



Backstrap Bands

LAVERNE WADDINGTON

Handwoven Presents

BACKSTRAP LOOM

STRUCTURE

Warp-faced plain weave with pick-up.

EQUIPMENT

One $\frac{3}{4}$ " dowel about 19-22" long; band with loops on each side for a back strap; 2 small weaving swords, about 6"; a pointed pick-up stick; 1 shuttle; a strip of cardboard about $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 5"; key fob clips $\frac{1}{4}$ " or wider; split rings; Fray Check (optional). The $\frac{1}{4}$ " key fob clips are most common, but you can find $\frac{1}{2}$ " key fob clips at [Country Brook Design \(www.countrybrookdesign.com\)](http://CountryBrookDesign.com).

YARNS

Warp: $\frac{3}{2}$ pearl cotton (1,260 yd/lb; UKI), 3 colors of your choice: Band 1, color 1 (border), about 23 yd; colors 2 and 3 (pattern), about 6 yd each; Band 2, colors 1, 2, and 3, about 12 yd each. Note: The 2 pattern colors should be contrasting colors, light vs dark.

Weft: $\frac{3}{2}$ pearl cotton, color 1 or a contrasting color, about 5 yd.

WARP LENGTH

48 ends 26" long (allows about 2" for take-up and about 12" for loom waste).

SETTS

Warp: About 38 epi.

Weft: 10 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width on the loom: $1\frac{1}{4}$ ".

Woven length: about $11\frac{1}{2}$ ".

Finished size: 1 band $1\frac{1}{4}$ " x $11\frac{1}{2}$ ".



GEORGE BOE



SETTING UP THE BACKSTRAP LOOM

- 1 You can wind the warp either on a warping board or using four stakes stuck in the ground or into holes in a 2x4 board. The end stakes should be spaced the warp length apart, and the sticks for the cross should be about one-third of the distance between the end pegs. Wind colors according to the warp color order for your project as shown in Figure 1. You can wind the light and dark threads for the pattern area as one.
- 2 To take the warp off the pegs, insert a 6" section of 1/4" dowel on either side of the cross and then join the dowels together with a rubber band or elastic hair tie. If you wound the two pattern colors as one, you'll need to rearrange them before setting up your heddles. (See photos 1–3.) When arranging the cross on the sticks, make sure that you place the light thread in each pair of warp ends so that it sits to the right of its dark partner. Put a loop of yarn through each end of the warp.
- 3 After removing the warp from the pegs or warping board, enclose the dark threads and border threads on their side of the cross in continuous string heddles. (See Laverne's warping tutorial at backstrapweaving.wordpress.com/backstrap-weaving-basic-warping-for-back-strap-loom/ for details on making string heddles.) Enclose the light threads and the border ends on the other side of the cross in a shed loop (photo 4). Remove the cross sticks.
- 4 On one end of the warp, insert a dowel wide enough to go across your body and into the loops on the backstrap. Put the loop in the other end of the warp over a clamp fixed to a table or attach it to a post or piece of furniture so that the warp is at a comfortable height for you to weave.

Figure 1:

Band 1			
8x			
32	16		16
8		1	
8		1	
48 ends			
Band 2			
16x			
16	8		8
16		1	
16		1	
48 ends			

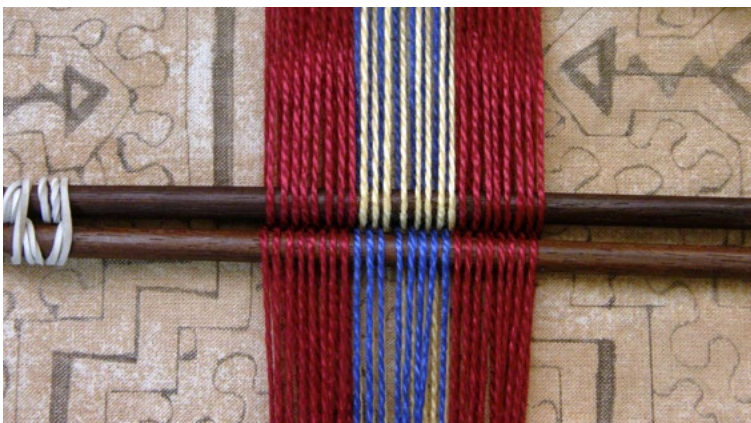
Color 1
Color 2
Color 3



1. The original cross



2. Rearranging the cross



3. The new cross with each light thread positioned to the right of its dark partner



4. Warp set up with string heddles and shed loop

PHOTOS BY LAVERNE WADDINGTON AND DORINDA DUTCHER

PICKING UP PATTERNS

The following instructions refer to the S-hook pick-up chart, Figure 1. Figure 2 is an additional pick-up chart of a lozenge motif.

Using two swords, you will form a picking cross from which you select the ends to form a shed for each weft shot. When the weft is on the left, the picking cross looks like that in photo 5. The dark threads form the close (to you) side of the picking cross and the light threads the far side. When the weft is on the right, the picking cross looks like that in photo 6 with the opposite arrangement of the dark and light colored threads. The picking cross gives you access to all the dark and light ends while keeping them in strict order. I will refer to the two sheds as the light shed and the dark shed and have labeled the swords as sword 1 and sword 2. (My Bolivian weaving friends use the index and middle fingers of the left hand to hold the picking cross instead of swords, but they get a lot more practice at this than we do.)

- 1 Open the light shed and place the cardboard strip within (photo 7). This will give a firm base against which to beat after the first shot of weft.

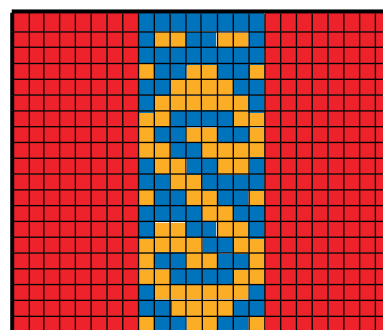


5. Light shed



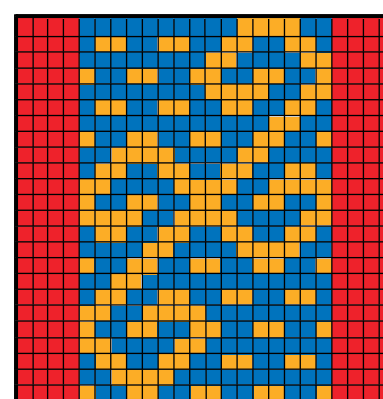
6. Dark shed

Figure 2: Band 1, S-hook pick-up



and picking from the left: after picking dark threads you must skip the very next light one before picking the next light thread in the pattern sequence.

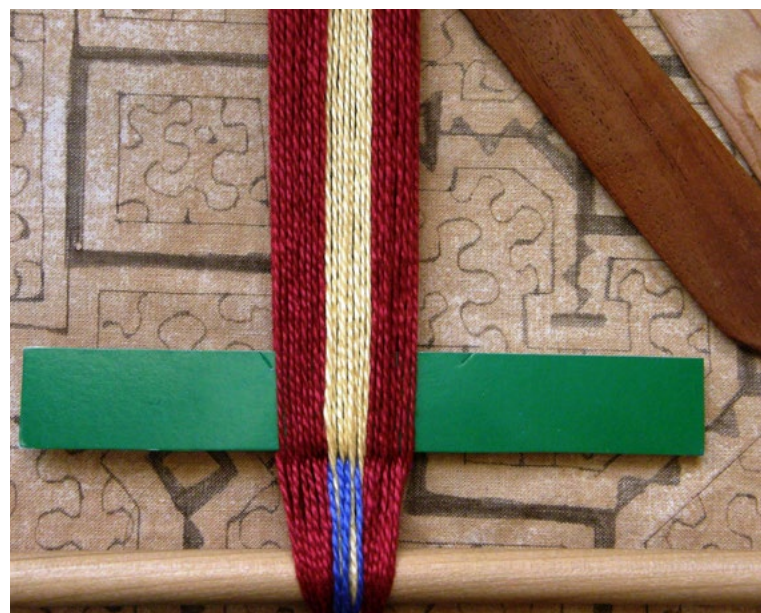
Figure 3: Band 2, Lozenge pick-up



Color 1 Color 2 Color 3

The dark thread is on the left of its light partner in each pair. If you are right-handed and picking from the right: after picking light threads you must skip the very next dark one before picking the next dark thread in the pattern sequence. If you are left-handed

The dark thread is on the left of its light partner in each pair. If you are right-handed and picking from the right: after picking light threads you must skip the very next dark one before picking the next dark thread in the pattern sequence. If you are left-handed and picking from the left: after picking dark threads you must skip the very next light one before picking the next light thread in the pattern sequence.



7. Light shed with cardboard strip within

2 FORMING THE FIRST PICKING CROSS: Open the dark shed, place sword 1 within and beat (photo 8). Open the light shed and place sword 2 within. Position the two swords away from the fell (photo 9). This is the first picking cross and is the one that you need to create every time the weft is on the left.

3 Tilt sword 1 to raise the dark threads and relax tension on the warp slightly so that you can place your left hand within the shed (photo 10). Select the threads to create the shed that is represented in the first row of the pattern chart. Using a pick-up stick, scoop up all the red border ends that are in your hand (photo 11). Next, swivel the stick to pick up the first yellow end (photo 12). The chart calls for 2 blue ends to be picked up next. Skip over the first blue end and pick up



8. Dark shed with sword 1



9. Light shed with sword 2



10.



11.



12.

the second and third blue ends from your hand (photo 13). The first blue end is skipped because it is the complementary partner of the first yellow end. It will appear on the lower face of the band. Each time you have picked up yellow ends, a blue end is skipped immediately before you pick up the next blue ends in the charted sequence.

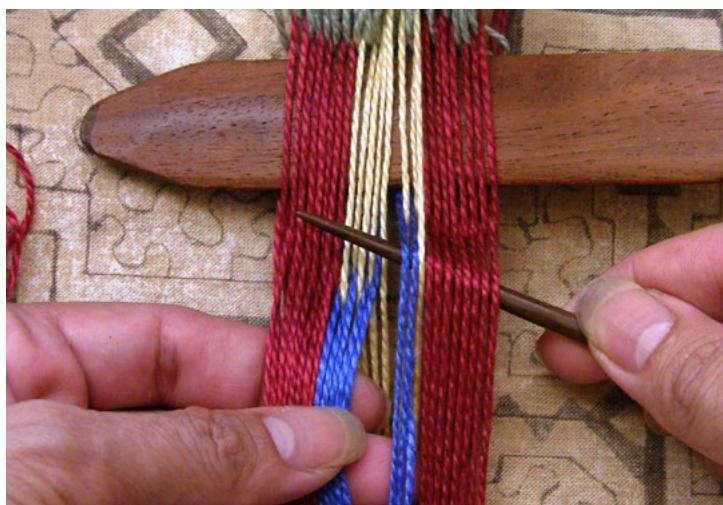
4 Pick up 2 yellow ends (photo 14). Skip the next blue end and pick up 2 blue ends from your hand. Pick up the last yellow end (photo 15). Skip the last blue end and scoop up all the red border ends.

5 Remove sword 1 from the shed and use it to replace the pick-up stick. Beat, prop the shed open with the sword, and pass the weft from left to right. Leave a tail of weft about 3" on the left side (photo 16). This will be secured later. Remove sword 1.

Draw sword 2 down to the fell and beat. Leave sword 2 in position. Check the width of your band against the end clip that you plan to use for your key fob (photo 17).



15.



13.



16.



14.



17.

FORMING THE SECOND PICKING CROSS: Create the next picking cross by opening the dark shed and placing sword 1 within. This is the picking cross that you will always create when your weft is on the right (photo 18). Tilt sword 2 so you can slide your left hand into the shed. Once your hand is within the shed, you can choose to remove the sword or leave it in place. Removing it gives you a little more room for your hand. However, leaving it in place allows you to quickly and easily recover the original picking cross if you make a mistake while selecting the threads for the next row of pattern.

6 Row 2 in the pattern chart calls for 2 blue ends, 4 yellow ends, and 2 blue ends. First, pick up the red border ends from your hand. Then, swivel the pick-up stick to allow you to scoop up 2 blue ends. Pick up 4 yellow ends from your hand. Skip the next blue end and pick up the last 2 blue ends and the red border ends (photo 19).

Replace your pick-up stick with sword 2 and beat. Prop open the shed with sword 2. In this second shed, you can secure the weft tail. Pass it from left to right and then pass the main weft from right to left (photo 20). Check the width of your band once more against the end clip and make adjustments if necessary. Remove sword 2.



18.



19.



20.

7 Draw sword 1 down to the fell and beat (photo 21). Open the light shed and place sword 2 within to create the next picking cross (photo 22). Select the colored ends according to row 3 in the pattern chart. Once you have picked the shed, replace the pick-up stick with sword 1, beat, prop open the shed with the sword, and pass the weft.

8 Continue forming picking crosses and picking up threads according to the pattern chart.



RESOURCES

For backstrap warping and weaving instructions, refer to Backstrap Basics Weavezine Article and Basic Warping for Backstrap Looms on Laverne's website: www.backstrapweaving.wordpress.com

LAVERNE WADDINGTON'S DVD Operating a Backstrap Loom is available at www.taprootvideo.com. She teaches all aspects of backstrap weaving at www.backstrapweaving.wordpress.com.



21.



22.