

# Tablet-Woven Leashes

## for Spike and Jones

LINDA HENDRICKSON

*After we lost our beloved airedale ten years ago, we visited the Oregon Humane Society to find a dog. My husband John spied a golden-haired Tibetan terrier mix peeking out from the “employees only” area (he and his brother were considered too aggressive to other dogs, so they were truly on death row). We fell in love with them both and convinced the officials to let us have them. They’ve been happily with us ever since!*

**T**hey have turned out to be wonderful pets, each with his own distinct personality. They still don’t like other dogs, however, so keeping them on leashes when they are in public is especially important.

My plan was to weave both leashes with just their names and paw prints on them, but after discovering dog haiku, I made one up for Jones’s leash:

“Jones my fierce guard dog  
pads down the hall on short legs  
looking for my shoes.”

Jones loves to collect shoes, not to chew, but as pillows to line his bed with!

### Tablet weaving for leashes

Tablet weaving is ideal for making a leash; it produces a sturdy band, and a loop for a handle can be woven right into the band. Because each tablet can be manipulated independently of the others, you don’t have to rethread to weave different structures—all you do is turn the tablets differently.

The instructions in this article are for Spike’s leash with a split-loop handle and a band decorated with a warp-twined



PHOTOGRAPH BY LINDA HENDRICKSON

Jones and Spike sport their new tablet-woven leashes.

checkerboard design alternating with paw prints and his name woven in double-faced tablet-weaving techniques. Spike’s leash uses a total of 30 tablets: 24 four-hole tablets for the design area plus three tablets on each side for a border.

To design and weave a personalized leash for your own favorite canine companion, study the graphs for the paw prints (Figure 5, page 5) and use the alphabet and the blank graph in Figures 6 and 7 (pages 5–6) to chart the letters for your dog’s name.

### Tablet weaving basics

Before winding the warp, use a colored marker to draw a heavy line between the A–B holes on both sides of the tablets. This line will aid in rearranging the tablets for the designs.

Warps for tablet weaving are often wound as a continuous loop around two upright pegs, with the tablets threaded on the warp and then placed. A continuous warp is used for Spike’s leash both because it is efficient and because it makes it possible to weave the handle. *Cont’d, Page 6*



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## STEPS FOR TABLET WEAVING A DOG LEASH

**Step 1** Place warping pegs 80" apart. Make a continuous warp for the design tablets (2 Purple and 2 Kelly Green threads wound together), placing the tablets near the left-hand peg. (For warping steps and how to use tablet-weaving equipment, visit [www.lindahendrickson.com](http://www.lindahendrickson.com) and click on Instructions.) Put the starting slipknot on the right-hand warping peg and keep the slipknot slightly above the rest of the yarns as you wind. When you finish winding, untie the slipknot and tie its 4 ends to the last 4 ends so the entire warp can be shifted around the posts.

**Step 2** Now add the border tablets. The three border tablets on each side carry 4 threads of a single color (2 tablets all Garnet, 2 all Gold, and the 2 outermost tablets all Purple). Again, tie the last 4 ends to the first 4 so the warp can be shifted around the posts.

**Step 3** Instructions assume that you are weaving with the band on your left. To weave the loop that makes the handle: beginning with the tablet nearest you, arrange the threading directions of the tablets so that the first three border tablets are Left, Right, Left. Pattern tablets: Right, Left, repeat. Last three border tablets: Right, Left, Right. Next, arrange the A-B lines: Border tablets: all A-B lines on top. Pattern tablets (for checkerboards): 4 A-B lines on top, 4 on the bottom; repeat.

**Step 4** Loosen the tension slightly, and divide the warp into two halves at the left peg, separating the tablets into two

groups as in Figure 2. Stand a can of food or a large cone of yarn in this space. Tighten the warp. Keeping the group of tablets that is closest to you (Group 1) near the left-hand peg, slide the other group (Group 2) toward the right peg. Put a choke tie around all the warp threads behind the left peg. Shift the entire warp counterclockwise about a foot.

**Step 5** Tape a bright piece of yarn to the table beneath the choke tie to mark its position and remove the tie. Place a warp spreader just beyond the tablets in Group 1 and spread the threads evenly to about 1" wide. Insert a small, stiff piece of cardboard into the shed at the mark on the table to beat against, and put in the first weft. Leaving a 2-yr tail of weft, begin weaving, always turning the cards forward, with the warp under your left arm as you face the right peg. Weave 5", ending with the A-B line on the tablet nearest you (the outermost border tablet) visible on top.

**Step 6** Adjust the warp spreader as necessary as you now move the tablets and the warp to weave the other half of the loop. Move each group of tablets to switch their positions (Group 1 moves toward the right-hand peg, and Group 2 moves back toward the left-hand peg). Shift the warp clockwise so the woven part is on the other side of the left-hand peg. Check the shed and turn the tablets if necessary so that the checkerboard design joins smoothly

with Group 2. Weave 5", using the 2-yard tail as weft for this half of the loop. End with the A-B line on the tablet nearest you on the bottom. Remove the warp spreader.

**Step 7** Shift the entire warp counterclockwise again so the two fells line up, and join the tablets together as one pack.

**Step 8** Now you will move the warp to the 6' board to weave the remainder of the leash. Place the tablet holder under the warp and put the 2 needles through all 30 tablets; secure with rubber bands. Cut the warp at the right peg. Clamp the board to the table, with the ends of the board hanging over both edges of the table. Clamp a warping peg to the left-hand end of the board, and the tensioning block with horizontal dowel to the right-hand end.

**Step 9** Carefully move the warp with the tablet holder and shuttle to the board. Slide the woven loop over the warping peg. Even up the fells and attach the loop to the peg with a large binder clip to secure. Clamp the tablet holder to the board/table.

**Step 10** Remove all accumulated twist one tablet at a time as follows: Hold the 4 warp threads from one tablet in one hand and put the fingers of your other hand in the shed. With the threads under tension, move both hands down the warp all the way to the end. Lay these threads down on the table and repeat for next 4 ends.

## PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

### Weave structure for leash

Warp twined and double-faced tablet weaving.

### Equipment

Thirty 4-hole tablets; 2 warping pegs; 1" x 4" board 6' long; 6 C-clamps; warping wand; 1 unopened soup-size can; 2 large binder clips; warp spreader; tablet holder; warp tensioning block with horizontal dowel; 2 pieces of 1" x 3" heavy cardboard; 1 knife-edged belt shuttle (see [www.lindahendrickson.com](http://www.lindahendrickson.com) for photos of tablet-weaving equipment).

### Yarns

Warp: 5/2 pearl cotton (2,100 yd/lb),

Purple, 126 yd (1 oz); Kelly Green, 108 yd (7/8 oz); Garnet and California Gold, 18 yd (1/5 oz) each.

Weft: 5/2 pearl cotton (2,100 yd/lb), Purple, 58 yd (1/2 oz).

### Notions and other materials

Fray Check and swivel clip.

### Yarn and equipment sources

5/2 pearl cotton and tablets are available from most weaving retailers; warping wand, warp spreader, tablet holder, and warp tensioning block from [www.lindahendrickson.com](http://www.lindahendrickson.com); Fray Check from fabric

shops; swivel clip from hardware stores.

### Warp order and length

120 ends 80" long (allows 22" for take-up and loom waste).

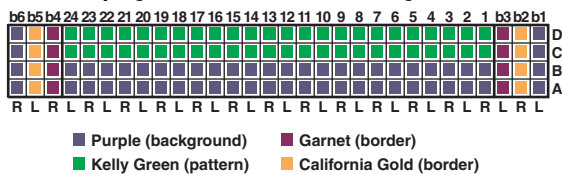
### Warp and weft spacing

Warp: about 96 epi for 1 1/2" weaving width. Weft: 14 ppi in warp-twined sections; 18 ppi in double-faced sections. Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 58".

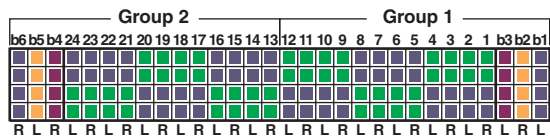
### Finished dimensions

After finishing, amounts produce one leash, 1 1/4" x 55 1/2".

### 1. Color order for warping and double-faced weaving (all A-B lines on top)

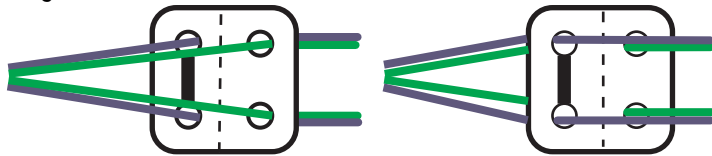


### 2. Color order for warp-twined checkerboard design



All A-B lines are on top in the border areas, and the pattern tablets are arranged so that they alternate 4 tablets with A-B lines on top and 4 tablets with A-B lines on the bottom.

### 3. Threading direction of the cards



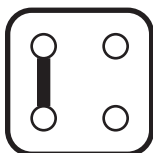
Left-threaded direction  
(all 4 strands of yarn are visible on the left side of the tablet)

Right-threaded direction  
(all 4 strands of yarn are visible on the right side of the tablet)

To change the threading direction of a tablet, flip the tablet around its vertical axis. Then, if necessary, rotate until the A-B lines are in the correct position for the design to be woven.

### 4. Turning the tablets for double-faced weaving

position of A-B line before 1st F row



ready for 1st turn Forward (F)

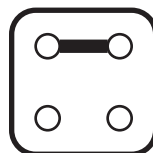


ready for 2nd turn Forward (F)

position of A-B line before 1st B row



ready for 1st turn Backward (B)



ready for 2nd turn Backward (B)

Turning sequence for double-faced designs = FFBB.

The A-B line connects the two holes (A and B) that contain background threads. Pattern threads are in the other two holes. Tablet pack's weaving pattern always turns in the opposite direction from pack's weaving background.

**Step 11** Tie the border threads to the dowel in the tensioning block. Then tie the pattern threads to the dowel in groups of four tablets each. Be sure the tension is even. Remove the tablet holder and binder clip. Sandwich the two sections of the woven loop side by side between two pieces of stiff cardboard and secure with two binder clips. Before beginning to weave, check to be sure the threading direction and position of the A-B lines in all tablets are arranged as in Figure 2.

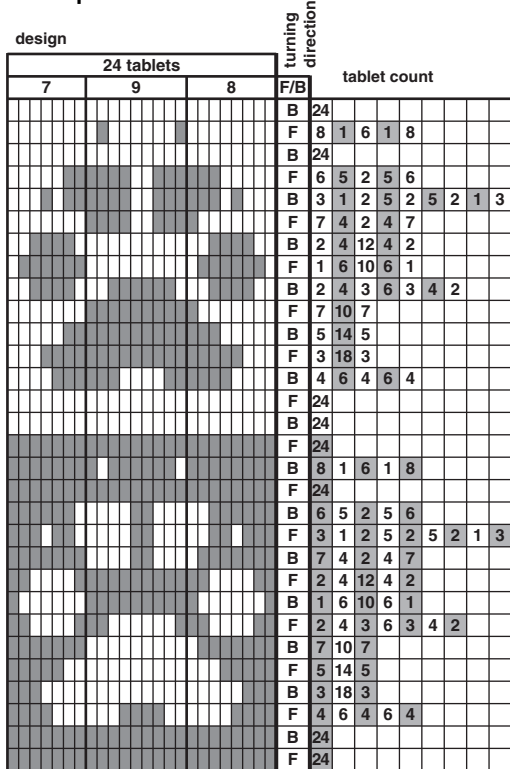
**Step 12** Weave 6" of warp-twined checkerboard design: put the weft tail and the weft on the shuttle through the shed in opposite directions. Turn forward, leave the tail, and weave with the weft on the shuttle. After an inch or so, cut

off the weft tail. End with the A-B line on top on the tablet nearest you (outermost border tablet). After the last turn, beat, but do not put in any weft.

**Step 13** To switch from the warp-twined checkerboard design to the double-faced weave for the paws and letter designs, place the A-B lines in the tablets so they are all in the same position. The following method distributes the extra twist between two picks so it is less obvious: with no weft in the shed, turn the tablets with green up (the A-B line on the bottom) one turn forward. Put in weft; turn all tablets. Beat, but do not put in weft. Turn the same groups of tablets as before so that all the pattern tablets have the A-B lines on the right. Put in the weft.



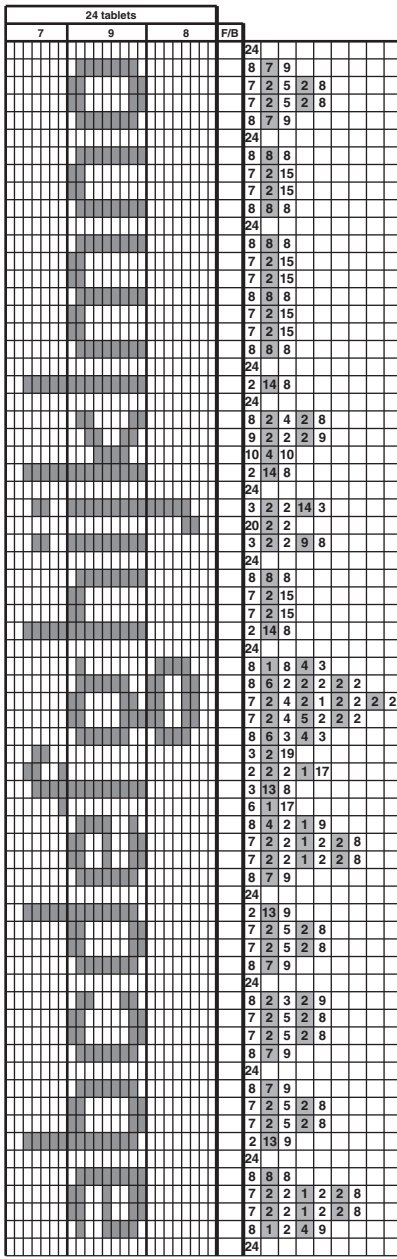
5. Paw prints



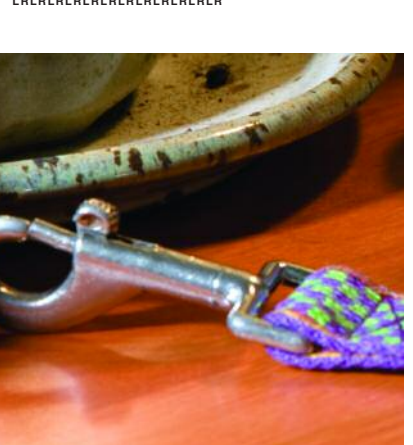
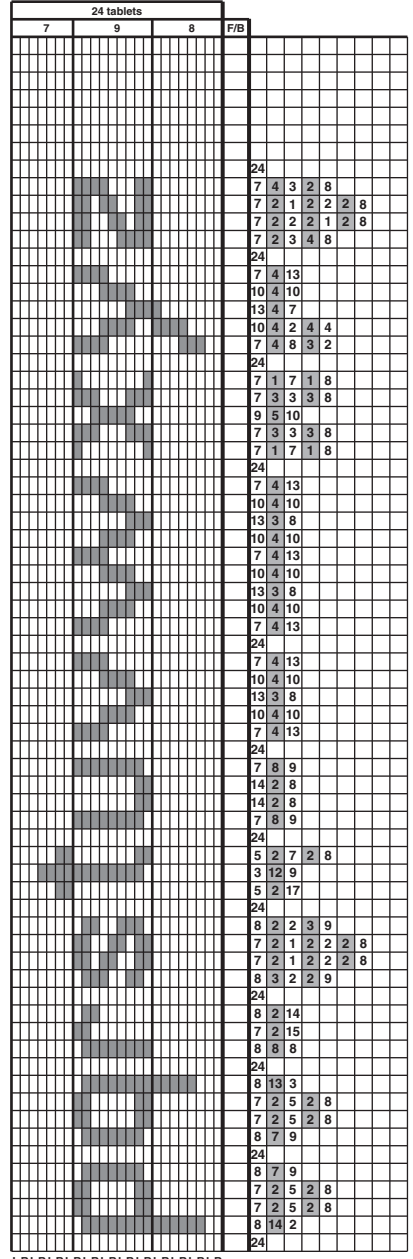
**LRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRL**  
Design section: Each rectangle represents 1 design tablet and 2 picks (border tablets are not shown).  
White square = 1 tablet in background pack (place close to the fell).  
Shaded square = 1 tablet in pattern pack (place farther away from the fell).  
Place border tablets farthest from the fell.  
Turning direction indicated is for background pack; pattern pack turns in the opposite direction.  
Tablet count: squares indicate the number of tablets, alternating between background (white) and pattern (shaded) packs. Move tablets between packs as necessary for each row.

**Step 14** Move the six border tablets away from the fell. Weave the paw prints dividing the design tablets into background and pattern packs as described in Figures 4 and 5. (The border tablets always turn forward.) Continue, weaving four paw prints, the dog's name, and four more paw prints in double-faced weave. For the remainder of the leash, alternate 6" of warp-twined checkerboards with one paw print. End with a section of warp-twined checkerboards. To, minimize twist buildup, reverse the turning direction in each of the warp-twined areas. Because the border tablets always turn forward, you will need to untie the threads of the border tablets at the far

6. Letters



**LRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRLRL**  
end, push out twist as described in Step 10, and retie them frequently. Adjust the tension on the warp after every few inches of weaving by loosening one clamp at a time on the tensioning block and moving the block about 1/4". Weave as far as possible, and then cut off the warp.  
**Step 15** Saturate the cut end with Fray Check. Fold the cut end over the leash hardware and turn the raw edge inside to make a hem; machine sew.



—continued from page 1

Once they are warped, tablets can be rearranged to produce different designs. Three variables can be adjusted for patterning: the direction of the threading, the position of the warp colors, and the direction the tablets are turned during weaving.

Tablets can be threaded either to the Left or to the Right (see Figure 3, page 4). The threading direction can be changed from one direction to the other by flipping the card around its vertical axis. The position of the colors can be adjusted by rotating a tablet, using the A–B lines as an aid to color placement. The third variable is the direction the tablets are turned during weaving: either Forward (F), away from the weaver, or Backward (B), toward the weaver.

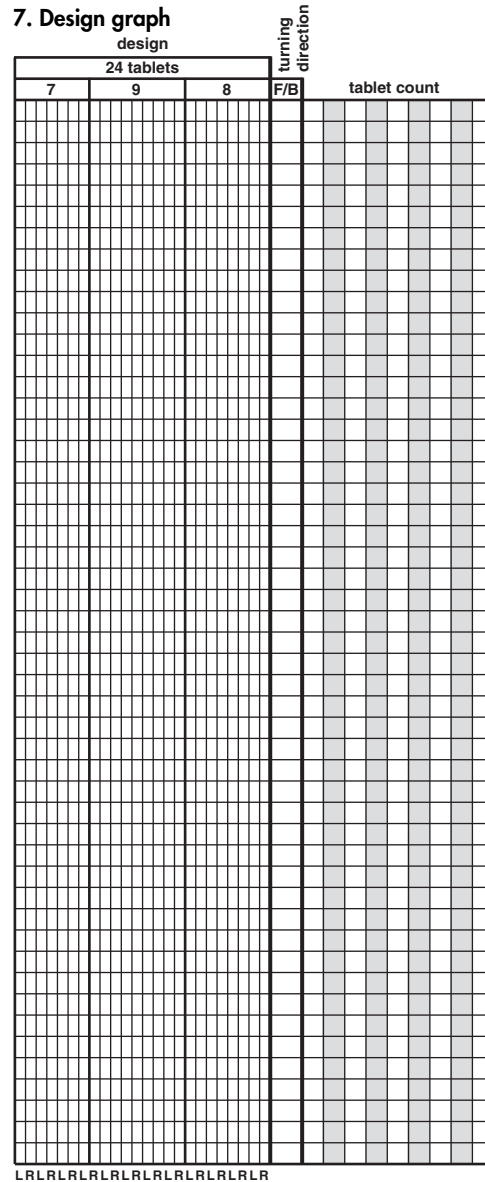
After the warp is made, the tablets in the project leash are arranged so that the threading direction alternates Left and Right across the width of the warp. Both the warp-twined checkerboard and the double-faced designs are woven on this arrangement.

### Warp-twined tablet weaving

To weave the checkerboard design in Spike's leash, the tablets in the design area are rearranged so that 4 tablets of the background color weave alternately with 4 tablets of the pattern color (see Figure 2, page 4). The checkerboard design appears as the pack of tablets is turned forward continuously and a weft inserted after every turn. The turning action causes the four warp threads of each tablet to twine around one another, forming a cord. Warp twisting occurs on both sides of the tablets. Because the twist in the warp beyond the tablets eventually interferes with making sheds, it is occasionally necessary to work out the accumulated twist.

### Double-faced tablet weaving

The double-faced technique is used to weave graphed geometric designs, pictorial images, letters, and symbols. The designs appear on both sides of the weaving, with the colors and image direction reversed. The graphs in Figures 5 and 6



show the designs used in Spike's leash. (The weave structure is three-span warp floats in alternate alignment.) Warp twisting occurs only where there is a color change, so there is less problem with accumulated twist in double-faced weaving than in warp-twined designs.

Before weaving the double-faced areas, the warp color orders must be rearranged so that the background and pattern colors are aligned and the cards in the design areas placed as shown in Figure 1, page 4. The turning sequence consists of two turns Forward and two turns Backward (F, F, B, B) with a weft placed after each turn. To weave double-faced designs, the design tablets move between two packs—the background pack and the pat-

tern pack. Tablets in the background pack stay close to the fell. Tablets in the pattern pack are moved ahead of the background pack (farther from the fell).

The border tablets are kept in a separate third pack ahead of both the background and pattern packs (farthest from the fell) and turned Forward continually. You will need to untie the threads in the border tablets every few inches to push out accumulated twist.

The graphs in Figures 5 and 6 show how to arrange the tablets and also which tablets must be moved from one pack to the other for each row to produce the design. Numbers in shaded squares indicate tablets that must be in the pattern pack, while each white square indicates tablets that must be in the background pack. For each graphed row, turn the background pack according to the F (forward) or B (backward) indicated by the row. Turn the pattern pack in the opposite direction. Use the tablet count to place the tablets in the correct pack for weaving each row.

For the graphs of letters in Figure 6, the turning directions have been left blank. After you arrange the letters into the words you want to weave, fill in the blanks, alternating F and B.

To get a clear shed in double-faced technique, after you turn the packs put your fingers into the shed between the packs and spread your fingers to widen the shed first between the packs and then all the way through to the fell. Put your hand into the shed between the main pack and the fell and slide it toward the fell. Put the shuttle in the shed before removing your hand. ➡

### Resources

- Collingwood, Peter. *The Techniques of Tablet Weaving*. McMinnville, Oregon: Robin & Russ Handweavers, 1996.
- Crockett, Candace. *Card Weaving*. Loveland, Colorado: Interweave Press, 1973.
- Hendrickson, Linda. *Double-Faced Tablet Weaving: 50 Designs from Around the World*. Portland, Oregon: Linda Hendrickson, 1996.
- . *Please Weave a Message: Instructions and Graphs for Tablet-Woven Calligraphy*. Portland, Oregon: Linda Hendrickson, 2003.
- Staudigel, Otfried. *Tablet Weaving Magic*. Libri Books on Demand, 2000.