

Basics You Need To Know

How much yarn do you need?

There is nothing worse than happily weaving along and suddenly realizing that you are about to run out of warp (or weft) before you've reached the woven length you need. You call *everywhere* to order more yarn (you'd pay for Next Hour) but—oh, no!—that yarn no longer exists. A much better MO for your weaving life is to know how much yarn you need before you start weaving and make sure you have that much or more.

Loom waste

The first factor to think about is loom waste. Loom waste is the length of warp you use that is not part of the actual woven cloth. The amount depends on your loom and the method you use to tie

the warp on to the front and back apron rods. Tying knots, like those in Photo a, takes about 5" of warp length.

The remaining loom waste is the warp length between the back apron rod and the place in front of the shafts where you cut the project from the loom; see Photo d. With some looms, you can weave with the apron rod fairly close to the shafts even if you have to struggle to open those last sheds. In Photo d, that distance is 19", so total loom waste for this "project" is 29" (5" + 5" + 19").

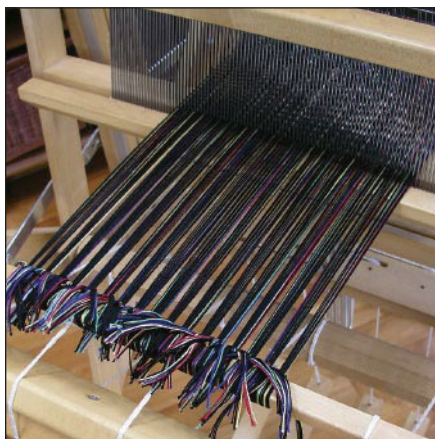
If you use scrap yarn to spread the warp, you must add the warp length used for that, too. It seems to be a standard in our craft to allow about 27" for loom waste—I always allow at least a yard.

Take-up

Warp length "takes up" as the fabric is woven. A line marks 10" of unwoven warp in Photo b. Photo c shows that 10" of warp length became 9" of woven length (measured with tension released), a take-up of ten percent. Even more take-up occurs as the cloth relaxes (Photo e). Because this cloth is warp faced, its take-up is greater than that for a balanced weave (usually about five percent).

The weft takes up, too. As you place the weft in an angle or curve, it becomes longer than the width of the loom. For *Handwoven* projects, we allow at least five percent weft take-up.

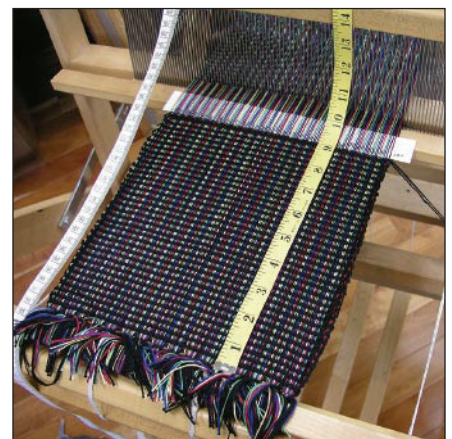
To be safe, add about ten percent for warp and weft take-up. 



a. Loom waste at beginning of weaving



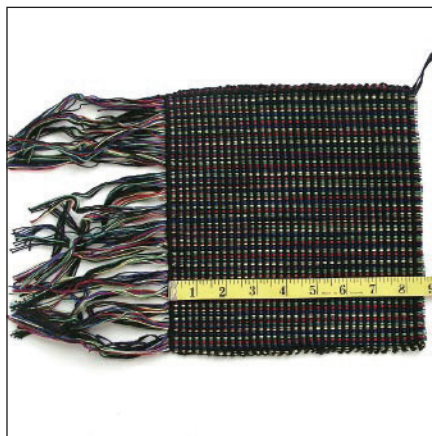
b. 10" warp length before weaving



c. 10" warp length becomes 9" woven length.



d. Loom waste at end of weaving



e. Length becomes 8½" off the loom; the "fringe" is the amount used to tie on (5").



f. A fine weft and heavy warp can produce weft take-up of more than five percent.