

Random Exchange Towels

KATHIE ROIG



STRUCTURE

Twill.

EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 24" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 1 shuttle; 1 bobbin.

YARNS

Warp: 8/2 cotton (3,360 yd/lb; Valley Yarns; WEBS), #3599 Lollipop, #7198 Burnt Sienna, and #3794 Burgundy, 220 yd each; #4425 Orange, #7327 Tobacco, #1382 Spectra Yellow, #5792 Lime, and #5468 Stone Green, 230 yd each; #5424 Turquoise Green, #2550 Nautical, #2636 Navy, and #6290 Petunia, 240 yd each.
Weft: 8/2 cotton, #8001 White, 1,975 yd.

WARP LENGTH

554 ends 5 yd long (allows for 14" take up, 26" for loom waste).

SETTS

Warp: 24 epi (2/dent in a 12-dent reed).
Weft: 20 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in reed: 23½".

Woven length: (measured under tension on the loom) 140".

Finished size: (after wet-finishing and hemming) four towels, 18¾" × 24½" each plus 11" sample swatch.

For the last 10 years, I have taught a workshop called "Warp It! Paint It! Weave It!" at various guilds, regional conferences, and the John C. Campbell Folk School. I was scheduled to teach the workshop at Convergence 2020, but, of course, those plans changed with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Because I had time on my hands and nowhere to go, what better way to connect with other weavers than to join the Handweavers Guild of America's 2020 Kitchen Towel Exchange? I had recently taken a color horoscope weaving workshop with Bonnie Tarses at the MidAtlantic Fiber Association Conference and had used 12 bright colors for my horoscope warp that I knew would be great in towels. For my draft, I chose a favorite twill pattern from *A Weaver's Book of 8-Shaft Patterns* edited by Carol Strickler.

When warping, I generally wind at least four ends at once (to save time) and thread them without regard to color. I don't use a paddle because I want color stripes that occur randomly. For these towels, I decided to expand on that unplanned warping process. My goal was to use all 12 colors in a pleasing gradation, randomly yet orderly changing the warp from warm to cool colors.

First, I organized the colors in a "rainbow sequence." Then I wound 8 of the 12 colors at a time for 2 inches' worth of warp, before subtracting one of the colors and adding the next one in order. I continued in this manner across the warp. When I had finished shifting the colors toward cool, I started shifting back toward the warm colors.

This may sound like a complicated process, but it doesn't have to be if you take care in winding your warp and pay attention as you dress your loom. The results are controllable—and it is a technique that can be used with all sorts of weave structures.

Notes on structure

Changing the tie-up and treadling with this M and W threading creates very different looks. Use the extra warp length to sample and experiment.

1 Wind a warp of 554 ends 5 yd long following the warp color order, Figure 1. Wind the colors from each column all at once, dropping one color and adding a new color as indicated. There will be multiple ends in the cross. Kathie recommends warping front to back for this project. Centering for a width of 23½", randomly select 2 ends to sley in each dent. Once the reed is sleyed, thread the heddles, choosing the 2 ends in each dent in any order, and following the draft in Figure 2. Wind the warp on the back beam slowly, giving it a good shake or yank from time to time and moving the beater bar back and forth to work out any tangles. **Note:** The weft will not catch the selvedge ends on every pick. Add floating selvedges if desired.



1. WARP COLOR ORDER

	2x	2x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	6x	
44		1	1	1	1	1	1	1					1	1	#7198 Burnt Sienna
44		1	1	1	1	1	1	1					1		#3599 Lollipop
44		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					#3794 Burgundy
48			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				#6290 Petunia
48				1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			#2636 Navy
48					1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		#2550 Nautical
48						1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	#5424 Turquoise Green
46	1	1						1	1	1	1	1	1	1	#5468 Stone Green
46	1	1	1						1	1	1	1	1	1	#5792 Lime
46	1	1	1	1						1	1	1	1	1	#1382 Spectra Yellow
46	1	1	1	1	1						1	1	1	1	#7327 Tobacco
46	1	1	1	1	1	1						1	1	1	#4425 Orange

554 ends total

wind each column together as a bundle

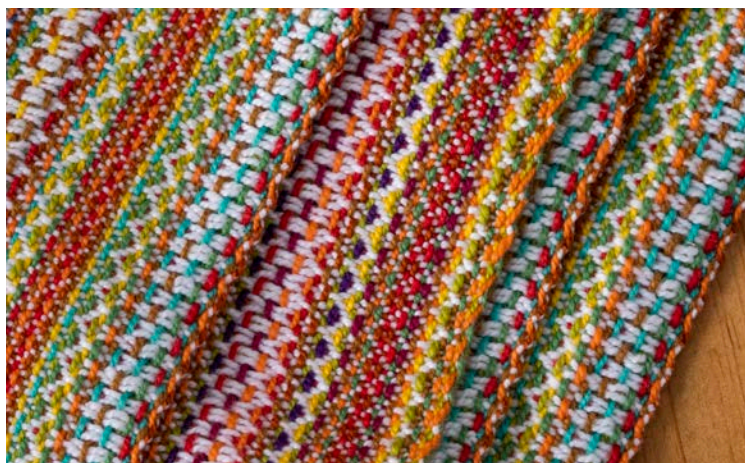
HEDDLE COUNT

Shaft 8	53
Shaft 7	79
Shaft 6	79
Shaft 5	66
Shaft 4	66
Shaft 3	79
Shaft 2	79
Shaft 1	53
Total	554

2. DRAFT

13x													1	2	3	4	5	6
8							8									8		8
7							7									7		7
6							6									6		6
5							5									5		5
4							4									4		4
3							3									3		3
2							2									2		2
1							1									1		1

← cont'd



8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

/	/	/	/	/	/
/	/	/	/	/	/
/	/	/	/	/	/
/	/	/	/	/	/


repeat

2 Wind a bobbin with the weft yarn. Spread the warp with scrap yarn using treadles 5 and 6.

3 Weave following the draft, Figure 2, until the fabric measures about 140".

4 Weave 10 picks of plain weave using treadles 5 and 6 to protect the weft. Cut the fabric from the loom.

5 Serge or zigzag both raw edges of fabric. Machine wash in warm water and machine dry. Press.

6 Cut fabric into 4 lengths of 27½" each. (You will have a sample swatch of about 11" left over.) Serge or zigzag raw edges. To hem, turn under ¼" and then turn under an additional ¾". Stitch by hand or machine. 

RESOURCES

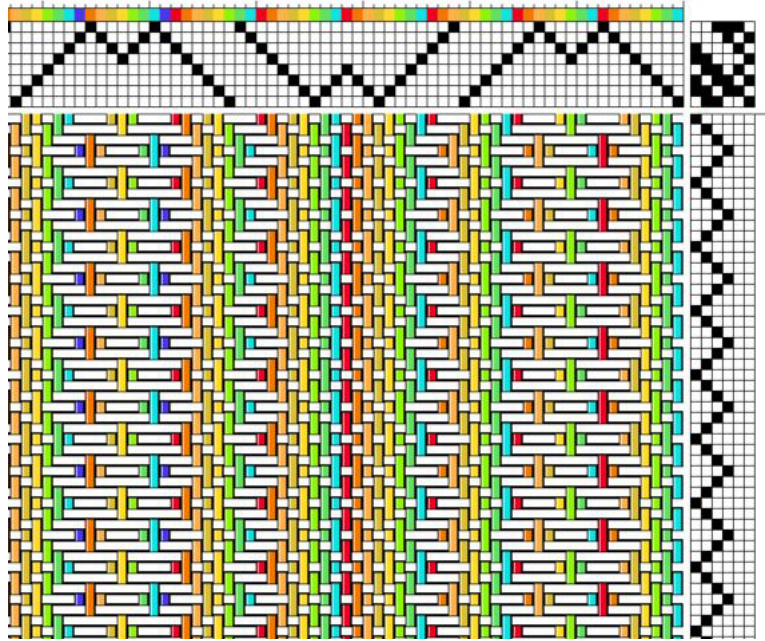
Strickler, Carol, ed. *A Weaver's Book of 8-Shaft Patterns*. Loveland, Colorado: Interweave, 1991, 37, #159.

KATHIE ROIG *remembers finding patterns in the quilt her grandmother made, catching tadpoles in a creek, and climbing trees to read a favorite book. She still pays attention to detail and pattern, has a sense of wonder, and enjoys the solitude of her studio.*

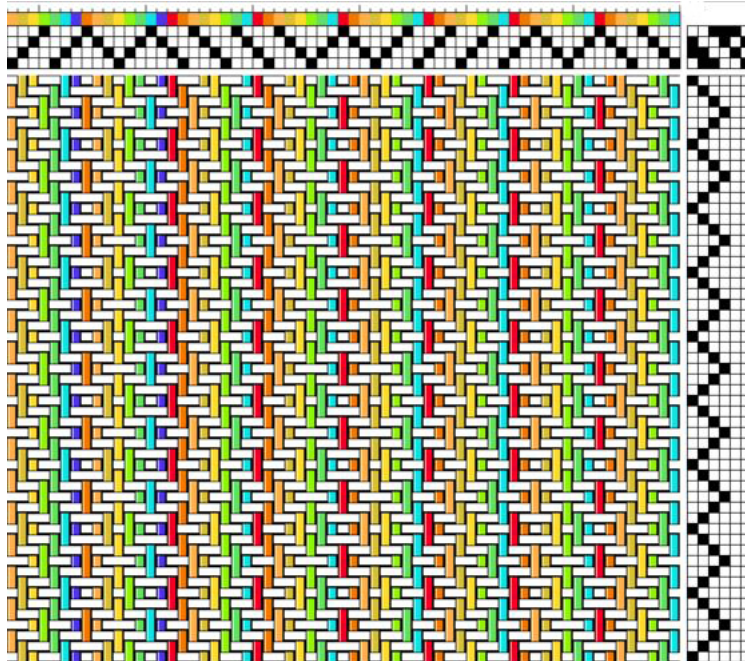
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REDUCING TWILLS PRACTICE DRAFTS

Whether you use the wrapping or telescoping method, your results should be the same. Try both for the practice and check your work below. We used a 2/2 twill tie up but as Madelyn notes you could also use a 1/3 or 3/1 tie-up. Note that translating a draft doesn't always produce a draft with the same number of ends. In this case, the full 4-shaft WIF that we have added to the WIF Library has the same number of ends as the 6-shaft version, but a weaving purist would want to add one more end on shaft 1 at the left to balance the draft!



6-shaft draft and drawdown



Check your work: 4-shaft translation draft and drawdown.