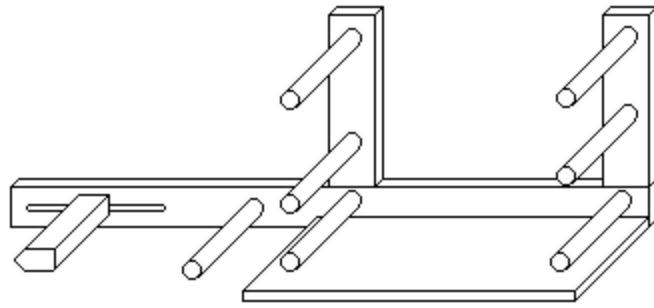


# Inkle Weaving

## The Inkle Loom

Inkle looms come in a variety of sizes but there are two basic size categories of inkle looms. The smaller ones are known as table looms (some are small enough to be called "lap looms") and are the most common ones that you may see at SCA events. These ones generally will weave bands 90 to 110 inches in length, depending on the number of pegs and the height and length of the loom.



## The Structure of Weaving

The **warp** is the set of threads that represent the straight grain of the fabric. When you buy woven fabric (as opposed to knits) off the bolt, the length of fabric that you purchase is measured along the warp of the fabric. In inkle weaving, the warp is the set of threads that you wrap around the pegs of your loom before any weaving can be done.

The **weft** is the set of threads that run perpendicular to the warp. When you buy woven fabric off the bolt, the width of the fabric is measured along the weft. In inkle and tablet weaving, the weft is the thread you have wrapped on your shuttle and is passed back and

forth between the sheds of the warp.

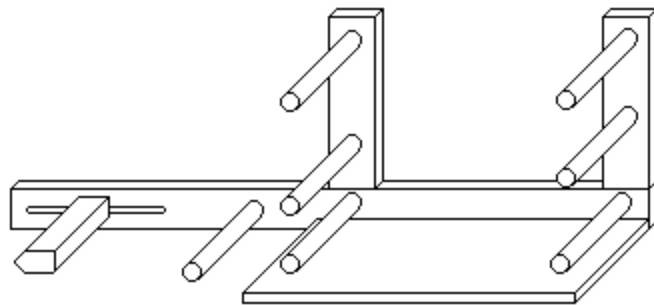
The **shed** is the space you create in the warp by the raising or lowering of every other warp

thread. The weft thread is passed through this opening. This becomes more clear later in this document.



A **shuttle** is flat paddle onto which you wind your weft for the ease of passing the weft through the shed. In inkle weaving, oftentimes the shuttle doubles as a beater bar.

The **heddles** are loops of thread through which every other wrap of the warp is passed. The purpose of the heddles is to keep half of the warp threads stationary while the other half is free to be shifted either up or down in the creation of sheds. You can make your heddles out of just about any thread or string that has no stretch that you have handy. To make heddles, tie a loop of string from the 2 pegs shown in the drawing. Tie a firm knot in each loop. You will need half as many heddle loops as the number of strings you will be warping.



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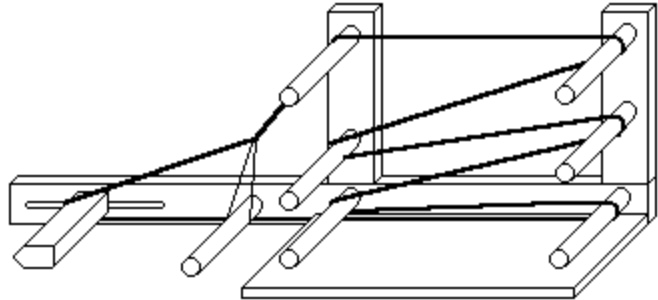
## Designing your Pattern

The designs that are possible in just your basic straight inkle weaving are limitless. The "style" of the designs is not. In creating inkle designs, you really only have two "rows" of design. The two rows repeat themselves. The finished design is row1, row2, row1, row2,

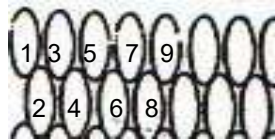
Use the blank patterns on the last pages to lay out your design for warping your loom and USE A PENCIL to draw it. We recommend making a diagram of less than 20 strings.

## Warping the Loom with your Design Pattern

The next step is warping the loom. This is the process of wrapping the warp threads around the pegs of the loom. The exact path that the warp threads take is dependent on your particular loom and the length of band you wish to weave. The following description should be fairly universal though. Your first step is to make sure that your tensioning device is fully extended. If this is not done, you may not be able to adjust the tension as the band shortens.

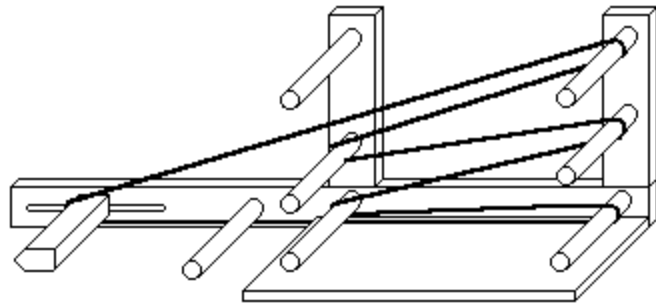


No Heddle



Heddle

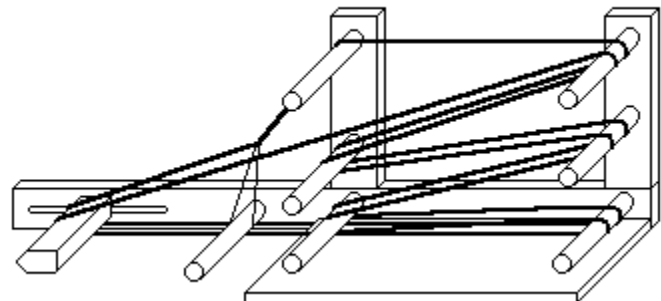
Pull down the warp with a heddle loop, ensure heddle loops go over the lower peg. Loop the warp high over the top front peg.



Continue to wrap. This time, do not loop over a heddle loop. Then pass the thread under the top front peg. The rest of the warping for this wrap continues in the same manner as the previous wrap.

For the third wrap, use a heddle again and wrap over the top front peg again. This warping continues in like manner until you need to switch colors.

To switch colors, tape or tie off the off-color to maintain the tension. Tape or tie off the start of your second color, and continue warping. When you need to use a color, tie off the other color while you warp with the first color.



When you have come to the end of the

# Inkle Weaving

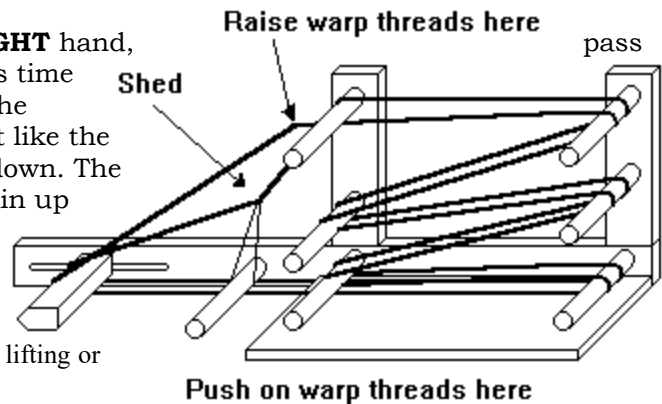
warping process, take the ends of each color of warp thread and tie them to together .This is known as a continuous warp.

## Preparing your Shuttle and practice Changing the Shed

Before you get to actually start weaving, you need to get your weft ready. Whatever color you use for the outer borders of your pattern, tie a 1 inch loop in the end of that thread as it comes off the spool. Loop the loop over one horn of your shuttle and wrap a bunch of this thread onto the shuttle in a figure 8 pattern. Cut the thread from the spool.

Now your loom is warped, your shuttle is wound. But, don't start weaving just yet. Get familiar with your warp threads and how to create a shed. Using your **LEFT** hand, pass your hand behind the heddles and under the warp. Raise your hand. Your hand will lift every other thread. The other threads will be captured by the heddles and will not be able to move up. You have just created your first **shed**. That is the open space in the warp that is in front of the heddles. It is through this type of shed that the weft will be passed from left to right. Direction is important.

Now, remove your hand and, using your **RIGHT** hand, your hand behind the heddles again but this time put it between the upper and lower part of the warp (so your hand is between the warp just like the top front peg). This time, push the threads down. The threads that pass through the heddles remain up because they pass over that top front peg. You have now opened another shed. It is this type of shed through which your shuttle will be passed from right to left. Play with your sheds a bit using the correct hands and lifting or lowering correctly.

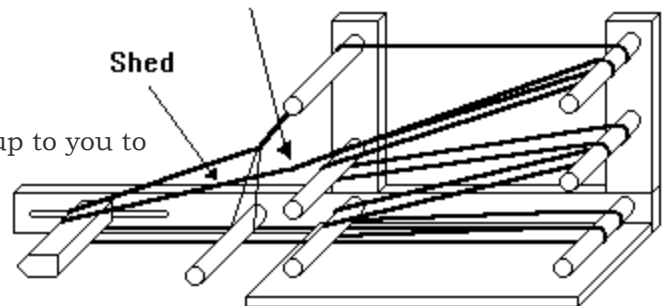


You are now ready to weave!

## Start Weaving

**LEFT HAND UP, RIGHT HAND DOWN** It's up to you to

decide from which direction to start. It really doesn't matter. Open a shed. Pass your shuttle through the shed. Leave a tail of weft a few inches in length (about six to eight inches). Make sure the weft is straight and change sheds. This time, as you pass the shuttle through the shed, lightly push the previous row with the edge of the shuttle (or whatever you are using for beating the threads), just to straighten the weft. Continue to pass the shuttle the rest of the way out through the shed. Before you change sheds, you need to pull the two strands of weft that you now have hanging from the same side of the project. Pull both at the same time until you no longer see the weft in the weaving. For your first project don't get it too tight. Now change sheds again. As you pass the shuttle, again use it to pack down the threads to get them straight and tight. Finish the pass and pull this one a little tight to secure the other edge. With these three passes of your weft, you should have the warp threads pulled together at both edges and you should not be seeing the weft encased in the warp. Getting this right just takes practice. From this point, you can just keep changing sheds, passing the shuttle and packing the threads. You're weaving!



# Inkle Weaving

Some people use a skewer (or a few rows of facial tissue or scrap cloth) somewhere in the first passes of the weft. This keeps the pattern straight

When you run out of weft, weave until you have enough to make one more pass that will travel about three-quarters of the way through the shed. Without changing sheds, re-wind your shuttle and continue weaving in the same direction by starting in the same shed, overlapping the end of the previous weft and the new weft. Just be a little careful for the first couple of passes with the new weft until it becomes secure. Do not tie weft threads together.

If you break your warp don't panic. Just stop what you are doing. If your shuttle is in the shed, remove it and set it aside. Cut just about an inch off each of the broken ends of the warp (cut more if the ends are severely deteriorated). Cut a new section of warp and tie, using a square knot) to each of these ends, trying your best to maintain the tension. Clip these ties close to the knot and push them down so that they, and the knot, get buried in the warp with the weft as much as possible. This is the only way to fix a broken warp. Depending on the material used, it may or may not show.

When your weaving gets close to the heddles, you will not be able to open a shed large enough through which to pass the shuttle. When this happens, loosen the tension on your tensioning device. Then, using both hands (one on the top set of warp and one on the bottom set of warp), carefully slide the woven section toward you, passing it over the top of the front bar. It will then pass under the front bar and away from you following the path of the warp. After you have moved it, reset the tension and continue weaving.

When the weaving is completed to the point where the starting part of the weaving has traveled the full warp path and is at the top front peg, you have to stop. You will not be able to progress further. It is now time to remove and finish the strip.

## Ending the Weaving

This method will lock in your Weaving Tail into the last 3 passes of the weaving, making it so that your band will not unravel.

Weave until you can only weave 3 more passes of the shuttle. Cut the shuttle string with about 15" to spare as a Weaving Tail on the band. Cut off 2 lengths from the shuttle 6" each long. Fold each of these over to make two 3" Loops. These loops will act as hooks to pull the Weaving Tail back through the weave.

Pass 3. Change the shed and pass the Weaving Tail through. Place one of the Loops in the open shed, with the 2 tails of the 1<sup>st</sup> Loop sticking out the same side as the Weaving Tail.

Pass 2. Change shed the other way, again sending the Weaving Tail through and laying the 2<sup>nd</sup> Loop over the Weaving Tail with tails on same side, but opposite of Pass 3.

Pass 1. Change shed again, sending Weaving Tail back.

Reverse Pass 2. thread Weaving Tail through 2<sup>nd</sup> loop and use it to pull Tail back through.

Reverse Pass 3. thread Weaving Tail through 1<sup>st</sup> loop and use it to pull tail back through. Pull tight and snip end close to weaving. End will pull into weaving and be locked in. K

# Inkle Weaving



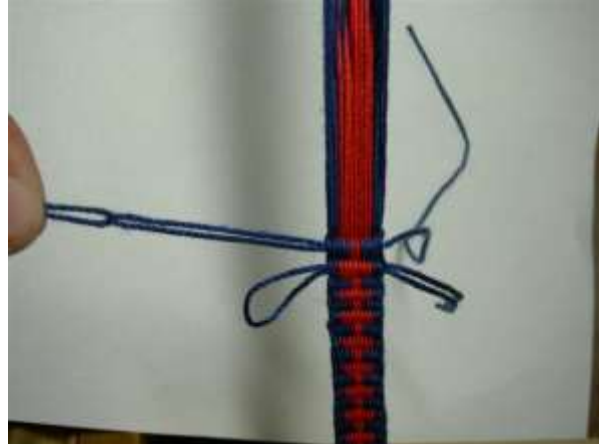
Pass 3



Pass 2



Pass 1



Reverse Pass 2



Reverse Pass 2 pulled tight



Reverse Pass 3

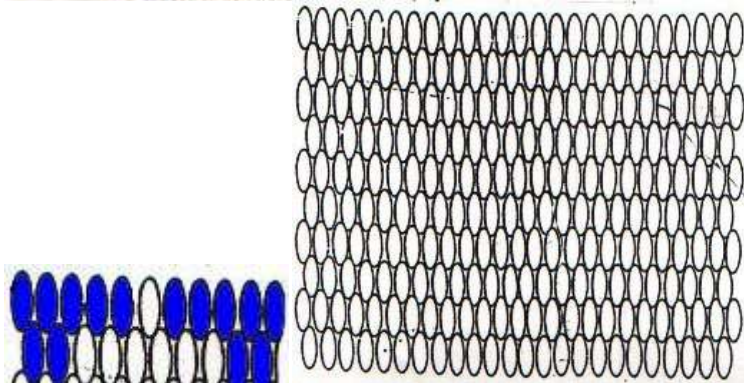
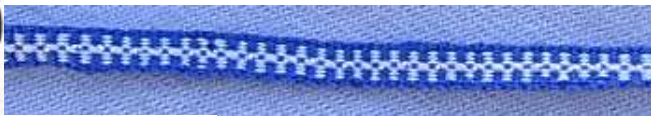
# Inkle Weaving



Reverse Pass 3 pulled tight



Pull tail tight and snip close to weave





# Inkle Weaving

