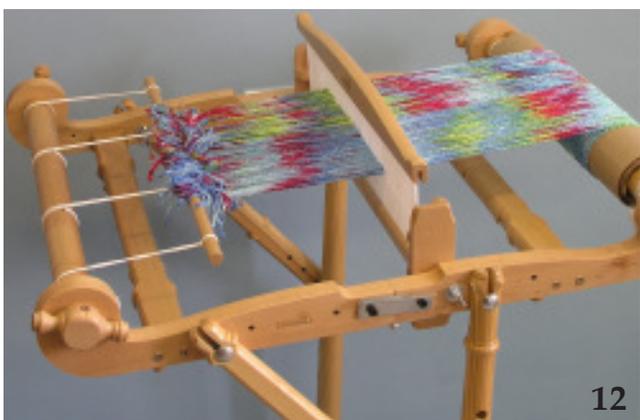
After the warp is wound onto the back beam thread one strand of each pair into the adjacent hole. We suggest double-threading the selvages. Place two warp ends in the outside hole and slot on each side of the warp. Once the holes have been threaded remove the shuttles.

(picture 10)



Tie the warp onto the front apron rod making sure the tension is even.

(picture 11)



Because the length of warp used to tie on with will become fringe, we suggest that you use bows instead of tight knots. They will be easier to untie.

(picture 12)



Start weaving with some scrap yarn, anything that's about the same weight will do. This yarn will be unraveled and discarded when you tie off the fringe so there is no need for it to match. Four to five passes of yarn should spread the warp threads and let you know if there is a mistake that needs correcting.

(picture 13)



There's always a chance you'll find a knot or break a thread, so we have included threads that have been dyed at the same time so that you can find a matching repair length. One thread has been taken from each half of the warp, and each is marked so you know which warp chain they came from.



Weave the entire length of the warp with the bouclé yarn provided. Since the two skeins provided for weft are hand-dyed they won't be exactly the same. You may wish to alternate ten-twelve inch sections from each throughout the length of the scarf.

When you get to the end of the warp again secure the weft in place with 4 or 5 passes of scrap yarn.

(picture 15)



When you remove the warp from the loom **do not** cut the warp at the fabric line. But **do** cut the warp threads as close to the apron rod as you can. Remember you need the loom waste for fringe. Unwind the scarf from the cloth beam and untie the warp from the front apron rod so that extra length at this end can also be used for fringe.

(picture 16)



To finish remove the waste yarn from one end of the warp. Tie 18 over-hand knots of 6 threads on the outside edges, and 5 on all the others. Make sure each knot sits snugly right up against the fabric. Repeat on the other end of the scarf.

(picture 17)



Trim the fringe threads evenly after tying the knots, leaving them an inch or two longer than you want them to end up, so that you can trim them again after washing and drying your scarf.

(picture 18)

Hand wash your scarf being careful not to tangle the fringe. Then lay it out flat to dry. After the scarf is dry a gentle shake will soften the fabric. Or toss it in the dryer on low for 5 to 10 minutes only. More time in the dryer will fray the fringes.