

Full Circle Tote

REGINA MCINNES



Photos by Matt Graves

HANDWOVEN

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STRUCTURE

Networked twill.

EQUIPMENT

16-shaft loom,
20" weaving width;
12-dent reed;
1 shuttle; inkle
loom; belt shuttle.

BAG BODY

YARNS

Warp: 22/2 cottolin (70% organic cotton/30% organic linen; 3,230 yd/lb; Venne), #7099 Black, 105 yd; #6003 Brick Red, #2009 Orange, #1013 Golden Yellow, and #5033 Mint Green, 150 yd each. 8/2 cottolin (60% organic cotton/40% linen; 3,360 yd/lb; Maurice Brassard), #1152 Vert foncé, #8263 Brun chocolat, and #1757 Vert émeraude, 150 yd each.

Weft: 22/2 cottolin, #7026 Charcoal, 716 yd.

OTHER SUPPLIES

For each bag: lining material (cotton or linen in coordinating color), 45" × 30"; fusible interfacing, 45" × 30"; 13" zipper in coordinating color (optional); sewing thread; dark-blue webbing, 2 pieces, each 2" × 26".

WARP LENGTH

462 ends 2½ yd long (includes floating selvages; allows 6" for take-up, 32" for loom waste). **Note:** Warp yardage is sufficient for two pieces; add 30" for each additional bag or towel.

DIMENSIONS

Width in reed: 19¼".

Woven length: 52".

Finished size: (after wet-finishing and sewing) two bags, 11" × 9" × 4" plus 22" handles; or one bag and one towel, 16½" × 24½".

SETTS

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

Weft: 23 ppi.

HANDLES

YARNS

Warp: 22/2 cottolin, #4006 Deep Navy, 36 yd; #1013 Golden Yellow, 9 yd. 8/2 cottolin, #1152 Vert foncé, 106 yd.

Weft: 22/2 cottolin, #4006 Deep Navy, 20 yd.

Note: Double yarn amounts if making straps for two bags.

WARP LENGTH

67 ends 2¼ yd long (allows 7" for take-up, 16" for loom waste). **Note:** Increase warp length to 4 yd if making handles for two bags.

DIMENSIONS

Woven length: (measured under tension on the loom): 58".

Finished length: two handles, 1" × 26" each.

*After acquiring a 16-shaft table loom from a dear friend and learning about networked twills, I thought I would like to give weaving circular shapes a go. I came across Alice Schlein's book *Network Drafting: An Introduction*, which explains the theory of network drafting in great detail and provides many examples and drafts for eight or more shafts (see Resources).*

I decided to adapt one of Alice's designs for my project. It uses twelve shafts for the circular design and an extra four for a border. I first threaded a prototype using a narrow border and just one color for the warp, and I wove it with one color for the weft. I was happy with the results, so I moved on to designing this project. This time, I divided the warp into stripes that were bounded by dark lines, with each stripe containing a circular motif.

Next came another new experience for me. After discussions with other weavers, I tied the new warp on to the existing one behind the heddles, using overhand knots (see Resources). I'm happy to say the ends didn't break when pulled through the heddles and the reed!

I wove the first section, destined to become a bag, with one dark weft color. To make the bag, I followed instructions on YouTube, adjusting the dimensions slightly for my fabric (see Resources). For the handles of the bag, I wove a narrow inkle band using some of the same yarns as in the body of the bag. For reinforcement, I sewed my inkle band on top of a dark-blue band of purchased webbing.

1 Wind a warp of 460 ends 2½ yd long, following the warp color order in Figure 1. Wind 2 additional ends of Black for floating selvages and set them aside. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the draft in Figure 2.

Warping Tips

Complex 16-shaft patterns—particularly those with fine yarn and many ends—can be challenging to warp without mistakes sneaking in. It can be time-consuming to find and fix those mistakes, especially if they become apparent only after you start weaving.

If Regina wants to weave more than she originally warped for, she's found that tying on a new warp is best. Because she's already fixed all the threading errors in the first warp, the new one will be error-free.

Tying on a new warp takes about the same amount of time as warping from scratch, but not having to search out and fix threading errors makes the process worth it for her. As an added benefit, you can change the colors of your second warp.



Centering for a weaving width of 19½", sley 2 per dent in a 12-dent reed. Thread the floating selvages through empty dents on each side of the warp, and weight them over the back beam.

2 Wind a bobbin with Charcoal. Spread the warp with scrap yarn.

3 Weave 15 picks of plain weave for the seam allowance of the bag (or the hem of a towel).

4 Weave 9 repeats of the circle pattern, following the lift plan in Figure 3. End with 15 picks of plain weave for the seam allowance or hem.

5 Weave a few picks of contrasting yarn as a separator.

6 For the second bag or a tea towel, repeat Steps 3–4. See “Weave Towels as You Sample Colors” for other weft ideas.

7 Weave a few picks of scrap yarn to protect the weft. Remove fabric from the loom.

8 Zigzag stitch the ends of each woven section. Cut the pieces apart.

9 Wet-finish by gently hand-washing, and dry the fabric flat.

10 Inkle band: Warp an inkle loom following the draft in Figure 4. Wind a belt shuttle with Deep Navy. Weave plain weave for at least 58" if weaving bands for one bag, or 116" if weaving

bands for two bags. Remove the band from the loom.

11 Cut the inkle band into two or four pieces, each 26" long. Center an inkle band on a piece of commercial webbing and pin in place. Using coordinating sewing thread, sew the edges of the band to the

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Weave Towels as You Sample Colors

After she wove the fabric for her bag, Regina wove multiple towels using the circle design. For one towel, she used a solid Charcoal weft, as she had for the tote.

Her next thought was, “What if I used a different color for each new section of circles?” She picked nine colors from her stash of cottolin and wove each repeat of the circle motif in a different color, with Charcoal for the first 2 picks and last 2 picks of the repeat as a dividing line. If you’d like to do the same, allow 38 yd of weft for each repeat of the circle motif.

For her third towel, Regina tied on a blue warp with black borders and used a yellow weft.

She encourages you to work with your stash and weave your own kaleidoscope of bags and tea towels.

Regina wove a tea towel on this warp using the same weft as the bag (*above image, top*), and a second towel with dividing lines and bright colors from her stash (*above image, bottom*). Then she tied on a solid-blue warp and wove a towel using yellow as the weft (*left*).



webbing. Repeat for the remaining pieces of inkle band. Set aside.

12 For the bag, follow instructions for the zippered tote bag (see Resources). Regina included both the zippered top and the inner pocket in her bag, but you can leave them off if you prefer.

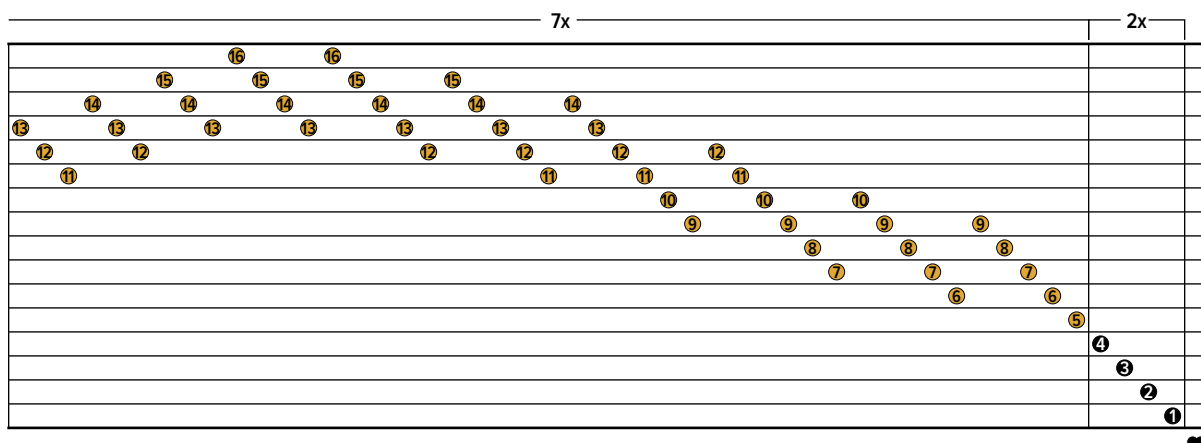
Shaft 16	14
Shaft 15	28
Shaft 14	42
Shaft 13	49
Shaft 12	49
Shaft 11	42
Shaft 10	42
Shaft 9	49
Shaft 8	48
Shaft 7	41
Shaft 6	27
Shaft 5	13
Shaft 4	4
Shaft 3	4
Shaft 2	4
Shaft 1	4
Total	460

FIGURE 1. WARP COLOR ORDER

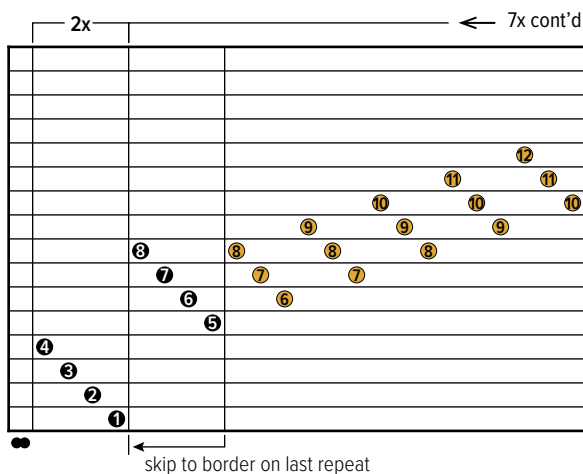
40	8	4	4	4	4	4	4	8	Black
60								60	Vert foncé
60							60		Mint Green
60						60			Vert émeraude
60					60				Golden Yellow
60				60					Orange
60		60							Brick Red
60	60								Brun chocolat

460 ends total

FIGURE 2. DRAFT



- doubled floating selvedge
- Black
- Vert foncé, Mint Green, Vert émeraude, Golden Yellow, Orange, or Brun chocolat. See warp color order.
- Charcoal



[illegible]

Heddled
Unheddled

Read inkle drafts from left to right, as they are threaded.

13 For the tea towel, fold the hem under twice and sew in place. Regina recommends basting first by hand (or hand-sewing) to keep the colors straight and the ends neat.



To assemble the bag, Regina used a tutorial by My Passion Crafts: [youtube.com/watch?v=Wyuy3mYRRzI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wyuy3mYRRzI).

Learn how to tie on to an old warp with this video by Kari Fell: [youtube.com/watch?v=0vn-dcaaY5Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vn-dcaaY5Y).

Alice Schlein explains network drafting in *Network Drafting: An Introduction* (Greenville, SC: Bridgewater Press, 1994). Regina used a combination of block twill and network drafting, explained on pages 81–84, as the basis of this project.

REGINA MCINNES *has been weaving for seven years, and she enjoys discovering new techniques and patterns. Living in a subtropical climate, she loves to work with linen and other light yarns. Everything from useful everyday items to decorative wall hangings is on her radar.*