

# the Wheel

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aShford  
WHEELS & LOOMS

spinning | weaving | carding | felting | knitting | dyeing

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**ashford**  
WHEELS & LOOMS

## Editor's Letter

This is a very special issue of *The Wheel* for me as I step down as editor after 34 annual editions! In the very first issue back in 1987 – before our twins James and Lucy were born – I recorded my debt of gratitude to my parents-in-law Joy and Walter Ashford. Now I am handing the privilege, and joy, of communicating with craftsfolk around the world, to my son James and his husband David, and our Marketing and Sales Manager Kate and her team.

I have loved working with you and sharing stories, ideas, and techniques that make the textile crafts so fabulous. Thank you for so generously sharing your experiences and skill with me and readers of *The Wheel*.

Particularly as many of us face, or have faced, huge challenges and disruptions to our lives, I am grateful that many craftsfolk have sought and found comfort and joy in their crafts. In this issue of *The Wheel* almost all the articles pay homage to this.

As so many are turning to the crafts, we continue to experience unprecedented demand for all our products. At no time in our almost 90-year history have we been so busy! Although we have employed more staff, purchased more machinery, and worked overtime, we are still behind. We thank you for your patience as we work hard to get our spinning wheels, weaving looms and all our range out to you.

Richard, after many years of development and testing, is delighted the first batch of e-Carders has been so well received. With two exceptionally powerful motors, fleece and sliver are carded and blended easily and quickly. The e-Carder is an impressive addition to our range.

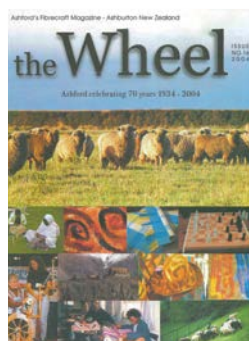
Please accept my very best wishes for the future – and happy crafting!



Elizabeth



*The first issue, in 1987, was in black and white newsprint, tabloid size*



*The Wheel, now magazine size and full colour in 2004*



*Family business! Daughter Lucy on the cover of the 2007 issue*



*Daughter Cathy on her wedding day, in 2018*



*Kate's daughter McLeod features in every issue since she was born in 2005*





8



12



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# A World in a Wildflower

BY YUNAN MA, REDWOOD CITY, CA, USA

*Capture the beauty of nature in hand carded and felted wool sliver.*

Yunan Ma was born and raised in China and moved to the US at the age of 17. After graduating from Savannah College of Art and Design with a BFA in Fashion Marketing and Management, she worked at a well-known leather handbag company, where she mastered leather weaving techniques. Through this work experience, Yunan became fascinated with weaving and knitting techniques and discovered her passion for fibre arts. In 2018, she graduated from the Academy of Art University, San Francisco, with a MFA in Knitwear Design and was mentored by the famous knitwear designer Midori Sergent. Yunan was the only knitwear designer presenting on the NYFW graduation runway. She was also selected for the 2018 CFDA+ Design Graduates Program. Yunan has published her fibre artwork on worldwide platforms including Creative Magazine, Napa Valley Library, Planet Inc, and Noise NYC.

Yunan Ma Fiber Art is designed and handmade by Yunan at her studio in the San Francisco Bay Area. Each unique piece is executed with the finest natural fibres, including Merino wool, alpaca wool, mohair, silk, cotton, and novelty accents, that are carefully selected from top yarn mills around the world.

Yunan creates hand felted realistic flowers which capture the moment a flower blooms, depicting all of the details with “paint strokes” of natural wools. She transfers two dimensional images of flowers to three-dimensional wool arts using her creativity and craftsmanship to depict the light and shadow within the flower and the result exudes cheerfulness and beauty. In this article Yunan is excited to share step-by-step how she makes an Iceland poppy. This type of flower has large crepe paper-like petals in shades of pink, with many yellow stamens forming a conspicuous whorl in the centre of the flower.



*Photo by Beth LaDove, Owner of Ground in Tiburon, California*

Study the photo of the flower and select the colours for it. This flower uses Ashford Corriedale and Merino wool sliver in colours Cherry Red, Magenta, Marshmallow, Coral, Candy Floss, Cupcake, White, Yellow, Lemon, and Beansprout.







1. Prepare a copper hoop and wrap the hoop around with yarn to act as a weaving loom.



2. Starting from the centre, weave rya knots with yellow and green wools for the stigma of the poppy.



3. Needle felt two shades of yellow together to create the stamens of the poppy.

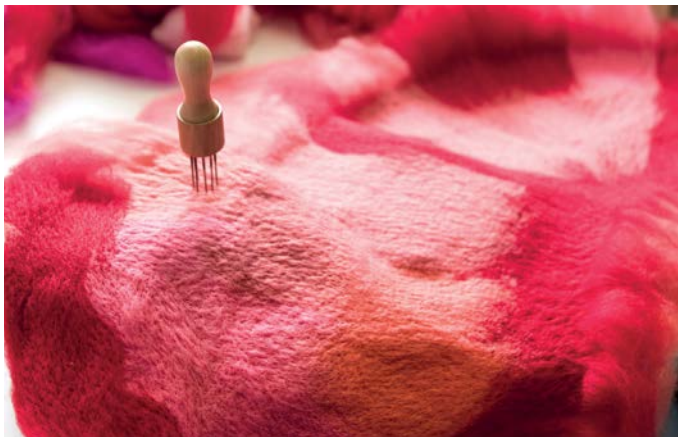


4. Attach the stamens on the loom by weaving the ends in through the warp threads.



5. Use a drum carder to blend shades of pink and create a base layer of the petal.

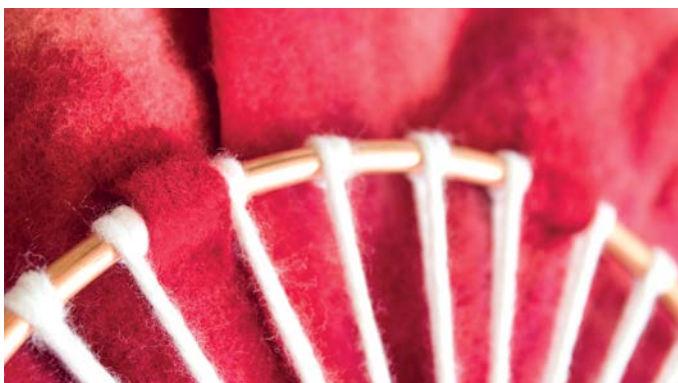




6. Needle felt the base layers together to create a rough shape of the petal.
7. Refer to the photo of the flower, continue layering details on top of the base layer until the desired thickness and stiffness is reached. Take time to blend the colours so there are no obvious margins.



8. Add more details such as creases and folds to emphasise the characteristics of the petal.
9. Repeat the steps to complete the other three petals.
10. Attach the petals on the loom.



11. Secure the petals to the loom at the back by attaching some felted strips.



Voilà! Here is the final look of the Iceland poppy.

*Yunan recreates the beauty of nature*



### **Editor's note**

Yunan Ma is a fibre artist based in San Francisco, California. With a fine arts and knitwear design background, Yunan's fibre art not only has exquisite craftsmanship and beautiful textures, but also captures the joy, beauty, and energy of nature. Follow Yunan on Instagram @yunanmadesign



# A Bit of Bling!

BY KATE SHERRATT, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

*An easy way to add a little bling to your beautiful hand spun yarns is to incorporate beads when you ply your yarn.*

To create the yarn for this project I dyed 250gm (9ozs) of Ashford Black Merino/Silk blend with Ashford Protein Dye in the colour Sapphire. Once dyed and dried I split the fibre into three equal lengths. As I planned on making a three-ply yarn, I spun singles onto three bobbins.

Using a needle, thread the beads on to one of the yarn singles. As you are plying, release the beads along the single as frequently as you choose.

## Tips

- Spin your single that will carry the beads as evenly as possible as you don't want the beads to get stuck on thick parts.
- If using an upright lazy kate, place your bobbin with beads at the bottom of the lazy kate to avoid it getting tangled.
- Use a small bowl in front of the lazy kate to contain the yarn with the beads on. The weight of all the beads in one place may break the yarn if left hanging.
- Don't try and work with too many beads in your hand at once.
- If using very small seed beads a dental floss threader may work better than a needle to thread the beads onto your single.
- The pattern used for this cute, cropped cardigan is #288 Little Girl's Shrug from [www.knittingpureandsimple.com](http://www.knittingpureandsimple.com)



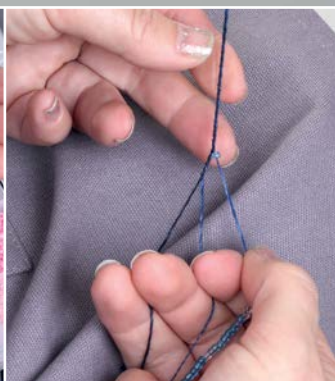
McLeod wearing her new cardigan with a bit of bling



Dyed fibre spun into singles



Threading beads onto one single



Holding beads and releasing into the ply



## Editor's note

Kate's daughter McLeod who featured in her first Wheel magazine seventeen years ago, looks very grown up and sophisticated in her hand spun and knitted cropped cardigan – with a bit of bling!





Lea, and her daughter Elfie



# Nurturing Crafts from a Young Age

BY LEA WILLIAMS, MONTGOMERY, WALES, UK

## *The story of Elfie and Lea's creative journey.*

Fifteen years ago, I learned to spin yarn on a drop spindle and after some time moved on to my first wheel, an Ashford Traveller. Spinning and weaving are my favourite crafts; I especially love to spin and weave stories into my work, and play with texture and pattern.

I was raised in a very creative family, learning from my Mom how to sew, knit, embroider, crochet, and weave. I also learnt from my Dad by watching his carpentry, art, and creativity in the house and garden. I loved it all.

I crafted all my way through childhood and teens and spent every spare moment I could in the art room at school. I was looking forward to art college but it didn't work well for me. I left and ended up having a break for quite some time. I felt lost. I returned to creative work after taking some time away. This gave me time to think and remember the encouraging words of my art teacher at school and how much of an important part of my life art is.

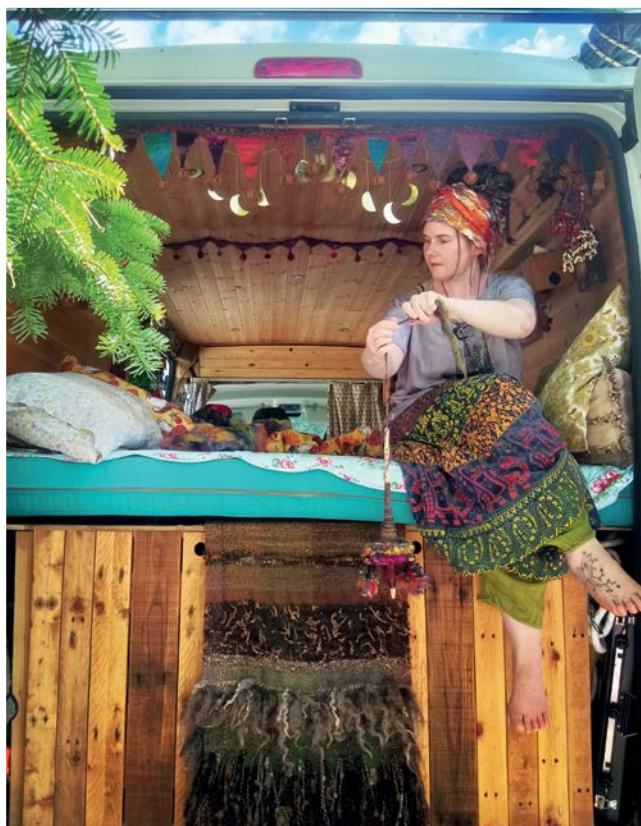
I started to bring textile art and crafts into my working life when I bought and lived on a narrowboat on a canal as a young adult, and made and sold my jewellery, crafts, and handmade clothes from my boat. And, when I married, I continued to make and sell from our live-in vehicle, a Luton truck that we converted to live and travel in.

These days we are settled in the Welsh hills, in an old cottage on some land, where we now keep a small flock of Shetland sheep for wool. I spin, dye, and weave wool, and also crochet, knit, carve wood, and make jewellery.

Our daughter Elfin was born here and over the years, she has developed a strong love of many crafts. She always watched intently as I worked with wool and she loved to hold and explore the tools and yarns. Her first creative projects before the age of two were long beaded hangings, made with a box of beads and felted pompoms, hemp thread and a big bodkin needle. When she was three she was sewing all the time, making little pieces of art out of the recycled fabric and yarn scraps, and weaving on branches and cardboard looms. By the time she had turned four, she had graduated from sitting on my knee while I was spinning and could at last reach the treadles properly, spinning her first yarn alone. She was so excited about it, and would literally spin yarn for hours and hours, and make beautiful colourful batts on the drum carder (Mr Prickles).

I'm often asked how I got her to learn crafts from a young age. I didn't. I just supported her interests and allowed her the space and time to explore. I always offer help if she struggles with anything, but more often than not she would want to figure it out for herself.





To begin with, this was the hardest part: to hold back and respect her space despite her frustration, watching while she worked out how to do things. As I watched her learning process, I could see her enjoyment of figuring out and understanding how things work for her. I respect her determination and independence. Sometimes she'll ask for help after she's had a good go at it, and other times she works it out all by herself.

I always allowed her to play with my spinning wheels and other tools and equipment, showing her how to use them safely. Treading the wheels gave her good control of speed and playing with wool batts allowed her to get a feel for fibre. Tying a ball of yarn to the leader on the bobbin gave her many hours of fun, allowing her to feel as if she was spinning.

This summer she turned ten and continues her love of crafts. Most of all she loves weaving, continuing to develop her skills. After accidentally missing some of the warp threads in one of her weavings, she started playing with warp and weft floats and made everyone cotton face cloths and towels, and a waffle weave blanket.

While I've been designing the thistle pattern for this magazine, Elfie's picked up some of the graph paper and has been designing her own overshot patterns of castles to weave on her Samplelt loom.

### **Editor's note**

Over the page, Lea shares with us a pattern for a table mat woven on a rigid heddle loom with a lovely overshot thistle design. Follow Lea on Instagram @lea\_and\_elfie



# Inspired by your Surroundings

BY LEA WILLIAMS, MONTGOMERY, WALES, UK

*An overshot rigid heddle weaving pattern for a table mat with thistle design.*

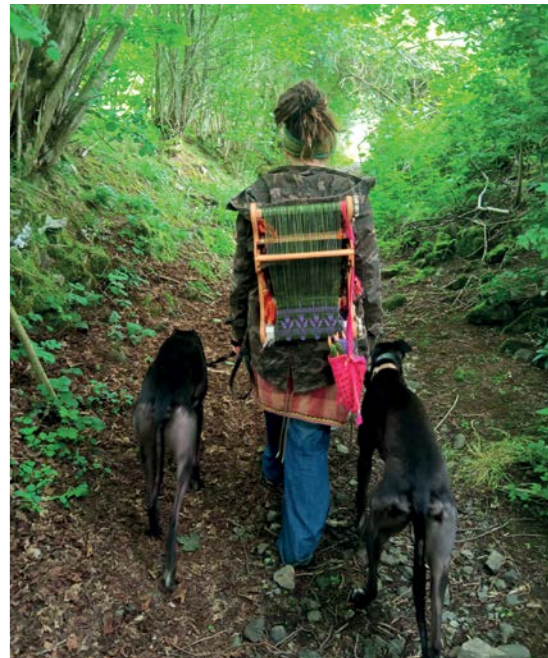
Inspired by how indigenous cultures make designs from their own surroundings, weaving culture into the cloth, I created this thistle design from my own surroundings here in the hills. I dedicate this thistle design to my late father Edwin George, a wonderful Scottish artist, builder, and craftsman.



*On the loom*



*Table mat*



*Lea and her loom*

## Table Mat with Thistle Design

### You will need:

Loom: 40cm (16ins) or wider rigid heddle  
Reed: 30/10cm (7.5 dpi)  
Warp yarn: 35gm (1½ozs) sport weight yarn – thicker than a 4 ply, but thinner than a dk. I used Malabrigo Arroyo  
Weft yarn for pattern weave: 40gm (1½ozs) chunky weight yarn. I used Cascade Yarns Eco  
Weft yarn for tabby weave: 25gm (1oz) – sport weight yarn same as warp yarn  
Other: Two shuttles 46cm (18ins), one pickup stick 56cm (22ins)

### Here's how:

Structure: Overshot  
Warp sett: 3epcm (7.5epi)  
Warp length: 110cm (43½ins) 26cm (10¼ins) for weave, and allowance for fringes at each end of the weave, and warp waste  
Width in heddle: 28.3cm (11¼ins)  
Total warp ends: 85 (43 slots, 42 eyes)  
Finished length: 38cm (15ins) incl fringes  
Finished width: 24cm (9½ins)

### Warping

Direct warp in the centre of the reed. As there are an odd number of warp ends finish your last warp on the warping peg. Wind on the back roller and thread as normal.

### Weaving

First weave some scrap yarn to space your warp threads evenly.

The table mat is started with a plain tabby weave border before the pattern weave starts. Each pick of the pattern is followed by a pick of tabby weave.

Each pattern row is repeated for two picks (left and right), each of which is followed by the tabby weave to hold the pattern in place.

There are three warp threads at either end of the thistle design to leave a border on each side, I go under these warp threads with the pickup stick (apart from the first one at the start of each row - see below). Starting from the left, leaving a tail approximately 150cm (59ins) weave



15 picks of plain tabby weave. With the tail, hemstitch across the warp at the beginning of the weaving.

With the reed in the neutral position, follow the chart taking the pickup stick over the warp threads shown as black squares and picking up the warp threads shown as white squares in front of the reed.

After picking up the pattern row turn the pickup stick on its edge to create a shed (fig 1).

Take your pattern weft shuttle over the first warp thread and through the shed created by the pickup stick. Leave a tail of the pattern weft yarn long enough to weave in when you have finished the mat.

At the end of the pattern pick. To catch the pattern and tabby weft yarns around each other neatly and the same way each time on the edges, place the pattern shuttle down. Remove the pickup stick. Follow each pattern pick with a pick of tabby weft, place the tabby shuttle down above (in front of) the pattern shuttle (fig 2).

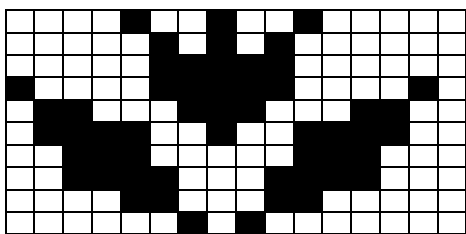
When I start each pattern weave pick, I go over the first warp thread, to catch the pattern yarn in (fig 3) and the same when starting a pick from the right (fig 4). Because of the order of placing down the shuttles at the end of each pick, (fig 2) the pattern yarn and the tabby yarn will catch around each other in the same way at the edges (fig 5).

Between each row of completed thistle pattern, weave two picks of tabby weave before starting the next row of thistles.

Carry on with the pattern until you have 6 rows of thistles. Cut the pattern weft leaving a tail long enough to weave in. Weave 14 picks of the plain tabby weave (finishing on the right). Hemstitch the end (fig 6).

Take your weaving off the loom, weave in the ends.

Finish off with the kind of fringing you would like, I have done split knotwork on this one. If you prefer you could finish with braids, or a twisted fringe, or a simple knotted fringe. Soak in warm water, rinse and lay flat to dry.



### Thistle design

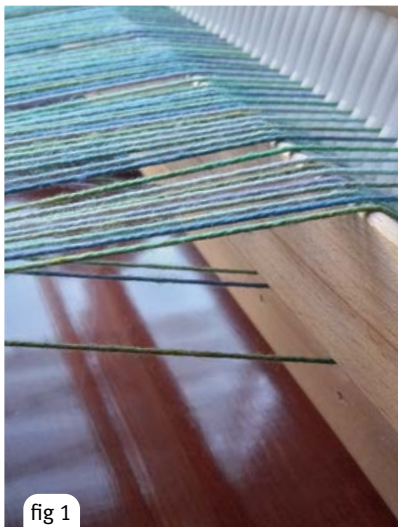


fig 1



fig 2

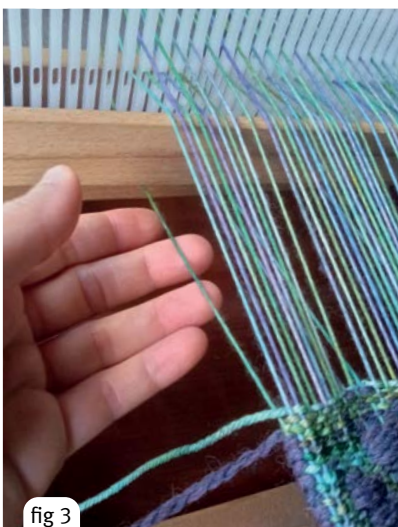


fig 3



fig 4



fig 5



fig 6



# The Joy of Plain Weave

BY AMY SPIRES, SOMEWHERE IN SCOTLAND, UK

*While simplifying her life, UK craftswoman Amy discovers spinning and weaving and creates a new business.*

The last few years have brought a huge change to my life. I've dramatically downsized my living space, sold most of my belongings, and hugely simplified my lifestyle. My husband and I moved into a van, and headed up to the Scottish Highlands to live a quieter, slower, rural life. During this change, I decided to learn a new craft, and I settled upon weaving.

I'd always loved designing interiors for my own homes, and had a tonne of creative energy which I could never throw in the right direction. I tried photography, candle dipping, water colour painting, furniture restoring and much more. I'd noticed rug weavers and tapestry weavers on social media, and admired the skills they had, and the beautiful pieces they created that could be displayed in a home. I also paid attention to vintage rugs and wall hanging pieces I spotted in antique shops, and loved that they'd withstood the test of time. Off I potted to a local craft shop and picked up a very basic tapestry loom and some wool, and I got to work. I immediately connected with weaving, and the simplicity of the technique. Move the heddle, pass the shuttle, move the heddle, pass the shuttle. All the crafts I'd tried to learn in the past have been fleeting, only lasting a few weeks and then have never been mentioned again, but I knew that this was different.

Over time, I tried expanding my skills in different ways. I discovered peg looms, after chatting to a lovely hand spinner on the Isle of Skye. I started spinning small bits of scavenged wool that I'd pulled off fences and then upgraded to a drop spindle. I tried tapestry weaving, rug weaving, I made hundreds and hundreds of bookmarks (and I still do!). But the thing that I really connected with was the rigid heddle loom. I bought an Ashford one from a lovely shop in Scotland, and instantly felt like I'd found the perfect loom for me. I remember unwinding my first little table runner, and being absolutely amazed that I'd created this piece of cloth. This lovely woven textile that could be used in a home had been produced from my mind and my hands. I made (and continue to do so!) many many more runners, scarves and wall hanging pieces, thoroughly enjoying my new-found passion and creativity.

One of the other joys that comes with weaving is the community. Online and in day-to-day life. As soon as anybody spots a shuttle or some yarn through one of our van windows, they immediately come over for a chat and to talk techniques, or tell me about a parent or grandparent they had that loved to weave and spin. It's always exciting to meet somebody who shares the same passion as you.

One of the downsides to this was, particularly online, seeing so many beautifully intricate patterns every day, complicated colour schemes, multiple heddles, and lots of technical language about weaving that I struggled to grasp. I did start to feel a little like I should be doing what they were all doing, aiming to be able to

create the most complicated patterns possible, mastering every single technique and being able to talk the lingo. It was a little disheartening, finding my passion and then feeling the creeping sensation of imposter syndrome.

I felt gutted with myself, that I'd found my passion and was feeling this sensation that I wasn't doing it properly, or doing enough. Weaving had become my full-time job, and my work was selling enough for me to live off, which was (and still is) absolutely mind boggling to me and fills me with pride, but can also add to the feeling of imposter syndrome. This is my job, I'm technically a professional weaver, so shouldn't I be able to do this, master it and enjoy it too?

*Amy, somewhere in Scotland*







I decided to do what I'd done in every other aspect of my life: completely strip it back to basics. What did I love about weaving, and what did I love about the finished piece? These are the most important things. It's all about the final woven piece, and however you get there shouldn't really be an issue. I love texture, and I love wool. I want to feel a wrap, a scarf or a runner and be able to feel the lumps and bumps from the hand spun yarn. I want tufts and curls, and I don't even mind still smelling a bit of sheep in there. I love natural colours, and being inspired by the moody, rugged Scottish landscape that I surround myself with. I want my pieces to blend in, and look like they've been woven with the forest or mountains in mind. I want my work to be hardy and strong, to be able to last years and years and be mended easily when needs be.

All of these things can be achieved with just a plain weave, and they all bring me joy.

I decided rather than focusing on complicated techniques that weren't bringing me satisfaction or pleasure, to focus more on these simple things that I love. I decided to head down the rabbit hole of spinning...

With my drop spindle I started spinning small amounts of scavenged wool to add to my pieces, and soon realised that having this extra level of creative control was what I needed. Not one to do anything by halves, I jumped from a drop spindle to the Ashford Super Jumbo e-Spinner. Living in such small quarters, a traditional wheel wasn't an option, and luckily the e-Spinner uses a surprisingly small amount of power so it was perfect for my tiny off-grid home.

Sitting at my workbench in the back of the van, spinning some lovely chunky yarn while looking out over a loch or forest has become one of my favourite ways to relax, while also being productive. I found experimenting with plying and carding different

breeds and colours of fleece together added another layer of creative satisfaction to my work and now I can truly say that I have found a place where I am completely happy with my weaving. Some people could think it was odd to feel so much gratitude towards a craft, but weaving and spinning have become not only my full-time job, but my therapy and joy in life.

### *Editor's note*

Follow Amy on Instagram @cabinwoven and [www.thiscabinvan.com](http://www.thiscabinvan.com)





# Making a Tote Bag

BY MARIA CHIDO, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

*Tote with mosaic feature*

*Weave, cut, and sew this tote bag with a unique mosaic design feature using woven offcuts.*

Planning and creating a piece of hand woven cloth requires inspiration, passion and time. The same can be said about cutting and sewing. Asking you to cut and sew your precious hand woven cloth can be very intimidating, but if you read all the instructions prior to cutting and sewing, the process will be made so much simpler. Just remember this when working on this project - you will have created an irreplaceable fashion piece unique to you!

Current fashion trends, in particular with handbags, are incorporating hand woven details as part of their current collections. So give this project a try.





Maria and her loom



Zipper pocket

# Tote Bag

## You will need:

Loom: 40cm (16ins) or wider four shaft  
 Reed: 40/10cm (10dpi)  
 Sett: 11ep/cm (28epi) sleyed 3-3-3-2-3-3-2-3-3-3  
 Warp yarn: Ashford unmercerised cotton 10/2 (ne 10/2, 1696m/1854yds per 200gm); 765m (836yds) Cedar Green #22, 718m (785yds) Celosia Orange #50  
 Weft yarn: Ashford unmercerised cotton 10/2 (ne 10/2, 1696m/1854yds per 200gm); 795m (869yds) Cedar Green #22, 304m (332yds) Celosia Orange #50, 24m (26yds) Radiant Orchid #56,

17m (18½yds) Freesia #54, 17m (18½yds) Twilight Grey #10, 8m (9yds) Green Glow #52

Other: Cotton lining 1m (39ins), fusible interfacing 75cm (29½ins) I used Fusible Fleece style L-971, zipper 30cm (12ins), sewing thread to match your project, sewing machine, a small piece of tulle, 35cm (13¾ins) long x 25cm (10ins) wide in a neutral colour, I used a mushroom pink colour.

## Here's how:

Number of ends: 421 plus 2 floating selvages

Width in reed: 38cm (15ins)

Warp length 3.5m (3¾yds)

Weave Structure: Herringbone 2/2 twill

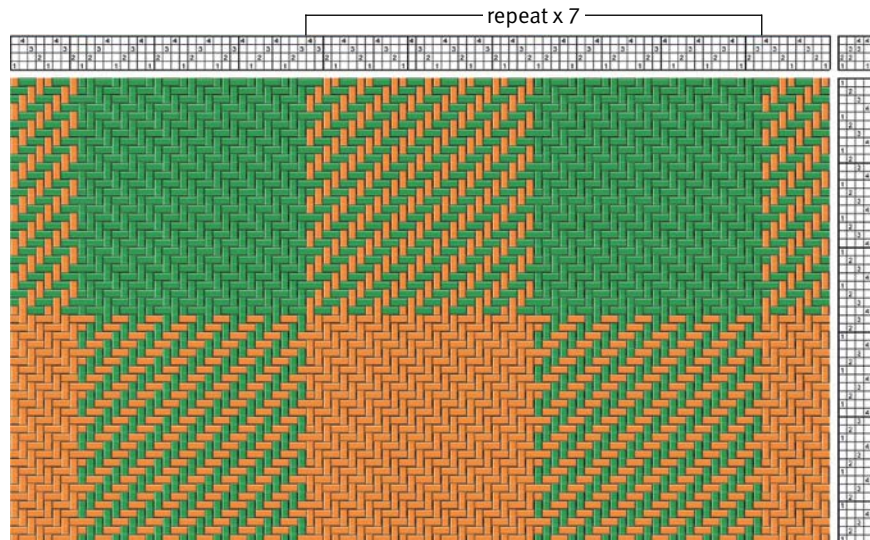
## Warping

Warp colour order.

		repeat x 7					
	fs						fs
Celosia Orange		8		27		8	
Cedar Green	1		27		27		1

## Threading

Thread as per draft below. For a full size draft go to [www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34](http://www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34)



## Weaving

Weave following the draft at 25 picks per 2.5cm (1in). Begin with 175cm (70ins) using Cedar Green followed by 12.5cm (5ins) in Celosia Orange. Weave the next 76.5cm (30ins) alternating 20 rows in Cedar Green and 20 rows in Celosia Orange. Work towards having nice even squares. For the final 20cm (8ins) weave 20 rows using each of other weft yarn colours.

## Finishing

Remove from loom. Warm machine wash, lay flat to dry and iron on medium heat.  
 Finished length 2.85m (3yds)  
 Finished width 33cm (13ins)

## Preparing the Pattern Pieces

1. Download and print the pattern from [www.ashford.co.nz/wmag34/totepattern](http://www.ashford.co.nz/wmag34/totepattern)
2. Make sure the pattern has been printed at 100% or Actual Size.
3. Check the 'Test Square' in Pattern Piece 4.
4. Join all the printed pages that need to be joined by following all the letters.
5. Cut out all the paper pattern pieces.
6. Place the lining patterns on the lining following the grain line, and cut out.
7. Place the interfacing patterns on the fusible interfacing following the grain line, and cut out.
8. Place the cut interfacing pieces, sticky side down, on the wrong side of your hand woven cloth (you can cut your patterns against the grain if you wish, as long as your interfacing has been cut on the correct grain).
9. Once you are happy with your layout, pin the interfacing pieces to the hand woven fabric.
10. Cut around each piece leaving 1cm (½in) around the interfacing.
11. Iron each piece to fuse.
12. Trim the fabric piece back to the interfacing.



## To Create the Quilted Mosaic Feature (Preparing Pattern Piece 3)

1. Iron interfacing to the lining.
2. Arrange your left-over pieces of hand woven (offcuts) on the interfaced lining.
3. Make sure your pieces don't overlap too much as it could become too bulky.
4. Place the tulle on top, pin down and machine sew around the edge within the seam allowance.
5. Cut a piece of light cardboard into a 2cm (¾in) wide by 25cm (10ins) long strip to use as a guide for sewing the lines when you quilt your work.
6. Once quilted, trim all excess tulle and any hand woven pieces back to the edge of the pattern.
7. Your pattern piece 3 is ready to be stitched into the tote bag.

Finished size of tote bag 37cm (14½ins) wide x 26cm (10¼ins) high x 7cm (2¾ins) deep.

For a full size draft, tote bag pattern and the full instructions for sewing the tote go to [www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34](http://www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34)



## Editor's note

Maria, a designer, manufacturer, and teacher of fashion, has been taken on an incredible journey after discovering weaving. Her goal is to illustrate her designs and techniques to the greater weaving community.





Flax in flower



Flax spun and woven

# Plant Textiles in the Time of Technology

BY MEAGAN CONDON, GLADSTONE, MO, USA

*Most plant fibres are renewable, sustainable, and biodegradable – can we use any of these bast, seed and leaf fibres for our next textile project?*

In the face of humanity's impact on our ecosystem, environmental consciousness has become a survival skill. It is increasingly important to know where our textiles come from. Synthetic fibres are produced with harmful chemicals, wasteful water usage, and unfair labour practices. Meanwhile, most plant fibres are biodegradable, renewable, and sustainable, making them a more environmentally responsible choice.

## Bast Fibres

Bast fibre is the cellulose fibre collected from the inner bark of plant stems and lends structural support to the plant.

### 1. Flax

Besides cotton, linen is the most popular and historically important plant fibre in the western world; and it comes from the flax plant. We use a "retting" or "rotting" process to break down the pectin and natural gums that hold the fibre together. The woody parts of the stem are then broken and removed, leaving a strong, absorbent, breathable fibre which initially feels stiff, but softens over time.

### 2. Hemp

Hemp, the "sober cousin" of marijuana, is a low-impact crop that requires little water and low-to-no chemical herbicides. When processed to fully organic standards, hemp is rated as one of the most sustainable fibres. It is stronger than flax and gets softer with use. Until recently, it was illegal to grow in many places. There are still more than a few hoops to jump through to get permission to grow it.



Hemp



Ramie

### 3. Nettle

Known as the "weed with a sting", nettle can be found worldwide. Ramie may be the most widely used variety of nettle for fibre. Used for textiles as far back as 5000 BCE, nettle produces a fibre that is pliable and strong, but not as soft as hemp or flax. It is most often used to provide structure in garments. Unlike other bast fibres, nettle is chemically degummed instead of being retted, which can contribute negatively to environmental pollution.



The cut lotus stem



Fibres from the lotus stem



Meagan collects the lotus stems



Lotus yarn



Milkweed fibre

#### 4. Lotus Silk

Originating in Myanmar in the early 20th century, lotus silk is now considered one of the most expensive fabrics in the world. Farmers wade waist-deep in lotus ponds or fields to harvest the stems. Each stem is broken, and a miniscule amount of fibre is drawn out and rolled together to make thread. A three square metre area in an American lotus pond produces only a few precious metres of yarn, not even enough to make a swatch with.

### Seed Fibres

Some seeds grow cellulose fibres that protect the seed or allow them to be carried by wind away from the parent plant.

#### 5. Cotton

Cotton makes up more than a third of the world's textiles and is grown on every continent except Antarctica. Its sustainability is up for debate. The amount of fossil fuel and water consumed by commercial cotton is enormous and year after year cultivation degrades the soil. Cotton can be grown in a home garden but check with your local government agency for any permits you may need.

#### 6. Milkweed Floss

Milkweed is food for butterflies and fibre for us. Primarily used in upholstery padding and insulation, this fibre can be turned into yarn by only the most patient spinners. Milkweed floss contains a woody plant substance called lignin and hollow air pockets which make the fibre brittle and natural oils which makes it slick. Though

tricky to spin on its own, milkweed blends beautifully with silk to make a lighter-than-air textile with brilliant lustre.

#### 7. Kapok

Chiefly grown in Indonesia, kapok is a tropical tree that produces large seed pods full of yellowish fibre like milkweed. It was used during WWII to produce life preservers. The fibre, while highly flammable, has a waxy coating and air-filled cells which help the fibre to be buoyant. While this fibre doesn't require a lot of washing or processing, it does take a gentle hand and a fast spindle.

#### 8. Dandelion

Before you get excited, dandelions are not the next big spinning craze; but it is important that the hand spinning community continues to experiment with unexpected plant fibres, especially as we discover new methods to process and spin fibres. In the case of dandelions, a fibre must have a staple length of at least 12mm (½in) for twist to hold the fibres together. Dandelion fibres are roughly half that and have microscopic air pockets which make the fibres brittle. It can successfully be blended with longer fibres, like silk or even cotton, to make an airy textile, but doesn't hold up on its own.

### Leaf Fibres

Leaf fibres are coarser than stem and seed fibres and are often relegated to rope and basketry, but there is still historical precedence for their use in finer textiles.

#### 9. Agave

Most notable is the use of agave in Central and South America. Sisal, a variety of agave, is known for its stiff fibres used for making rope. Fibre is also a waste product of the tequila industry. Other varieties of agave have finer fibres, though. On the island of Madeira off Portugal in the 19th century, nuns used the century plant, *Agave americana*, to create Pinta lace. *Agave americana* produces a fibre slightly coarser than flax that feels stiff at first but softens with use.

### Synthetic Fibres

It seems counterintuitive to include synthetic fibres in this list, but most of our so-called plant fibres are actually synthetic fibres. Have you ever spun a fibre blend that contained bamboo? Bamboo is a rayon!

#### 10. Rayon

Rayons are man-made fibres derived from cellulose materials which are dissolved into a pulp using sodium hydroxide. Rated as a category I toxin, sodium hydroxide is corrosive and generates enough heat to start fires. The pulp is then cleaned and treated with carbon disulfide to polymerise it. It is dissolved in sodium hydroxide again and forced through spinnerets which create the long, silky strands we associate with rayons. The process uses a lot of water and chemicals and isn't considered eco-friendly. That said, it also gives people a way to recycle plant waste from other industrial and farming processes.





*Kapok*



*Sisal yarn*



*Viscose Rayon*



*Milkweed*



*Sisal*



*Cotton*



*Dandelion*



*The cotton flower before fertilisation*



*Dandelion from my garden, picked before they puffed*



*The forming cotton boll*



*The open cotton boll*



*Cutting off the fluff*



*Meagan*

May you be inspired to explore the fibres growing in your own garden!

### **Editor's note**

Meagan Condon is a librarian and fibre artist with extensive experience. Her areas of focus are microscopy of fibre, breed studies, plant fibres, natural dyes, digital community, and the science behind textiles. You can follow her at [www.luthvarian.com](http://www.luthvarian.com)

To see Meagan's microscope images of the plants' structure and list of references go to [www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34](http://www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34)



# Explore the Colour and Weave Effect while Weaving a Circle Scarf on a Rigid Heddle Loom

BY KARUNA PERALTA, NELSON, NEW ZEALAND



*Create the illusion of complex weaves in a plain weave structure when threading and weaving with contrasting colours.*

The classic 'Colour and Weave' patterns explored in this project emerge when two contrasting yarn colours, placed in a specific sequence, create seemingly intricate weave structures while still using the simple plain weave technique.

Striking results can be achieved by using highly contrasting colours, such as black and white. Soft, beautiful patterns occur with the use of subtler colours. The endless colour possibilities, and the fact that it can all be achieved with a balanced plain weave, and on the one threading, make this technique fascinating and adaptable for all sorts of projects.

Sometimes the value (lightness or darkness) of a colour is not instantly obvious, so here is a quick activity to make the task much easier.

- Take two identical photos of your yarns with a phone camera.
- Edit the 2nd photo using the 'Mono' filter setting. This desaturates the colour but retains the values.
- Compare the photos to make your yarn choices.



## Circle Scarf

### You will need:

Loom: 30cm (12ins) or wider rigid heddle

Reed: 40/10cm (10dpi)

Warp and weft yarn: Ashford Merino DK 8 ply (100% wool, 105m/115yds, 50gm) 2 balls #10 Old Navy; 2 balls #15 Old Gold (All 200gm of yarn was used weaving this project, with very little waste. Allowances vary between looms, so you may wish to purchase an extra ball of each colour, just in case.)

Other: 2 weft shuttles, table/loom stand, warp peg, 2 clamps, threading hook, scissors, measuring tape, warp sticks, tapestry needle.





## Here's how:

Structure: Plain weave (tabby)

Warp sett: 10epi

Warp length: 2.1m (2½yds)

Width in heddle: 28.5cm (11¼ins)

Total warp ends: 114

Weft sett: 3.5-4 epcm (9-10 ppi)

Making up: Hand-sewn French seam using hemstitch, backstitch and whip stitch.

Finishing: Gentle hand-wash, dry flat on a towel away from sunlight. Warm iron under a clean cloth.

Finished length: A stretchy 142cm (56ins)

Finished width: 25cm (10ins)

## Warping

Warp the width of the reed using the direct warping method according to the chart. Now wind the warp onto the back beam with tight, even tension. Use separator sticks so the threads build up evenly.

## Direct Warping Colour Sequence (Read chart in columns)

		Repeat x 12 = 48			Repeat x 12 = 48		Total = 114
Old Navy	4	2		4	2		=56
Old Gold		2	4		4	2	=58

## Threading Colour Sequence (Read in columns)

	Repeat x 2 = 4	Repeat x 24 = 48	Repeat x 2 = 4	Repeat x 2 = 4	Repeat x 2 = 4	Repeat x 12 = 48	Repeat x 1 = 2	Total = 114
Slot	Navy	Gold	Gold	Navy	Gold	Navy Gold	Gold	=56
Eye	Navy	Navy	Gold	Navy	Gold	Navy Gold	Gold	=58

## Threading

The patterns only appear by placing dark and light threads next to each other in a specific order, so it is important to get the correct colour thread in each slot and eye of the heddle.

The first navy thread on the left-hand side should be in a slot. The last gold thread on

the right should be through an eye.

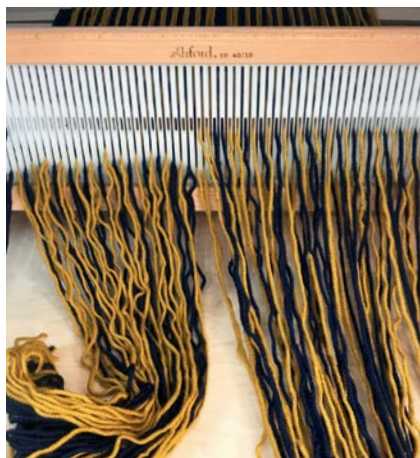
The alternating navy/gold section on the left-hand side of the warp needs to be threaded so that a gold thread is in every slot and a navy thread is in every eye.

The rest of the warp can be threaded as usual by transferring one thread from each slot to the eye on its right.

## Detailed threading instructions

Section one applies to the 4 navy warp threads on the left, and all threads from the centre stripes to the right-hand edge.

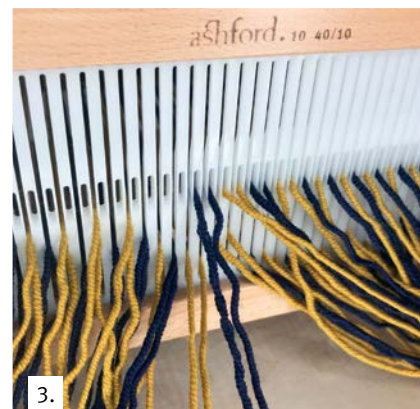
Transfer one thread from each slot into the eye that is directly to its right. Take care not to pull the hook too hard as this may break or split the yarn.



Section two applies only to the remaining 48 threads on the left. The navy threads will go into the eyes of the heddle and the gold threads into the slots. Do this in 3 moves.



1. Remove 2 gold and 2 navy threads. Rest them carefully over the heddle. There are now two empty slots and two empty eyes to their immediate right.
2. Place one gold into each of these 2 empty slots.
3. Place one navy thread into each of the 2 corresponding eyes (to the right of the gold slots). Repeat for the rest of the section.



Ready to Weave



Tie the warp onto the front warp stick with even tension. Weave a 2cm (3/4in) header of waste yarn. Wind the remaining yarn onto separate bobbins (or stick shuttles).



Twist the two weft shuttles around each other at each side as you weave. This will stop any unwoven warp threads and long weft floats appearing at the selvedge.

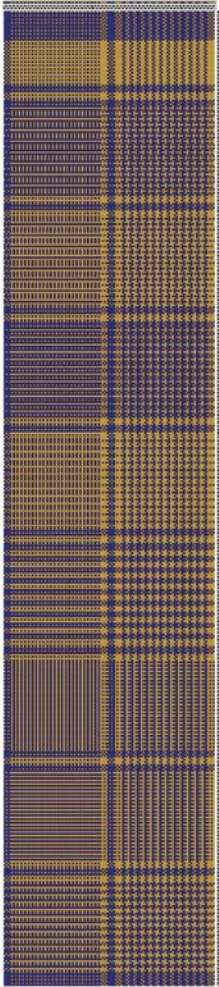


The navy weft shuttle always starts, ends, and travels up the navy selvedge on the left hand side. The gold weft shuttle starts, ends and travels up the gold selvedge on the right-hand side.

This circle scarf is woven with 8 different pattern blocks. Each block consists of 48 weft picks of plain weave. Alternating stripes of 12 picks separate each pattern block. See chart for the specific weft colour order.

Weft Colour Weaving Sequence

(Read chart from base up, the same as your weaving direction)



To finish, weave remaining gold weft (approx. 24 picks). Set aside 2.5m of navy yarn for sewing, then weave remaining navy weft (approx. 16 picks)

4 navy, 4 gold, 4 navy = 12
(2 navy, 1 gold) x 16 = 48 (Pattern block H)
4 gold, 4 navy, 4 gold = 12
(2 gold, 1 navy) x 16 = 48 (Pattern block G)
4 navy, 4 gold, 4 navy = 12
(3 navy, 1 gold) x 12 = 48 (Pattern block F)
4 gold, 4 navy, 4 gold = 12
(3 gold, 1 navy) x 12 = 48 (Pattern block E)
4 navy, 4 gold, 4 navy = 12
(3 navy, 3 gold) x 8 = 48 (Pattern block D)
4 gold, 4 navy, 4 gold = 12
(1 gold, 1 navy) x 24 = 48 (Pattern block C) Twist wefts
4 navy, 4 gold, 4 navy = 12 (Separator stripes Y)
(1 navy, 1 gold) x 24 = 48 (Pattern block B) Twist wefts
4 gold, 4 navy, 4 gold = 12 (Separator stripes X) Twist wefts
(2 gold, 1 navy) x 24 = 48 picks (Pattern block A) Ensure the gold shuttle starts/ends each pattern block on the right hand side and the navy starts/ends on the left hand side.

Weaving Plan

Start with the heddle in the up position and the navy weft shuttle on the left. Weave a plain weave header of 8 navy picks

Finishing

Weave 2cm (3/4ins) in contrasting colour waste yarn. Loosen warp tension. Cut warp from the loom, away from the edge of the fabric.

Hand stitch the cowl into a loop with a French seam (to see detailed description of how to sew a French seam by hand go to [www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34](http://www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34)).

To relax the fibres, gently hand-wash in lukewarm water. Dry flat on a towel away from direct sunlight. Warm iron under a clean cloth.

To wear, place the scarf over your head, with the seam at the back of the neck, letting it hang forward and down. Twist

once before placing it again over head and it will fit snugly and attractively at the neck.

Editor's note

Karuna was born in Chile, and later grew up in England where she studied textile design to Masters' level, worked as an industrial textile designer and university lecturer. Her work focuses on traditional techniques, natural materials, and vibrant colour combinations. Follow Karuna on Instagram @twilltextiledesign [www.etsy.com/shop/twilltextiledesign](http://www.etsy.com/shop/twilltextiledesign) [www.twilltextiledesign.com](http://www.twilltextiledesign.com)



# Made by Hand

BY ELIZABETH ASHFORD, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

Almost all the articles in this year's issue of The Wheel have paid homage to the joy and comfort that crafts bring. I can turn my back on consumerism, while exploring my creativity, and make something beautiful and useful – all made by hand. How wonderful is that!

## My Joyful Apron

### You will need:

Loom: 70cm (28ins) or wider rigid heddle

Reed: 60/10 (15dpi)

Warp: Ashford unmercerised cotton 5/2, 848m/927yds per 200gm.

For my apron I used approximately 324m (353yds) #46 Dazzling Blue, 72m (78½yds) #50 Celosia Orange, 72m (78½yds) #11 Jet Set Black, 36m (39yds) #08 Pine Bark

Weft: Ashford unmercerised cotton 5/2, 848m/927yds per 200gm, 360m (392yds) #11 Jet Set Black

Other: Inkle Loom and 100m (109yds) of #46 Dazzling Blue for the ties

### Here's how:

Warp the width in the reed: 70cm (28ins)

Total warp length: 1.2m (47¼ins)

Total warp ends: 420

EPI: 15

PPI: 14

Finished size after washing:

85cm (33½ins) long x 65cm (25½ins) wide

Weave structure: Plain weave

### Warping

Warp the loom as follows:

135 ends Dazzling Blue, 30 ends Celosia Orange, 30 ends Jet Set Black, 30 ends Pine Bark, 30 ends Jet Set Black, 30 ends Celosia Orange, 135 ends Dazzling Blue

### Weaving

1. Weave at 14 picks per inch to create a firm, durable cloth.
2. Place the weft thread gently with the reed. Do not be concerned if the weft looks loose at this point.
3. Change sheds and with the shuttle (before going through fully), beat the previous weft pick into place by pushing firmly with the shuttle edge. As the shed has been changed it will lock the previous weft pick in place.
4. Regularly advance your warp so you are always weaving in the optimum spot.
5. Run the shuttle along the eyes of the reed because this is where the threads are the tightest and the shed will be the "cleanest" to avoid catching any threads.
6. Weave to end.



*My joyful apron*

### Finishing

1. Remove the fabric from the loom.
2. Wash and press.
3. Cut apron pattern and fashion pockets from bib waste. Fold pocket edges, press with a hot iron and hem.
4. Overlock outer edge of apron. Fold outer edge under approx. 1cm (½in), press with a hot iron and hem.
5. Place right sides together of pocket pieces and sew centre seam on the straight edge. Fold the straight edge under 1cm (½in), press and sew. Fold curved edge under 1cm (½in), press, and pin in place on the apron. Sew in place.
6. Weave 2m (2yds) inkle bands. Cut into 3 lengths and hem. Attach at the neck and sides.

# Playing Possum

*Tactile Book for Children*

BY MARIE WILLS,  
CRAIGMORE, SA, AUSTRALIA



*A hand crafted tactile book tells a story for all.*

*Playing Possum* is a short children's story I wrote for a friend's family in 2018. I am currently working on a traditionally illustrated version of the story. The story is based on my friend's experience in her chook yard in rural Victoria. The story is about a possum that appears to be dead but turns out to be "playing possum" – something possums will do if very frightened or upset by a situation – and the young child who discovers the possum and seeks to help it.

*Playing Possum* is a short story about empathy, problem solving, and caring for wildlife. It deals with the complication of a terrified possum trapped in a chook house early on a school morning.

I also wanted to create a version of the story that would appeal to my good friend's 16-year-old son Owen, so that the whole family could enjoy the story.

Owen cannot read for himself and traditional storybooks do not hold his attention. Owen learns through his senses rather than reading and writing. He explores life through his hands and thrives on opportunities for tactile and sensory experience. He enjoys The

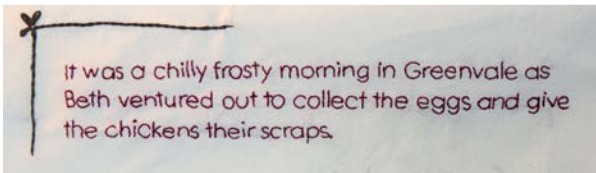
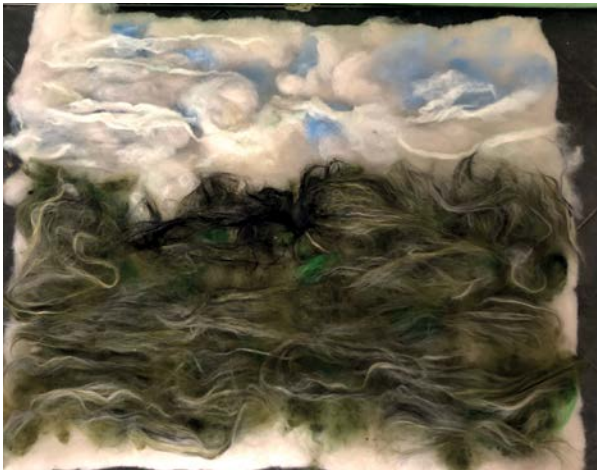
Wiggles, balloons, trampolines and things that move.

2021 saw me learning needle felting and wet felting as an experimental technique for my studies in illustration with the University of South Australia. My tutor knew I enjoyed hand spinning and weaving and encouraged me to try my hand at felting to create the illustrations for *Playing Possum*. This led me to start the creation of an interactive tactile version of the story that might appeal to a teenager like Owen.

When completed, the book will take the form of a large format eleven page, softbound fabric book – an abridged version of *Playing Possum*, suitable for a supervised small group and one-on-one reading in an early childhood education setting. It will contain sensory/tactile and interactive elements with hand embroidered text and fabricated illustrations.

The book also has an educational purpose. Sensory input has been shown to be of value for learning, with a child's fingers described as an extension of their eyes. Textures give sensory input that can help a child engage with the narrative. This can encourage imaginative play which in turn can help develop literacy skills. The illustrations also allow open-ended exploration encouraging a child





to create their own narrative from the story.

The completed pages use a heavy handmade felt base for stability and durability. The felt was made using locally sourced pre-felted batts with a combination of natural fibres and hand dyed or commercially dyed fibre.

The text is hand embroidered in backstitch on quilt backing fabric using cotton embroidery thread. This gives a raised text that gives another dimension to explore.

The first stage of the story is illustrated using three interactive pages. It depicts the main character Beth going out of her home to feed the chickens.

A doll was created using needle felting on a felt base. The doll can be moved around the scene to explore the story.

A friendly needle felted dog waits by the door. Moveable curtains cover a window through which a curious alpaca can be seen. An old belt buckle tongue was repurposed to make a hook for a hat. The buckle is used on a later page as a handle. Hand modelled polymer clay boots give information about the family.

Appliquéd alpacas watch needle felted chickens scratch in the chicken coop. Magpies overlook the scene from the branches of a gum tree.

The next illustration is hidden under a large flap which a child lifts to see Beth's face peeking into the nesting box.

Beth's face is three dimensional. The eyes are commercial glass teddy bear eyes, painted on the back to get a darker brown. The eyelids were created out of a small piece of wet felted fibre and sewn in place for strength. The seam was then hidden under more needle felting.

The big chook has hidden features such as feet and a squeaker. She was needle felted using several layers and segments, with head details made in appliquéd fabrics.



*Beth, the felted doll, can be moved around the scene to explore the story*



The nesting material was made from raffia. This makes a very satisfactory sound when readers of the book are rummaging through seeking the eggs hidden under it. The raffia was tied with lark's head knots to a string making a long section of straw-like material, which was then sewn down firmly.

If you would like to create a sensory story book the first step is to create a storyboard. This will allow you to determine the flow of the story and decide on how many illustrations are needed, and the amount of text for each page. From this develop conceptual sketches of each idea. Select the best ideas and develop them further. I made paper patterns for each illustration.

Gather a variety of materials. My selection was a mixture of materials purchased specifically for the purpose and items or fabrics I already had in my stash.

Some construction techniques you could try might include wet felting, needle felting, polymer clay models, appliqué, embroidery, and using yarn, wire, and mixed fabrics.

Experiment with as many elements as possible. Include flaps, hidden objects, pockets, finger puppets with different expressions, buttons, ties and other manipulative features to give variety.

Assess all materials for texture, durability and most importantly, safety. The pages must be created in a manner that is child safe, with all elements attached securely. I suggest the use of strong sewing thread in combination with glue. Don't rely on glue alone. A good quality craft glue can also be applied to the back of the felting to secure threads and make the needle felted areas more durable.

When the book is in use, inspect it regularly. Be prepared for damage and loss. The pages need to be repairable and loose parts replaceable.

The final step is to enjoy spending time with a child exploring the story together.



### ***Editor's note***

Marie is the third of four generations of hand spinners in her family. She uses her yarn primarily for creating wearable items for family and friends. Marie particularly enjoys weaving with her hand spun yarn and experimenting with colour.





Robin's v-shawls inspire her students

# Weaving the Versatile V-Shawl

BY ROBIN LYNDE, VACAVILLE, CA, USA

*A weaving teacher shares her experiences teaching double weave on a four shaft loom to create an elegant wrap.*

The v-shawl is one of my favourite projects to weave. I first read about the idea in *Weave a V* by Kerstin Froberg and was intrigued by the design. Since then, I have woven many using a variety of yarns and each one is unique.

The v-shawl is woven in double weave on four shafts by weaving separate layers for two front pieces and then joining those fronts by cutting one pair of warp threads at a time and weaving those across as weft. This creates a diagonal join resulting in the V shape and an interesting pattern in the back.

The v-shawl covers the wearer's back well and stays put on the shoulders. Front panels can be worn loose in front with or without a clasp, or thrown over the shoulders.

I want to share this fun project with

Ashford enthusiasts and will provide insights to help you design and weave a successful project.

Ashford DK yarn is a great choice for this project. It is easy to use and offers a variety of colours. The shawl on the left of the photo above, was designed when I spread out the odds and ends of DK yarns left over from other projects. There are nineteen colours separated by one black thread. The front panels were woven with black weft. The second shawl was designed by winding two separate warps and "painting" one of the warps with Ashford dyes. The two warps were integrated in the raddle when winding the warp on the loom. The third shawl uses four main colours in a symmetrical design with blocks separated by one light coloured thread. The shawl on the right is warped with five colours. This is the design that is outlined on the following pages.

As I was planning new warps for this article, I noticed the Caterpillar Cotton on the shelf and decided to try that yarn as well.



The v-shawl in Ashford Caterpillar Cotton



My warps usually are 50-60cm (20-24ins) wide at 8epi/layer (16epi in double weave) for the DK yarn. Warps are usually 225cm (88ins) long. There is no point in making a longer warp when you are going to cut the warp threads to become your weft. It is a great project to use up odds and ends of yarn.

## Shades of Blue V-Shawl

### You will need:

Loom: 60cm (24ins) wide four shaft

Reed: 8dpi reed (sleyed 2/dent)

Warp and weft: Ashford DK 8ply yarn

(100% wool, 202m/221yds, 100gm) 4

balls #350 Sapphire (main colour), 1 ball

#340 Spearmint, 1 ball #345 Cornflower;

1 ball #230 Peppermint; 1 ball #235 Sky

### Here's how:

Width in reed: 53cm (21ins)

Sett: 16epi

Warp ends: 336

Warp length: 225cm (88½ins)

Weft sett: 3 picks/cm (7-8 picks/in) each layer

Finished measurements: long edge =

152cm (60ins); front to neck selvedge

= 94cm (37ins); front width = 47cm

(18½ins); neck corner to point at back =

71cm (28ins)

### Weave structure

Plain weave using double weave. Weave two separate layers first and then connect the layers.

### Warping

Find a 225cm (88ins) path on your warping frame. That is just the right amount for weaving this piece, using “waste” yarn for the fringe. I warp back-to-front and there is minimal waste. Wind the warp, following the desired colour order.

### Threading

Thread as per draft.

### Weaving

Allow desired length for fringe, including what is tied to the front stick. I allow 18-20cm (7-8ins) for the twisted fringe.

Use two shuttles and follow the draft to weave two layers for 99cm (39ins). Make sure that the weft threads don't cross at the edges and the layers remain separate.



I start with both shuttles on the right side. Beat at 3 picks/cm (7-8 picks/in) in each layer. I like to place the yarn in both layers and then beat.

Weave 99cm (39ins) ending with the last pick before the fold by weaving right to left and cutting the weft on the left side. This will be incorporated into the fringe.

Start weaving the V by cutting the farthest right pair of threads at the back of the loom and using those as weft. Continue following the treadling order. The cut warp thread, coming from the upper layer, becomes the weft for the lower layer and the cut warp thread coming from the lower layer becomes the weft for the upper layer. Watch your beat, especially near the end of the V. Keep it as loose as the rest of the weaving. Ideally PPI = EPI. I calculated the yarn needed based on a balanced weave of 8epi and 8ppi for each layer. As I was weaving the measurement under tension it was closer to 7ppi for the two front layers.

Tie the side fringe in loose bundles while weaving to keep selvages somewhat controlled. This will be twisted or tied later.

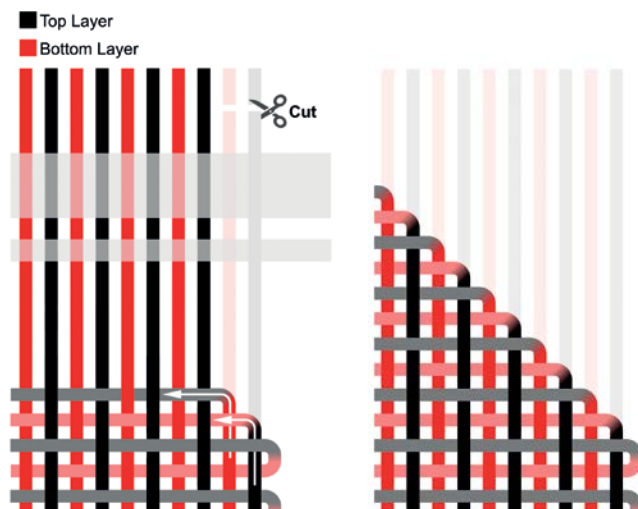


Siobhan wears the Shades of Blue v-shawl



## Warp colour order

Colour	# ends								Warp m/yds
350 Sapphire	48		32		32		32		395/431
340 Spearmint		64							145/157
345 Cornflower				48					108/118
230 Peppermint						32			72/79
235 Sky							16		37/40



## Creating the V

### Finishing

Spread the shawl on a cutting mat with a grid. Take some care at the point of the V to organise the fringe ends coming from each side. Tie or twist the fringe on the V part of the shawl and the fronts.

Wet finish by agitating for 2-3 minutes in the washing machine or by hand, using a wool friendly detergent in hot water. After draining the water, rinse in cool water. Spread the shawl on large towels to dry.

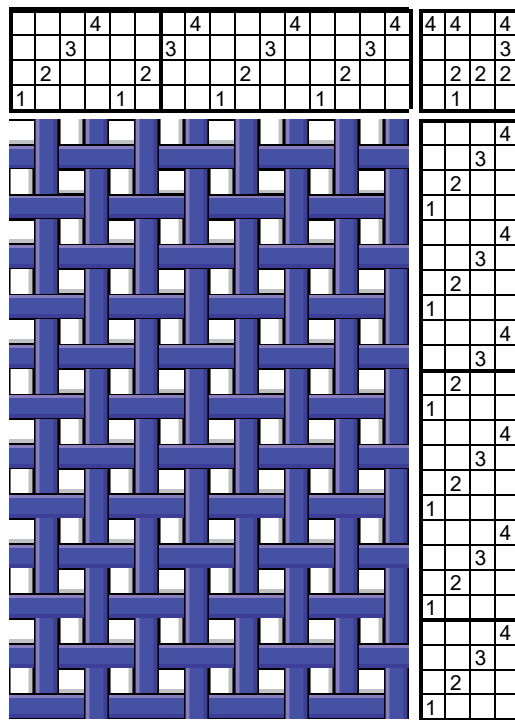
### Design tips

- Use the warp colour order and yarn requirement charts as a starting point to design your own shawl.
- Wind each thread individually for your first warp as you learn this technique.
- Remember that each pair of threads will show up as one thread on each side of the shawl.
- This can be a fun project to use up odds and ends of yarn. Just remember that you need to select a weft yarn that will complement the variety in the warp.

- If the weft yarn is very different from the warp, you will notice an obvious line between the last weft thread and the beginning of the V where the warp becomes the weft.
- I start the V on the right side of the warp. Keep that in mind when you plan a warp design. The selvedge on the right will be at the neck. The selvedge on the left will be the lower edge of the shawl.
- For an interesting look you can weave the top and bottom layers of the first 99cm (39ins) with different weft colours.
- If you design a warp that is wider than 60cm (24ins) you might need to lengthen the warp a bit. When you finish weaving the 99cm (39ins) fronts there must be enough warp left to reach across the width of the warp and have some remaining for the fringe.
- If you experiment with other yarns and it turns out that your beat is significantly less than the sett (ppi much fewer than epi) you will use up more warp before

## Threading

Thread as per draft below.



you get to the last warp threads to cut. If you run out of room to weave you can finish the shawl by cutting it off at the back stick and end up with an attractive w-shawl!

### Reference

*Weave a V* by Kerstin Froberg, Laura Fry Weaving Studio, Canada, 2004

### Editor's note

Robin Lynde raises Jacob sheep in California and shares her passion for wool, sheep, and fibre arts through her on-line presence and her unique Farm Club. Robin is an accomplished weaver and shares her skills by teaching classes at the farm shop and on-line. Robin has v-shawl kits available in different colours. See [www.meridianjacobs.com/yarn-kits](http://www.meridianjacobs.com/yarn-kits) Follow Robin on [www.meridianjacobs.com/meridian-jacobs-blog](http://www.meridianjacobs.com/meridian-jacobs-blog)



# Creativity on the Move

BY AMANDA McLENNAN, ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

*New places and new experiences can spark creativity when your tools go too.*

When your creative hobby becomes your job, or is monetised, it can be very easy to lose the joy that made you start in the first place.

When I started weaving and spinning in 2017, it was purely out of the need to have a quiet creative outlet while my daughter was small. But since it has grown into a full-time business, I have to work hard to keep my creative energy and focus fuelled up.

My work has always been inspired by nature, predominantly wildflowers and the Scottish hillsides, and I travel home to Scotland from Abu Dhabi, where I live, as often as I can. It's important to me that my daughter experiences as much of her Scottish heritage as she can, and it is equally important to me to 'refuel' my creativity and inspiration!

In the age of social media demanding constant fresh content and new work, being able to travel and work at the same time is

incredibly convenient for me and means I can travel farther for longer periods of time than if I had to leave my work at home.

But for me, the most enjoyment I get from working on my travels is the opportunity to immerse myself in nature and my surroundings. I find inspiration from new places can infuse my work with my heritage. I also enjoy the opportunity to take a break from the usual routines and making schedules for the business, and get creative, trying new techniques or simply making something for myself purely for fun.

Whenever I am in Scotland, I have a couple of favourite spots I travel to for a few days, on my own, to decompress and relax with some spinning or weaving. In the past I have taken my drop spindle and a frame loom but since the business has expanded, I've accumulated a few pieces of equipment that I can travel with, including my 30cm (12ins) Ashford Knitters Loom and my Ashford Jumbo e-Spinner, and on my most recent trip I was able to easily





pack these both into my luggage to join me on my two-month trip home.

I could never imagine being away from my spinning wheels for two months and the size and portability of the Jumbo e-Spinner has meant I have been able to bring the business with me. My Ashford Knitters Loom was a Christmas gift from my husband after I lamented that I didn't have any 'just for me' fibre hobbies. We chose the Knitters Loom specifically so I could travel with it – it folds up in half, even when it has a project on it and is small and lightweight enough to slip into a tote bag, for weaving on the train, in a hotel, or even in a tiny beachside wagon in the Scottish Highlands, which is where I spun and wove the scarf in this project!

Of course, travelling and making, whether that's spinning, knitting, or weaving requires a small amount of forward planning. Making sure you have all the fibre materials you will need will be important so that you have enough for the project. I

knew I didn't want to spend time carding fibres in Scotland, and I definitely didn't want to travel with my drum carder, so I carded enough fibre to spin and weave before I left Abu Dhabi and then used that fibre to help protect my equipment in the suitcase.

When making this scarf, I was staying in a tiny wagon on the northern Scottish coastline, far away from any sort of easily accessible supplies, and so I had to improvise on occasion. For example, when I realised I didn't have my threading hook with me, I made do with a bobby pin! And working space was extremely limited, which gave me the excuse to spin outside amongst the wildflowers, and in bed!

And of course, you don't need to travel overseas for this kind of experience. You can take your Jumbo e-Spinner in the car and spin on a road trip, as it can be powered by the car battery. You can take it camping! You can weave on the beach, go hiking and spin at the top of a hill or at a friend's house.

Sometimes things don't go as planned, sometimes things go better and sometimes you're forced to be more creative than expected. The key is to be open-minded and let the location, landscape, and culture inspire you. For me, this is so integral to the enjoyment of taking my work out of the studio and on the road.

So, for this project, I will give an overview of what I did and the materials I used to make this scarf, with directions for those who want to try it for themselves, but the main element of this project is to show you how, and challenge you to get out of your usual work space and try somewhere new and try something new. Use the opportunity of being away from your home or studio and get creative. Make something for yourself that you wouldn't normally or try a new technique that you've been putting off.

## *Beachside Wagon Scarf*

### **You will need:**

Spinning wheel or drop spindle

Loom: 30cm (12ins) or wider rigid heddle

Reed: 30/10 (7.5dpi)

Warp yarn: approx. 250m (273yds) of warp yarn (I used a mill spun fingering weight Merino which had been hand dyed in a colour to match my sari silk)

Fibre for the weft yarn: approx. 250gm (9ozs) of prepared fibre for spinning (I carded two batts of Merino, blended with natural Shetland and Icelandic fibres and recycled sari silk threads)

### **Here's how:**

#### **Spinning the weft yarn**

I had carded 2 batts of Merino, blended with natural Shetland and Icelandic fibres and recycled sari silk threads before I travelled.

The fibre you choose to spin can be anything you like, but you will need around 250gm (9ozs) in total to weave a scarf of around 1.5m (1½yds) in length.

My preference is to weave chunky singles, so I spun my fibre (approx. 8 wpi) slightly thick and thin and slubby, allowing the texture of the rougher wools and the pops of colour from the sari silk to shine.

Note: take care when spinning singles not to overtwist, otherwise your finished woven piece might be a bit wonky!

### Warping up the loom

I warped the full width of my 30cm (12ins) Ashford Knitters Loom. My warp was 2m (2¼yds) in length, and I used a mill-spun fingering weight Merino which had been hand-dyed in a colour to match my sari-silk. I like my warp to be seen when weaving so I like to use bright colours. Depending on the weight of your finished hand spun, you may want to adjust the warp accordingly.

### Weaving and finishing the scarf

I used an Ashford Boat Shuttle to weave with, and just wound on small amounts of hand spun weft yarn as needed. One of the side benefits of using textured hand spun as your weft is that ends can

be tucked in and woven easily without looking too obvious, often adding a bit of extra texture to your finished piece.

I simply wove this using plain weave. On this occasion I just wanted to enjoy the process and not think too much, whilst making something for myself, a luxury I do not often have. As this was a simple weave, it took around 2 hours to weave the 1.5m (1½yds) length.

Once I had reached the end of my warp threads, I cut the scarf off and knotted the warp threads securing both ends of the scarf. You can choose to leave the ends as they are for a more 'rustic' look or finish them by twisting them. Once secured, a warm bath with some hand-wash detergent or wool-wash will help your hand spun fibres bloom and settle into place and finish your scarf nicely. Make sure to lay it flat to dry.



### Editor's note

Amanda is a Scottish textile artist currently living in Abu Dhabi in the UAE, with her husband, daughter Lily and their two dogs. She took a modern weaving class in 2016 and started spinning in 2017 using a drop spindle. Spinning luxury unique art yarns is now her full time business.

Amanda featured in *The Wheel* issue 33.

Follow Amanda on Instagram @wildjuniperfibreat

*Amanda inspired by the Scottish countryside*



# A Journey of Recovery

BY CAROLINE COSTER, BEDFORD, UK

## *A Covid survivor finds joy in weaving.*

In March 2020 I was fifty seven and a full-time teacher (a role I had been in for over thirty years). In my spare time I raised money for charity by recycling old jeans into bags and other items which I then sold to support families in the bush village of Utange in Kenya.

Everything changed for me when I contracted Covid in late March 2020. At the end of April, I was sent to hospital, admitted to intensive care and put on a ventilator in an induced coma. Covid was, at that time, very new in the UK and treatments were limited. I was in multi-organ failure and my family was told that I was not expected to survive. However, the doctors, nurses and other medical staff worked really hard to keep me alive; I fought even in my unconscious state and friends prayed round the clock. After a month, I was moved to a vascular ward in the main hospital with gangrenous hands and feet which were subsequently amputated. Once I was sufficiently strong,

I was moved to inpatient rehabilitation where I was fitted with prosthetic arms and legs and learnt to walk and to carry out many essential activities such as washing, dressing and feeding myself. In October 2020 I returned home, after nearly six months in hospital.

I attempted to continue sewing for a year but found it impossible to accept the reduced speed and quality of what I was producing. Sewing no longer brought me pleasure and was certainly not a relaxing hobby. I knew, however, that I needed to be creative and so decided it was time to find a new creative activity. I wanted something connected with textiles which produced practical, rather than just decorative, objects. Following online research, I decided to explore whether weaving was practical.

I arranged to visit the Handweavers Studio and Gallery in London; the closest specialist shop I could find. They could not have been more helpful, and I left with an Ashford 40cm (16ins) Rigid Heddle loom

and stand. One month on, I had completed my first scarf, and understood that I could complete an item independently.

I warp with my prosthetic hooks. This is a great physical workout; I engage all muscle groups to balance while simultaneously positioning, opening, and closing my hooks. The only adaptation has been a hole drilled through my threading hook to attach it to a ribbon. This lessens the frustration of dropping the hook. I am learning to allow myself time to complete this stage and to enjoy the process. While weaving, I choose to work without upper limb prosthetics and with a long shuttle, which reduces the likelihood of dropping it.

I find weaving so very satisfying and am gradually improving my technique. I love choosing new yarns and my mind is constantly considering new weaving projects. Weaving already brings me the joy I once found in sewing and I know I still have so much further to go with it.

*Below: Learning to weave at the Handweavers Studio and Gallery in London*



*Caroline became a quadruple amputee after contracting Covid*



## **Editor's note**

Follow this heroic quadruple amputee on [facebook.com/JourneyofRecoverycc](https://facebook.com/JourneyofRecoverycc)

# Colour Blending to Match Colours

BY ALANNA WILCOX, ROCHESTER, NY, USA

*A fibre artist develops a technique to blend fibres to precision-match digital image colours.*

Have you ever admired the gorgeous array of colours in a sunset, and with great excitement grabbed your phone or camera to capture the glorious palette before you, only to be disappointed by the captured image compared to the colours observed in real life? Or perhaps you saw a breathtaking photo and wanted to depict the colours you observed in your work and were stumped as to why the colours that you dyed or spun were disappointing.

Trying to match a colour can be a daunting task, but it really doesn't have to be, especially when you know where to begin.

At the beginning of my fibre and colour matching journey, I tried to match the colour pixels from a digital image with dye and found the results to be hit or miss. So I continued to do a series of experiments over the last fifteen years, tweaking and fine-tuning my colour formulas until I could transmute a digital colour to a dyed fibre with great fidelity.

One part of my process is to start with a digital image and observe what part of the picture I would like to recreate. To do this, I look at the individual dots, or pixels, that make up the image. Each image we see on digital screens is made up of these tiny dots. And when the viewer zooms out or looks at the image at 100% magnification, the image appears as a unified whole, but on closer inspection, it transforms into a mosaic of various colours, tints, tones, and shades of hues, all ripe for selection. Each of these colours has a corresponding hexadecimal identifier that is referred

to as a HEX colour code. The HEX colour is the language a computer monitor uses to project a specific colour in any given pixel. That is why if you're looking at a digital image of, say, a cornflake and you open it up in a photo editing app and click on the cornflake to see what colour the pixel is, it will most likely give you a colour that is a golden brown colour with a series of letters and numbers, such as this colour here: HEX #B88D48



*If you look at a picture of a cornflake on a digital screen and hover over a pixel, this is one of the HEX colour codes that might appear.*


Depending upon what my intention is for picking a colour – to dye fibre to match a target colour or to card fibre to create a blend that will match the colour – I will approach it in one of two ways. If dyeing, I will use whichever one of my colour matching dye formulas is closest to the colour and then apply the dye directly. This will often yield a solid colour. If carding, however, I can simply skip the dyeing step completely and use commercially dyed top to blend the fibre according to my formula's specifications. For this article the inspiration photo is the sunset photo below.






*The reference photo of the sunset and the corresponding colour palette that was extracted from the HEX colour codes present in the photo's pixels. Photo courtesy of Fran Rickenbach.*





To recreate the purple/blue colour of the sky in the photo I selected the HEX colour #474DA4. I used my colour matching dye formula to break down the different colours that were present in it.

 Sample colour swatch #474DA4	Formula based on:	Dry weight of goods
	Dry weight of goods	10 g
	Dye stock DOS	1 %
	Citric acid needed	0.30 g

	Brand of Dyes needed	% of Formula	Liquid dye needed
	Brand A Blue	35.53%	5.94mL
	Brand A Turquoise	1.89%	0.32mL
	Brand B Plum	7.90%	1.32mL
	Brand B Purple	30.90%	5.16mL
	Brand C Magenta	23.78%	3.97mL

#474DA4 formula using dyes

But I could also recreate the blue/purple in the sky using the different colours present in the dyed Ashford Corriedale range.

Instead of starting with blue, turquoise, plum, purple, and magenta dye, I started with the following Ashford colours:

- Blue = (Blue) 5g and (Lagoon) .94gm (.03oz)
- Turquoise = (Turquoise) .32gm (.01oz)
- Plum = (Purple) 1.32gm (.05oz)
- Purple = (Blue) 5.16gm (.18oz)
- Magenta = (Pansy) 3.97gm (.14oz)



*Creating purple/blue*  
*Top left: Corriedale fibre*  
*Purple being weighed*  
*to the right ratio for*  
*the formula prior to*  
*carding. Top right: All*  
*the colours used to*  
*create the colour blend.*  
*Bottom: All the colours*  
*blended to create a*  
*match for the printed*  
*version of the HEX*  
*colour code: #474DA4*

I was so pleased with how the colours turned out! In place of dyes, I used the Ashford Corriedale primary colours, weighed each colour according to the ratios in my formula, and within 30 minutes I had a colour match.

Every fibre artist has their own preferences as to how they like to achieve their colour results. I am constantly fascinated by the way fibre and colour can work together to create subtle nuances and shifts that really influence the way colour is perceived in our creations.

In one of my first attempts at mastering dyeing, blending, and spinning, I created these gloves using this image of a sunset as a colour reference.



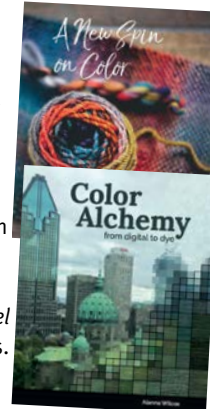
Sunset gloves

If you look at the area from the tree line down, you'll notice it isn't as rich in colour complexity as the portion above the black line in the sky. This is because not only were those colours dyed from pixels extracted from the image, they were also carded together to create subtle variations that infuse the gloves with their colour magic. I like to refer to this process of working with colour, dye, and fibre as *colour alchemy*: the process of transmuting a digital colour to a dyed fibre by combining the science of colour theory with the art of dyeing and carding.

### Editor's note

Alanna Wilcox is an artist and educator who helps spinners, dyers, and fibre art enthusiasts achieve their creative goals through expert instruction via books and online workshops.

If you're interested in learning more about Alanna's colour matching method, obtaining formulas to help you match the colours you envision in your work, or becoming a colour alchemist by taking her course and getting a copy of her newest book "Color Alchemy from digital to dye", you can reach out to her by visiting her website at [alannawilcox.com](http://alannawilcox.com). Alanna is kindly offering readers of *The Wheel* a 50% discount on colour matching formulas. Please email her on [alanna7181@hotmail.com](mailto:alanna7181@hotmail.com) and quote the code The Wheel34.





# Poncho Soroche

BY BLANCA DE LA SOTILLA CASADO,  
MENORCA, ISLAS BALEARES, SPAIN

Blanca wears her soroche poncho

*The poncho, traditionally made in the highlands (in mountain sickness “soroche” territory) is given a contemporary design.*

Andean people have worn alpaca ponchos for centuries, and still do to this day. These traditional alpaca ponchos are an essential part of the indigenous culture and have become recognised as a symbol of Andean craftsmanship and beliefs. Handmade, the ponchos are convenient to wear, they last a lifetime, and the patterns and symbols woven into each one convey meaning from generation to generation.

The pallay (“designs” in Quechua) are centuries-old representations of the natural environment and demonstrate the inspiration of indigenous artisans. Each pallay is unique to the region where the textile is woven.

In some communities the task of creating the garments is shared between men and women, while in others women weave ponchos and men knit chuyos (the typical Andean wool hat).

The poncho is a garment so relevant to the Andean culture that it has been incorporated into colloquial language. As an example, we have the expression in colloquial Peruvian Spanish “que no te pisen el poncho”, which would translate to “Don’t get your poncho stepped on” meaning don’t be overwhelmed.

### Chart key:

W= white  
R= red  
B= blue  
E= eyes  
S= slots

	W	R	W	B	W	R	W	R	W	B	W	R	W	W	R	W	B	W	R	W	R	W	B	W	R	W
E	4	1	1	1	1	1	35	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	35	1	1	1	1	1	4
S	4	1	1	1	1	1	35	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	35	1	1	1	1	1	4

## Inspiration

I learned to weave on a loom when I lived in Peru. Just before Covid lockdowns were declared, I shared some precious time with master weavers from the Urubamba Valley, where the changing temperatures of the Andean highlands make ponchos an extremely useful garment. Along the way, they explained about the meanings of the designs and the colours.

As a result, my poncho draws inspiration from the vibrant colours of the Andes, the culturally-rich designs and the mastery of traditional weaving.

## Minimal Design

I believe that less is more. My aim for this pattern is to create a contemporary design for a traditional garment that will remain stylish and not go out of fashion. It is a straightforward pattern, consistent with the Peruvian poncho’s traditional simplicity.

## Usability

In Peru the poncho is a garment of daily use in the country, mainly for its relaxed fit, durability, and convenient usability. High quality fibre is the foundation of a good poncho, and is at the core of the traditional Quechua lifestyle. The women and children of many rural Andean villages spend much of their time tending their sheep, llamas, and alpacas, which are the source of fibre for the Andean weaving process. The animals are usually shorn once a year and the fleece is either used for weaving or sold in bulk at the market.



# Poncho Soroche

## You will need:

Loom: 70cm (28ins) or wider rigid heddle

Reed: 30/10cm (7.5dpi)

Warp yarn: Peruvian Alpaca (100% alpaca, 430m/470yds per 100gm) Off white (W) 725m (792yds), Navy blue (B) 34m (37yds), Red (R) 70m(77yds)

Weft yarn: Peruvian Alpaca (100% alpaca, 430m/470yds per 100gm) Off white 725m (792yds)

## Here's how:

Total warp ends: 204 (yarn doubled in the reed is counted as 1 thread)

Width in reed: 68cm (27ins)

Warp length: 210cm (82½ins)

Weave structure: Plain weave

Finished size after washing: 98cm

(38½ins) long x 66cm (26ins) wide

## Warping

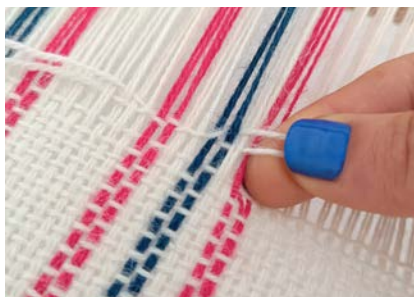
Follow the chart. The warp threads are doubled.

## Weaving

The poncho is woven in one piece leaving an opening for the neck that is reinforced at each end.

Weave plain weave throughout.

1. After weaving a few rows hemstitch to secure the start of the fabric.
2. Weave 56cm (22ins) for the back.
3. Make a reinforcing seam across the centre 6cm (2½ins). Take a length of yarn, fold in half and tie onto a warp thread 3cm (1¼in) to the right of the centre. Twine or hemstitch across 6cm (2½ins) across to the left. Tie a knot to finish. You will sew the ends in before wet finishing.
4. Now you will use two shuttles to weave the two sides of the neck leaving an opening for the neck in the centre. Weave 32cm (13ins) with the fabric divided.
5. Make another reinforcing seam across the centre 6cm (2½ins).
6. Weave the front part of the poncho using one shuttle across the full width. Weave 45cm (18ins).
7. Hemstitch across the end.



*Reinforce the seam for the neck opening*



*Starting the neckline*

## Finishing

Remove the weaving from the loom. Gently wash and lay flat to dry. Cut the fringes at the desired length and enjoy your poncho!

## Editor's note

Blanca, an ex-private banker from Madrid, felt the urge to find her balance in life. Settling in Peru, she went on a journey working together with local master artisans. She lives now in Menorca, one of the Spanish Balearic Islands, where she weaves garments, collaborates with brands as a designer, and gives knitting and weaving classes.

Follow Blanca on Instagram @tunkicrafts



*Continue making the neckline with two shuttles*



*Continue with one shuttle*



*In Peru Blanca finds a balance in her life*

# Are we Outsourcing Joy in how we Obtain our Clothes?

BY CAROLINE BLACK, VISSOIE, SWITZERLAND

## *Valuing what we do as textile artists.*

I love clothes. I love alluring colours and natural fibres. But I hate high street clothing. Row upon row of homogenous mass-produced garments, clothes with no story, with no soul. I feel deeply that there's an overlooked aspect to how we value our garments aside from their comfort and aesthetic appeal.

Do you know the name of the seamstress who made that dress you plan to wear out at the weekend? Does that cotton shirt at the back of your wardrobe acknowledge the 300 million people involved in cotton production in China alone? Is the ecological and 'literal' footprint considered in the polyester t-shirt you wear on your daily run? (By literal I mean the accumulated footsteps of other people on your behalf to allow this t-shirt to get from the other side of the planet to your local store). We don't really value our clothing in a way that's meaningful to ourselves or the planet.

But things are changing, and textile revivalists everywhere are dabbling in plant dye baths, and reclaiming the art of spinning, and weaving.

Garments are slowly reclaiming their value. Why?

**Because we are beginning to realise that there is profound joy, creative expression, community movement, and a sense of accomplishment to be had in clothing creation.**

Generally, obtaining a wool sweater (for example) involves:

- a trip by car to the high street store of choice
- a short (or long!) browse through the store until the desired sweater is found



- a return trip home to unpack the shopping bag and admire the new garment
- immediate gratification and a temporary blissful feeling

Outsourced movement in one wool sweater:

- the **tending** of sheep or goats
- the **shearing** of sheep or goats
- the **transportation** of the wool to the processing plant
- the **cleaning** and **carding** of the wool (often mechanised)
- the **transportation** of the wool to the spinning mill
- the **spinning** of the **fibres** into wool (often mechanised)
- the **dyeing** of the yarn (often mechanised)
- the **transportation** of the wool to weaving mill/knitting studio
- the **weaving** or **knitting** of the yarn (often mechanised)
- the **transportation** of the finished piece to a warehouse
- the **transportation** of all finished pieces to the store

Outsourced joy in creating a sweater:

- the **companionship** gained from **looking after animals** and the **connection to the countryside**
- the **joy** gained from handling **freshly shorn wool**
- the **fun** involved in **spinning wool** into yarn
- the **awe-inspiring dyeing process** using natural foraged materials
- the **relaxation** and calm in **knitting** your very own sweater
- the joy gained from **sharing** your dye **process**/spinning knowledge/knitting patterns with others
- the **healing power** of being in creative flow
- the value of **patience** – of having to wait for something special to come to life instead of instant gratification
- the lesson of **acceptance** – your finished item may not turn out as you hoped but you accept its beauty anyway
- the deep sense of **fulfilment** and **empowerment** from **following through** on something difficult, **making mistakes** but **not giving up**, accomplishing, and creating.

I am not saying there isn't a need for high street stores – for sure they can be practical and necessary. Nor am I saying that everyone needs to start homesteading and making all their own clothes. What I am suggesting is a societal paradigm shift in the way we value what we have and do.

## **Editor's note**

Caroline's wool obsession began in Switzerland when gifted a bag of raw wool. In the two years following, she has taught herself how to process wool by chatting to the retired women in the alpine village where she lives, to spin by watching YouTube videos, and to dye by experimenting with local flowers and leaves.





# Cosy Merino Yoga Socks

BY PAULINE MULROONEY, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

*Keep your feet and legs warm while you move – perfect for your yoga, dance, and Pilates classes. With open toes and heels, there is no slipping while keeping arches, ankles, and legs cosy warm. Merino makes these super soft and squishy and so nice to wear.*

Knit in natural white and then dye with Ashford Protein Dyes in your favourite colours or to coordinate with your activewear.

## Yoga Socks

### You will need:

Yarn: Ashford Merino DK (100% wool, 105m/115yds, 50gm) 4 balls #14 Pearl

Ashford Protein Dyes

Other: set of 5.5mm DPNs (US9, UK5) 20cm (8ins), place marker, yarn needle

Abbreviations: KFB – knit into the front and the back of the next stitch

### Here's how:

Use two strands held together throughout:  
Cast on 36 stitches (12 stitches on each needle)

Use place marker to identify end of round if needed

Join in the round (being careful not to twist) and knit 20 rounds

Next round: cast off 14 stitches, knit to end of round

Next round: cast on 14 stitches, knit to end of round

Knit 10 rounds

Increase round: knit 5, kfb, kfb, knit to end of round

Knit 7 rounds

Increase round: knit 6, kfb, kfb, knit to end of round

Knit 7 rounds

Continue increasing as set until:

Increase round: knit 12, kfb, kfb, knit to

end of round (52 stitches)

Knit 3 rounds

Cast off

Finish off ends

Knit the second sock the same

### Dyeing

Make up dyes according to instructions (for more dyeing information visit [www.ashford.co.nz/dye-info](http://www.ashford.co.nz/dye-info)).

Mix a drop or two of dishwashing liquid into some warm water and soak socks for 30 minutes. The dishwashing liquid acts as a wetting agent and helps the dye adhere to the fibres more evenly. Squeeze excess water out and lay out on some plastic wrap. Apply only enough liquid to saturate the yarn. To get the ombre effect start with full strength colour, then reduce to half strength by adding more water, then reduce to quarter strength by adding more water.

Once all the colour is applied, enclose with the plastic wrap and microwave to set the dye. Allow to cool, rinse, and dry flat.



Applying dye

### Editor's note

Pauline is a talented knitter and weaver and loves helping visitors at the Ashford Craft Shop. Her pinwheel pattern on the rigid heddle featured in issue 31 of *The Wheel*. Follow Pauline on Instagram @nana.pmm

# Spinning with no Boundaries

BY PHOEBE JONES, DORCHESTER, DORSET, UK

*Phoebe creates chunky, distinctive, art yarn with heaps of texture! Voluptuous coils are achieved through core spinning, plying, and auto wrapping on the Ashford Super Jumbo e-Spinner. She gives a master class on spinning art yarn and marketing on social media.*

## Experience on Socials

Let's talk about Instagram, the social media app where crafters, creators, and just about everyone shares pictures and videos of their proudest moments as well as their day-to-day life. I've used the app for six years and throughout those six years I've found myself losing sleep over the algorithm, jumping for joy over "viral moments" and also using it to drive and inspire me to work harder in creating new and exciting fibre arts. Without Instagram I wouldn't have been able to launch into the world of fibre art so quickly; using relevant hashtags and engaging photos, I managed to meet my target audience from the comfort of my home.

But don't be fooled. Social media is still a place which does require a lot of time and patience. It took me six years to grow my audience to 38,000 followers on Instagram. Whereas on TikTok I grew to 500,000 followers in the space of three months, simply through sharing drum carding and spinning videos. In the past two years users have been encouraged to ditch the photos and share short videos, or reels, of their process and final products. So, if you're hoping to engage your audience and grow your following, reels and social media apps like TikTok and Instagram are key. My top tips: don't put pressure on yourself, have fun, and film short five-to-seven second videos whilst you're getting to grips with the technicals. Get imaginative! Show off your equipment and use the voice-over function to explain the process after you've filmed it. Finally, and most importantly, post regularly! Your followers follow you because they already love what you do, so just get yourself out there.

## Pricing and Work/Life Balance

Two of the most common questions I'm asked online are: "How do you run a business around your family?" and "I don't know how to price my work! Help!" Let's start with the first, work/life balance, something from day one I had top of my agenda. When I started MadeWeaveLove I did so out of necessity. I had a six-month-old daughter, I was breastfeeding, my once-loved corporate management job wasn't physically viable anymore, and I was approaching the end of maternity leave. Whatever I chose to do from here HAD to fit around my family. I started weaving at nap time, then having fallen in love with the craft so quickly I soon utilised evenings and weekends too. But this was a slippery

slope into being overworked! Working every day, if you have other home/work commitments, means you're achieving at an unsustainable rate. I took a deep breath after a year of working every hour and said no more to weekends. I now work after school drop off, up until pick up. I steal another hour at dinner time and one or two more when the littlies are in bed. Totalling eight hours a day, sometimes more if I'm spinning or weaving for fun with no deadline. That's the great thing with fibre arts – it's therapeutic! My best advice when searching for a work/life balance is to optimise your free time. If you've lots of emails to do, save that for when you're waiting for an appointment. For me this is the 15/20 minute wait in the car on the school run. Being self-disciplined is one of the biggest game changers in running your own business and enables you to be present when you've other commitments like family time.

The pricing debate is a serious one. Personally, I take the cost of materials – factoring in shipping costs for materials etc., and roughly divide that into each product I make. I then charge an hourly rate which is reflective of my experience. I often share tips and tricks online with the technical side of spinning and weaving because it's nice to support the community you're a part of. But when it comes to the things I spent years of trial and error perfecting, I don't. Why? Because that's all part of a service that every yarn/fibre art collector pays for within the price of the final product they're buying. Giving this information out freely undermines your hard work, unless a big part of your business is teaching. If you're struggling to price, then I recommend working out the cost of materials per piece (over time you'll be able to do this by eye) and then thinking about what the average market value of the item is whilst also taking into account what your level of experience is in comparison. With that in mind, it's crucial you don't underprice your work too. It sets an example and doing so makes it's harder for you to increase your price in the future. It also undervalues the hand spun/fibre arts market as a whole.

## Spinning Art Yarn/Using it

Spinning art yarn is one of the most rewarding forms of spinning in my opinion. Anything goes! Big coils, small coils, sequins, dyed locks... even adding scraps from my weavings to reduce my waste. What I love the most is that you're creating a visual product. What I mean by that is so long as it's coiled with correct tension around the core (not so tight it unravels when cut and not so loose it loses definition when woven) and so long as you've steamed/wet set, you can't really go wrong. When I taught myself to spin, I got myself into a right pickle, focusing too much on what I was visually trying to achieve and not logically thinking about the physics. The single needs to be spun enough to remain smooth before plying/coiling







around the core - otherwise it will fold around your core, flat with squared edges, not firm and with smooth edges which you need to create that bouncy beehive effect.

My top tip when learning art yarn spinning is don't rush your single and don't use too much speed when plying. Use your finger, whilst holding the core thread, to direct the coil and push the coil gently to get them into proportion. For the core I always use a fluffy mohair yarn. This enables the fibre to lock in with the core, creating a strong bond. Art yarn is fantastic for creating a 3D textured appearance to woven wall hangings.

### ***Editor's note***

Working from the heart of Dorset, Phoebe from MadeWeaveLove, has been weaving for over six years and more recently spinning. Phoebe has focused her creativity on producing fun, textured art yarns and colourful fibre batts while working from home and raising her two daughters, Betsy and Mabel. Follow Phoebe on Instagram @madeweavelove



*Phoebe creates supersize art yarn*



# The Elizabeth and Richard Ashford Textile Award 2022

We are thrilled to announce the winner of the 2022 Award is Empower, Equip, Embrace — The Istanbul Refugee Project.

In the last decade, wars and uprisings have ravaged many nations such as Syria, Afghanistan, and now Ukraine. With each calamity, millions have become displaced from their homelands and have found refuge in Turkey. Many of these people find themselves struggling to survive as they navigate finding work and providing for their families all while learning a new language and culture.

Using waste from the textile industry and fabric from second-hand clothes, this project teaches these displaced women to weave. Project leader Rachel Johnson says the project aims to provide a space for refugee women, who are often perceived as burdens on society, to feel empowered to make a difference in their families' lives, to be equipped with the necessary skills to make a liveable wage, and to be embraced as a member in their greater communities.

The Istanbul Refugee Project has received \$5000 of Ashford products to increase the number of weavers and expand their range of woven goods.

Congratulations to all the applicants and especially the other finalists: the Guilderland High School's School-to-Work Program NY, USA and the Access Arts/School of Service, MO, USA.

Guilderland High School's School-to-Work Program provides students with work-based learning and life skills training, with an emphasis on helping special needs students build employability skills and gain their highest level of independence. In their Weaving for All programme, students assemble and weave on rigid heddle looms. The students build their independence in weaving, as well as develop many other skills. When counting pattern rows students develop maths abilities, in addition to



*Rachel (right) and Gül, Istanbul*

following directions, and communicating with job coaches. Most importantly they feel the joy of completing a project and a sense of accomplishment.

Access Arts, a non-profit established in 1971, provides creative learning experiences for adults and children with a special emphasis on bringing programmes to underserved populations within the community. They have scholarships for students experiencing financial difficulty, classes are adapted to meet the needs of disabled students, and they have specific classes for veterans and home-schooling communities.

To find out more about The Elizabeth and Richard Ashford Textile Award go to [www.ashford.co.nz/community/ashford-textile-award](http://www.ashford.co.nz/community/ashford-textile-award)



# One Warp One Wardrobe

BY KATE SHERRATT, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

*Create a capsule wardrobe from just one warp.*

We all love fashion and new clothes but sometimes forget that the fashion industry is the second largest polluter on the planet, second only to the oil industry. Did you know that last year the fashion industry accounted for 20% of the world's plastic production (petroleum-based polyesters)? Facts like that make me seriously consider my choices – not only for clothing but also yarns and fabrics. Once upon a time I shopped for new clothes seasonally, probably even monthly. Purchasing cheap, fun, fashionable clothes only to wear them once or twice then have them take up space in my wardrobe until I had a clean out. I am now older and wiser, I hope, and I do seriously consider every purchase I make. This past year I challenged myself and my wardrobe. Surprisingly it was very easy not to buy clothes. The ones I own already are perfectly fine and should last longer than a season. The tally of new clothes purchased was only four items, two of which were from sustainable materials – beautiful Merino possum sweaters. The other part of the challenge was to create a kind of capsule wardrobe from hand woven fabric. This was a challenge for sure but who doesn't like a good challenge?

The definition of a capsule wardrobe is “a collection of clothes that can be put together in different ways and includes everything you need to wear”. I had a general idea of the style I wanted; simple comfortable shapes that would work layered or individually.

There was also another small twist in the challenge – all the fabric would be woven from one warp.

Using a selection of different weft yarns, all from my existing stash, and varying treadling sequences I was able to weave many different pieces of fabric on the one warp.



I am very happy with my capsule wardrobe of hand woven garments. To see more detailed info, weaving drafts, sewing hints, and photos, go to the Ashford Blog [www.ashford.co.nz/blog](http://www.ashford.co.nz/blog)



# From Plain to Plaid

BY DAVID LESTER, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND



*Combining your favourite hand woven fabrics with your favourite clothes. Refresh and renew!*



Sometimes you end up with a piece of fabric left over from a project – or in my case extra warp length on your loom. A great way to use up these smaller pieces is by incorporating the hand woven fabric into your existing clothes. This is easy and requires fewer sewing skills than making a garment from scratch and you don't need metres upon metres of fabric.

## Reconstructed Sweater

### You will need:

Hand woven fabric that has been washed and pressed, a sewing machine and a garment of your choice.

To see the full weaving draft for my fabric go to [www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34](http://www.ashford.co.nz/wheel34)

### Here's how:

Unpick the seams of the garment piece you wish to replace. Use the unpicked piece as a pattern for your hand woven fabric. Sew your new pattern piece into the garment. Press seams and enjoy!

### Hints

Always make sure you have finished, washed, full, and pressed your fabric before you use it in your sewing. Overlocking (serging) the edges after you cut out the pattern pieces will reduce the chance of unravelling. Use a steam iron to press all seams flat once sewn.

### Editor's note

By upcycling an old garment David not only creates something exciting and unique, but he also helps reduce textile waste in our landfill.



# Guided by the Loom

BY REBECCA HESSELINK,  
PHILADELPHIA, PA, USA

*Traditional crafts of weaving and felting provide comfort and therapy against Covid, and a surprising entry into the world of high fashion, celebrities, and influencers!*



*My woven crop top*



*"Cool" hats*

Early 2020, I was about to travel to Panama for work, but the week before my flight, it was cancelled. I wasn't quite sure what was even going on. There wasn't much information, but things were shutting down left and right. I was polishing my silverware and afraid to go anywhere. I'd sit outside with my roommates and listen to the news, just to freak out and polish more things. All of the unknowns, losing jobs, changing plans and universal distress had me craving an outlet that was low stress and consistent, so I pulled out my rigid heddle loom. Weaving seemed to be the thing that kept my creative mind flowing and gave my hands something to do. It was something I could get lost in which was meditative and therapeutic. Weaving has continued to give me what I need for specific moments in time.

At first, weaving became a source of connection, solace, and purpose. After posting a few photos of my work on Instagram, friends and family reached out with different projects and I ended up having conversations with people from different chapters of my life. I used this time to refine my style while simultaneously reconnecting and staying busy with a project.

Primarily creating wall hangings, I played around with a variety of yarns, fabrics, and fibres. Once I picked up wool sliver everything clicked for me. I was able to break small pieces off or blend them together to create a variety of thicknesses. I could combine colours, and create large outcroppings that jutted out from the piece. It turned weaving into this sculptural experience that enabled me to manipulate the weaving into a 3D realm. Sliver created so much freedom for me and it quickly became my primary medium.

As time progressed, I wanted to create woven wearables with the same look as my wall hangings. Because I was weaving with sliver and creating pretty chunky



pieces, I knew I had to figure out how to felt, so I started playing around with felting techniques until I found a way to felt my work in a consistent manner. From there I went on to create my first set of bucket hats. They were pretty large, chunky, and received mixed reviews. I was convinced they were cool, and continued to work on them to get them right. After a month of being on the internet, I got my first celebrity commission. Going from friends and family to celebrity kicked me into high gear - I realised I needed to get professional. All of a sudden this was no longer a pandemic hobby. It was time to lean in and take a more serious approach to this craft that had blessed me with both connection and anxiety-reducing busy work when I needed it most. I quickly created a business plan, learned how to do taxes, created my logo, and made a website. This was the motivation and the justification I needed to reassure myself I was on the right path. I started working on more hat designs as well as larger fashion pieces and have continued to find opportunities that are far beyond the trajectory I had set for myself.

## Woven Crop Top Creation

One of my popular creations is this crop top. Woven on a rigid heddle loom with a cotton slub warp, I used Ashford Merino sliver as weft. I use the Merino sliver the most because it is soft, light, and breathable and then will always pair it with a natural fibre for the warp.

Using my hands, I feed in the sliver wool while using the heddle to push the wool down. I then use my fingers to push it in more tightly and fill in the ripples and curves.

The repetitive motions, attention to detail and the textures of the wool all play into my process and guide my direction. Long sessions help me fully immerse

myself in the piece while I let the colours, and fibre guide my practice. Due to my meditative and free form nature, much of my work is flowy and wavy and features inconsistent textures and patterns.

Once the pieces are finished, I begin my wet felting process. This process binds the fibres together to create a workable piece of fabric. It also blends the colours together and adds to a unique and irregular texture. I lose around 40% of my surface area during this process.

The weaving must dry for several days before I am able to work with it. Once dry, I will cut my pattern pieces out using heavy duty upholstery scissors.

I place the pattern pieces on the wool fabric and try to highlight certain sections of the weaving in these placements. I will prioritize these sections for my fashion pieces and then save the scraps from this process and use them to create smaller accessories and trinkets.

I hand sew the pieces together using a flat stitch on both sides of the piece. I chose this stitch because I like the visible addition of the hand stitching, and because the fabric is so thick, sewing it on both sides allows for a stronger and more durable finish.

There is something special about weaving and then turning it into fashion in this way. My weaving style continues to be extremely freeform and spontaneous, but turning the weaving into fashion requires consistency, attention, and detail. These pieces show a mixture of spontaneity and order.

The biggest lesson I have learned through this weaving journey, is to stay

## Editor's note

Rebecca has been a qualified Outward Bound instructor for many years but when Covid intervened she turned to weaving and felting. Through these she has been introduced to the world of fashion, influencers, and celebrities. As she continues to develop her craft, Rebecca hopes to continue representing traditional craft in the fashion industry. Follow Rebecca [thistlepot.com](https://thistlepot.com)



*Cutting the pattern pieces*



*Hand sewing with a flat stitch*

open to the opportunities that present themselves and lean in when the universe is pushing you in a direction. Have goals, but do not let them limit your experience and direction, and let the loom be your guide!



# Textile Arts Healing in a time of Covid

BY CAROLYN ROGERS, YARRA VALLEY, VIC, AUSTRALIA

*Textile arts cover such a wide range of processes, offering endless possibilities for play, and for building skills and confidence – so important when living through a pandemic.*



*Carolyn finds crafts brings out the best in others*

In 2021 I took the bold step of applying for a grant to teach textile art to parents impacted by the effects of Covid when their children returned to face-to-face school. In the end I taught a range of ages, from young mums up to 80-year-olds and they kept coming back for more fun. The lure of playing with colour and texture overcame the fear of leaving home for the attendees and it became easier for them as the weeks went by. The uncertainty on their faces in the early days changed to eagerness and joy.

On the creative menu were textured papers, gel plate printing, basic felting, Nuno felting, resist felting, designing with Transprint inks and printing with hand carved print blocks. All these options were taught as textile tasters, not fully finished items. My aim was to use the best quality art materials and blend them with as many recycled fabrics as I could, while teaching processes for experimentation.

Classes started with quiet anticipation and with a characteristic, “What are we making today?” As there was no ultimate “thing” we would create, I always replied, “You are here to play with inks and acrylic fabrics or turning fibres into fabrics.” Soon enough, after my demonstration of how to work with the mediums for the day, there were lots of outstretched hands and smiling faces as the students collected their goodies. Sharing and appreciation became the norm.

It was satisfying and encouraging to see how the different personalities came out in the individual samples being made. The room often fell silent as everyone became engrossed in what they were doing. I made sure there were plenty of materials at hand to use. Once the penny dropped and they “got it”, many trips to the materials table were made to try different fabrics and colours, or to collect more silks to add to





*The students experimented with different processes*

their felting. Oohs and aahs accompanied by big grins surfaced around the room as new skills were learned.

Overall, the classes engendered positive changes in the ladies each week. They brought back work from the previous week to show me the stitching they'd added or the small purse they'd created from their felt samples. The ladies arrived early and stayed afterwards to help me pack up the room.

The stresses of Covid affect people in different ways: loss of memory, lack of energy, depression and loneliness. For creative people, there is a deep sense of loss of direction, an inability to engage with normal creative materials or processes, or know what to do with them.

The grant gave me the opportunity to re-engage a small group of people used to putting creative thinking into practice, producing some form of artwork. The first couple of weeks the attendees were quiet, hesitant, but still curious. By the end of the course, they arrived happy, excited, and ready to learn new skills, play with colour and texture, and challenge themselves to create something they had never tried before. It was lovely to see them engaging with others, offering positive feedback on each other's work, often taking up a different application discovered by one of the others.

The result after six weeks of participation? Sixteen confident women taking newly learned skills and applying them to their creative practices in sewing, printing, felting, and designing. Most of the women have signed up with me for further classes. But most importantly, they have stepped back into their community with confidence and a sense of achievement.

## Crochet Bowl

During the long weeks of lockdown here in the Yarra Valley, I taught myself to crochet starting with the "magic circle" - circles developed into gentle curves which became bowls. As I was using some of my own hand spun slubby wool (thick and thin), the bowls were very holey! The obvious solution was to felt them. This solidified the shapes. I usually dye my fibres prior to spinning. Other times I like to spin, then selectively dye. For the undyed ones they needed colours as well. This was achieved by "puddling" each one in dye solutions and rolling the bowls around in the different colours. Steaming fixed the dyes.

### Here's how:

The pattern for the basic bowl is as follows. It is an easy pattern and good for a beginner crochet project. It can be changed by increasing and decreasing to shape your

work. (Abbreviation sc is a single crochet stitch)

R1: Sc6 in Magic Ring (6 stitches)

R2: Sc2 into each sc around (12 stitches)

R3: \*Sc1, 2 in next sc, repeat 6 times (18 stitches)

R4: \*Sc2, 2 in next\*, repeat 6 times (24 stitches)

R5: Sc1 \* 2 in next sc, sc3\*, rep until 2sc (30 stitches) remain

R6: \*Sc4, 2sc in next sc\* repeat 6 times resulting in 36 stitches

R7: Sc2, \*2sc in next sc, sc5, rep until 3sc (42 stitches)

R8: \*Sc6, 2 in next sc\* repeat 6 times making 48 stitches

Once I learned the rhythm of this pattern I spun and crocheted every day, resulting in a lovely pile of different size bowls, which will provide lots of inspiration for later work and classes of course!

### Editor's note

Carolyn Rogers Dip.T.A. has been an artist for over 35 years, while studying and nursing. Working in textiles, polymer clay/multimedia, she finds creativity through colour and texture. She has contracts with Community Houses and her work teaching the textile arts, including spinning and weaving, will continue to help inspire and bring the best out in others.





*Woven clothing -  
sustainable and  
eco-friendly*

# Taking Hand Weaving to a Sustainable Fashion Show

BY SARAH DOUGLAS, MOTUEKA, NEW ZEALAND

*Hand woven Leno meets sustainability and catwalk criteria.*

I began weaving about 20 years ago. My work is slow fashion. Garments take days to make, not hours. So, when your work takes a long time, it makes sense to use the best quality wool. I use an Ashford wheel to spin wool for a project or I use fine micron soft wools for clothing. I often mix textures, colours, and weights in a woven piece and these combinations add interesting drape, bumps, and gathers. My weaving has a very free and creative look.

This year an exciting opportunity came up to take my work to a sustainable fashion show, Otautahi Walk Lightly. Clothing entered needs to meet sustainability guidelines to be either recycled or natural and biodegradable. Pattern making must be sustainable by having little or no waste. I made clothes that are simple loom-based styles. Catwalk fashion involves thinking about the whole look; clothes, hair, accessories and how they look moving on a model on the runway. It is also very glamorous. For me it was the perfect opportunity to use lots of tassels. I got busy and created six complete looks.

This pattern is one of the tops I made for the show on my rigid heddle using the Leno weaving technique. It's a quick pattern that you could finish in a couple of days. Leno weaving grows fast due to the spacing. If you are not familiar with Leno, it is the simple process of twisting 2 warp threads, so the weft is secured in place while being spaced out. It creates netting that is very stable.



# Leno Top

## You will need:

Loom: 80cm (32ins) or wider rigid heddle  
 Reed: 10/10cm (2.5dpi)  
 Warp and weft yarn: Handspun Alpaca approx. DK weight 300gm (10½ozs) 600m (656yds)  
 Other: Pickup stick wider than your warp, wool needle

## Here's how:

Structure: Leno weave

Warp sett: 2.5epi

Warp length: 3.8m (4 1/8yds)

Width in heddle: 63½cm (25ins)

Total warp ends: 66

Weft sett: 1epcm (2.5ppi)

Making up: Hand-sewn

## Warping and Threading

Direct warp as normal. When you are threading go to the eye on the right of the slot. This way you will have a thread in the eye on the far-right side.

## Weaving

Do not have the tension too tight as it will make using the pickup stick more difficult. Starting on the right side, with the reed in the up position, with your fingers move the top thread over to the left and pick up the bottom thread with your pickup stick. Move the next top thread over to the left and pick up the bottom thread, continue across the width. You will see the threads are now crossed. Turn the pickup stick on its side to create a shed and pass your shuttle through in front of the pickup stick. Turn the pickup stick flat and gently push the weft into place. Change the reed into the down position and weave the next row as normal. You will see a cross between the rows. Repeat this sequence for the length of each pattern piece. Hemstitch at the beginning and end of each pattern piece while the weaving is on the loom.

Leave a gap in the main pattern piece for the neck. Use two shuttles, one each side to weave the shoulders, then return to one shuttle.

## Finishing

Remove from the loom, cut pattern pieces, and wet finish. Fill a tub with hot water 60-70°C (140-158°F) and add some soap. Place pieces in and gently submerge. Leave for an hour to soften and full. The goal is to get the fibres to link up but not felt. Gently agitate for about 5 minutes, then rinse in warm water and lay flat to dry.

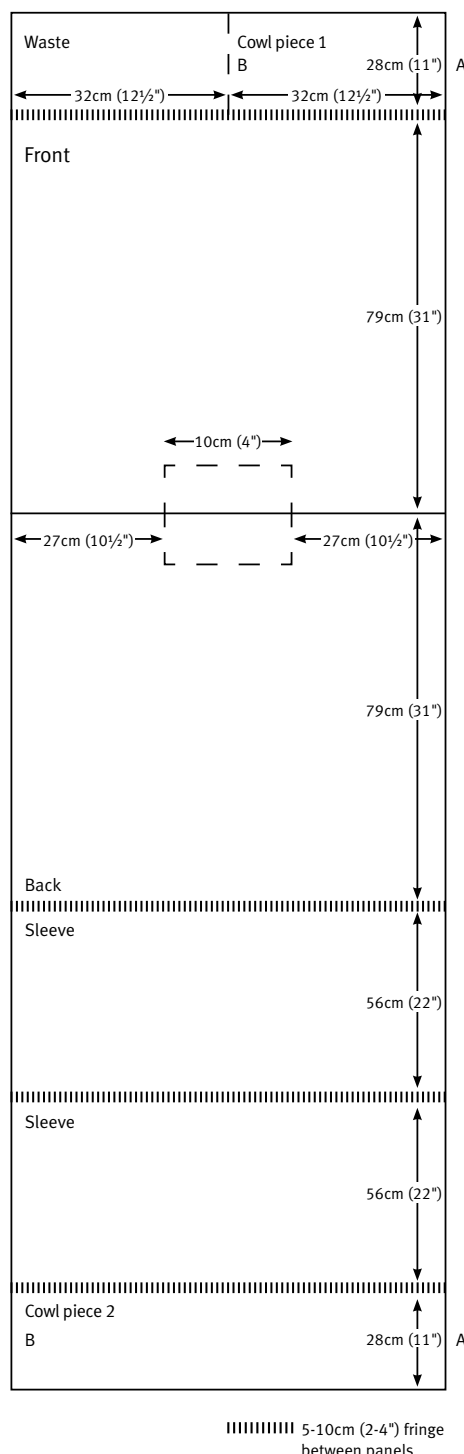
## Sewing Up

Cut the warp threads of the neck space and tie each pair in a knot to secure. The cowl is made from cowl piece 1 and 2 (see diagram). Sew edge A of piece 1 to edge A of piece 2. Then sew edge B of piece 2 to edge B of piece 1. Sew the cowl to the neck, if it is not an exact fit ease it in. Do not trim the fringes until after sewing. Position the centre of the sleeves at the shoulders, with equal length at the front and the back. Sew sleeve and side seams. Sew edge to edge - there is no seam allowance. If the sleeves are too long, you can use some hat elastic in the cuff or fold and stitch back. Once sewn wash again to full in hot water. Trim tassels, remembering this is a creative garment and is meant to be interesting so a few tassels are ok. Lay flat to dry.

I think you will enjoy making and wearing this and as you make it, dream up other ways to use Leno - for tops, skirts, dresses, bags, curtains... The possibilities are enormous. I encourage you to be sustainable and eco-friendly. I hope more people try weaving on a rigid heddle and make a choice to use only natural biodegradable clothing and upholstery, and reduce plastic use.

## Editor's note

Sarah started weaving when she was 35, learning from an experienced weaver the basics of a large floor loom. The weaver said, "You'll copy my style for a while then you'll develop your own," and that is exactly what happened! Now Sarah has three looms, and a spinning wheel, and after nearly 20 years says she is still learning and being inspired by other weavers.



# Avis Vest and Hat

BY LISA CRAIG,  
WANAKA, NEW ZEALAND





## A geometric bobble textured vest and bobble hat.

Avis is Latin for bird. Inspiration for the pattern comes from a bird's eye view of the beautiful clear waters of Lake Wanaka, revealing the stones and pebbles along the shoreline and the golden colours of the autumn trees.

As the bird soars high, she looks out past the crystal-clear waters to the mountains beyond.

**Tension:** 22 sts and 30 rows to 10cm (4ins) over stst on 4mm needles.

**Abbreviations:** alt = alternate; beg = begin(ning); cm = centimetres; cont = continue; dec = decrease(ing); foll = follow(s)ing; gtst = garter stitch (every row knit); K = knit; meas = measures; NR = Next Row; P = purl; patt = pattern; rem = remain(ing); RS = right side; RSF = right side facing for next row; sl = slip; st(s) = stitch(es); stst = stocking stitch (RS row K, WS row P); tog = together; yrn = yarn round needle

**Special Abbreviations:** MB = Make bobble = K into front, back, front of next st, turn P3, turn K3, turn P3, turn K3tog.

## Measurements

### Vest

Age	0-3	3-6	6-9	9-12	12-18	Months
To fit size	41	43	46	48	51	cm
Garment size	45	49	52	56	60	cm
Finished length	22	25	28	31	34	cm

### Hat

Age	0-3	3-6	6-9	9-12	Months
To fit size	35	40	45	48	cm

## You will need:

Ashford Merino DK

Old Gold	3	3	3	4	4	50gm balls
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One pair size 4mm (6US, 8UK) knitting needles, and one pair size 3.25mm (3US, 10UK) knitting needles, stitch markers and 2 small buttons.

## Here's how:

### Correct tension is essential!

The success of your finished garment depends on tension. Check this carefully before you begin to knit. If there are fewer sts in 10cm (4ins) than stated, your tension is too loose; use smaller needles. If there are more sts, your tension is too firm; use larger needles.

## Vest

### BACK

With 3.25mm needles, cast on 53(57,61,65,69) sts.

Work rib as follows.

Row 1: K1, \*P1, K1, repeat from \* to end.

Row 2: P1, \*K1, P1, repeat from \* to end.

Repeat the last 2 rows until rib measures 4cm from beginning, ending with RSF. \*\*

Change to 4mm needles and work stst until Back measures 12(14,16,18,20) cm from beg, ending with RSF.

### Shape the armholes

Cast off 4 sts at beginning of next 2 rows. 45(49,53,57,61) sts.

Decrease 1 st at each end of NR and every row until 35(39,41,45,49) sts remain.

Continue stst until Back measures 22(25,28,31,34) cm (8½(10, 11, 12, 13½) ins) from beginning, ending with RSF.

### Shoulders

Cast off 8(9,9,10,11) sts at beginning of NR, K 19(21,23,25,27) sts and place on a stitch holder for neckband, knit to end. 8(9,9,10,11) sts.

### Back Shoulder Band

Change to 3.25mm needles and work 5 rows of gtst.

Cast off.

Place a marker for one button on band as pictured. Note the 2nd button is on the neckband.

### FRONT

Cast on and work rib as for Back to \*\*.

Change to 4mm needles.

NR: Knit.

NR: Purl.

Then work pattern as follows

Row 1: K 17(19,21,23,30), P19, K 17(19,21,23,30).

Row 2: Purl.

Row 3: K 17(19,21,23,30), (P1, K5) 3 times, P1, K 17(19,21,23,30).

Row 4: Purl.

Row 5: K 17(19,21,23,30), (P1, K2, MB, K2) 3 times, P1, K 17(19,21,23,30).

Row 6: Purl.

Row 7: As row 3.

Row 8: Purl.

Repeat last 8 rows until Front measures 12(14,16,18,20) cm (4¾(5½,6¼,7,8) ins)

from beg, ending with RSF.

### Shape the armholes

Keeping pattern correct cast off 4 sts at beginning of next 2 rows. 45(49,53,57,61) sts.

Dec 1 st at each end of NR and every row until 35(39,41,45,49) sts rem.

Continue pattern until Front measures 17(20,23,26,29) cm (6¾(8,9,10¼,11½) ins), ending with RSF.

### Shape neck

NR: K 12(14,15,17,19) sts, turn.

Working stst, continue on these 12(14,15,17,19) sts for left side of front neck.

Dec 1 st at neck edge on NR and every following row until 8(9,9,10,11) sts remain.

Work until Front measures 5 rows less than Back, ending at neck edge.

### Front Shoulder Band

Change to 3.25mm needles and work 5 rows of gtst, making a buttonhole on row 2 as follows

Row 2: (Buttonhole row, work K2tog, yrn for buttonhole matching marker).

Cast off.

Return to remaining sts, slip centre 11 sts onto a stitch holder.

With 4mm needles and RSF, rejoin yarn to rem 12(14,15,17,19) sts for right side of neck, K to end.

Work as for left side of front reversing all shaping until right Front measures same as Back to shoulder, ending at side edge. Cast off.

### To Complete

Using mattress stitch, join right shoulder seam.

### Neck Band

With 3.25mm needles and RSF, begin at top front shoulder band, pick up and Knit 17(17,18,18,19) sts evenly down left side of front neck, Knit across sts from front stitch holder, pick up and Knit 17(17,18,18,19) sts evenly up right side of front neck to shoulder seam, Knit across sts from back stitch holder, pick up and Knit 5 sts across end of back shoulder band. 69(71,75,77,81) sts.

Row 1: P1, \*K1, P1, rep from \* to end.  
Row 2: (Buttonhole row) K1, P1, K1, yrn, K2tog, \*P1, K1, rep from \* to end.  
Row 3: P1, \*K1, P1, rep from \* to end.  
Cast off loosely.

Lap front shoulder band over back and sew together at armhole edge.

### Armhole Edges (Both alike)

With 3.25mm needles and RSF, pick up and knit 62(66,70,74,78) sts around armhole edge and work rib as follows  
Work 3 rows of rib (K1, P1).  
Cast off in rib.

Sew side seams.

Attach buttons to match buttonholes.

## Hat

With 3.25mm needles, cast on 74(82,90,98) sts.

Work rib (K1, P1) until rib measures 4cm (1½ ins) ending with RSF.

Change to 4mm needles and work pattern as follows.

Row 1: Knit.

Row 2 and every alt row: Purl.

Row 3: K1, \*K7, MB, rep from \* to last st, K1.

Rows 5 and 7: Knit.

Row 9: K1, \*K3, MB, K4, rep from \* to last st, K1.

Row 11: Knit.

Row 12: Purl.

Repeat the last 12 rows until Hat measures 11(12,13,14) cm (4½(4¾,5¼,5½) ins) from beginning, ending with RSF.

### Shape the Crown

Row 1: K1, \*K2tog, K 7(8,9,10), rep from \* to last st, K1.

Rows 2 and every alt row: Purl.

Row 3: K1, \*K2tog, K 6(7,8,9), rep from \* to last st, K1.

Row 5: K1, \*K2tog, K 5(6,7,8), rep from \* to last st, K1.

Row 6: Purl.

Continue decreasing in this manner, working one less st between each decreasing in following alt rows until 18 sts remain.

NR: K1, (K2tog) 8 times, K1. 10 sts.

Break off yarn, run end through remaining sts, draw up tightly and fasten off.

### To Complete

Using mattress stitch, join seam and sew in ends.

Make a pompom and attach to the crown of the hat.

*The Avis vest and hat are a textured delight*



*Lisa inspired by Lake Wanaka*

### Editor's note

When some of Lisa's earliest memories include family woolsheds, rural rhythms and landscapes, and her Great Grandma's diary prioritised knitting for her loved ones – then it is no surprise that knitwear designer and textile artist Lisa Craig has a deeply embedded passion for fibre arts. Lisa studied Textile Design in Wellington, and is published both locally and internationally.

Today Lisa and her family live in Wanaka, where her inspiration remains firmly entrenched in the rural and natural landscapes of the area.

Follow Lisa on Instagram @lisafdesign



# Product news

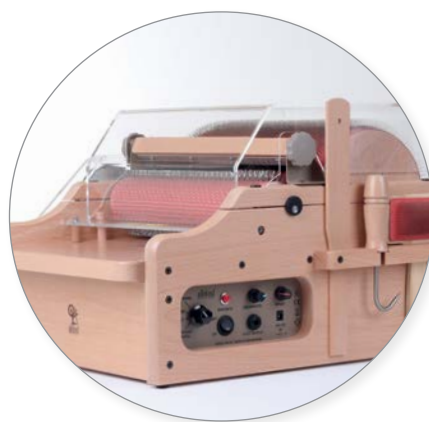


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*It is a perfect introduction to the fibre crafts!*





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