

# THE RIDGID HEDDLE

by Gloria Rither

## PILE WEAVES ON THE FRAMELOOM

Versatile pile weaves--weft loops or shaggy strands--can embellish surface areas or compromise an entire textile. Whether used dramatically or whimsically, they intrigue by creating masses, adding warm tactile and visual textures, and blending colors.

The nature of pile suggest many uses. It is a good technique for wider-than-your-loom pieces, as edges can be pile woven and seamed together; pile conceals seams. For wall hangings, of course, there are countless possibilities: knot in isolated areas or outline open areas with pile for maximum height/depth contrast. For clothing, pile might be used on hats, ponchos, capes, vests, jackets, muffs. Use pile both inside for warmth and outside for visual warmth. Pillows, hammocks, rugs, bed rugs, seats and backs for directors chairs or rockers are other suggested uses.

Some design decisions need to be made in planning pile woven areas. Determine the shape of the area, the length of the strands (which may range from velvet to several feet long), and the contour of the dimensional surface (which may be level or sculpted from high to low). Second, consider the texture variations resulting from looped and cut pile, from yarn choices, and from pile density. Third, consider the options of color. Analogous colors (colors close to each other on the color wheel) used together tend to give lively, interesting effects to "one color" areas; colors of opposing values (light and dark) used together give a salt and pepper effect that can dominate and may need to be balanced with other strong design elements. Subtle color changes can create movement and interest. Light and shadow are added color bonuses varying with pile height and direction.

Inspiration for pile may come from landscapes, especially gardens, bushes, trees, grasses; from feathers and fur; from traditional and modern rugs; ancient feather capes; needle-point and knitting graphs or Pointillist paintings.

### Warp and Weft

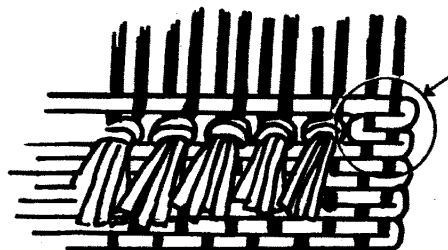
The warp can be set at 5 or 10 e.p.i. (typically 5), depending on thread choices and number of knots desired. Use a strong, hard twist warp thread. The weft can range from corn husks and grasses, roving, twine and rags to yarn. Yarns traditionally are rya--long stapled, multi-ply twisted wool--though linens, textured, thick and thin and looped yarns may be effective too. Fur strips woven in tabby can bridge between flat and pile areas.

With so many variables, calculating the amount of yarn is at best an estimate. Generally, allow about one pound of wool per square foot of 1½" pile and ground. For a large project, make a sample: count the number of knots per square inch and multiply times the number of inches needed for each knot. Multiply this figure times the number of square inches of pile, and add the amount needed for the tabby rows. The number of picks of tabby, of course, depends on the pile length, density, and direction. Generally for 1½" pile, allow ¾ to 1" of tabby between pile rows. Since the pile will conceal it, the ground may be woven of less expensive yarn, preferably in a color of the same or darker value and hue.

### Technique Helps and Hints

Since various techniques of making pile are explicitly shown in many sources, they will not be discussed here. Any number of knotting techniques or pulling up of weft loops may be used. See The Pile Weaves and Weaving is Creative by Jean Wilson; Weaving: A Handbook for Fiber Craftsmen by Shirley Held; The Techniques of Rug Weaving by Peter Collingwood.

- To begin, pin the cartoon behind the warp or draw the design directly on the warp. A more intricate design might be graphed out knot by knot. Weave an inch or so of tabby. For pile rows use small shuttles or butterflies on which 3-4 strands have been wound as one (consider varying color and texture in these groups of threads). For frequent color changes it may be easier to work with precut yarns. These cut yarns also give an uneven, "hand tied" surface.
- Knots are not usually made on the selvedge threads; edges will curl under if knots go to the edge. To compensate for the knot space and to strengthen the selvedge, weave two short shots at each selvedge before proceeding with the ground.

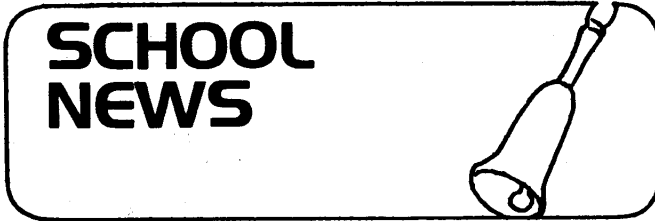


- To cut the loops, knot over a grooved spacer stick and cut along the edge. Or use two thin spacers sandwiched together and slide a razor blade between. Or clip each loop individually after removing the spacer.
- To knot both sides of the textile, either tie the knot in reverse using precut strands and push the strands to the back side, or turn the loom over and knot on the reverse side. These techniques can result in a two sided dimensional work which may differ in design and color on each side.
- To reverse the direction of the pile, make the knots upside down. To make the pile lie sideways, make the knot on a single warp thread or knot on two weft threads.
- Roll the cloth onto the cloth beam until the tension and weaving space are affected (usually 5-6 feet may be rolled). Then unroll the cloth, untie and knot the bottom warp fringe; hook the fell line (last weaving pick) into the loom's cloth beam pegs, and continue with the cloth in your lap. The space left by the pegs can be remedied by needleweaving two picks of ground later or by manually spreading the weft to cover the warp. To roll cloth with uneven pile lengths or pile only in selected areas, pad the lower areas (with dacron fill, thrums, paper, whatever) to keep the cloth rolling on the beam in an even cylinder.

### Additional Design Notes

- Use shorter pile for intricate designs, longer for less defined areas. To keep definitive edges on design areas, keep pile height of background and design even where they converge. If alternating high and low pile, make low areas larger, as high pile will tend to obscure part of the low area. If graduating pile height, usually keep color changes subtle.

- Throw two or more colors in the same shed and pull up loops of the desired color. Or pull up loops and chain them into each other with fingers or crochet hook.
- To vary density, vary the distance between knots. They don't always have to be made on every two warp threads. Or vary the kinds of fibers and number of strands in the butterfly.
- Wrap, coil, or braid long thread groups on the surface for added dimension. Tie beads along length or at ends of the longer pile.



### ATTENTION TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

An exhibit of student work is planned for the Annual Open House on Sunday, December 5. Please bring in pieces made in classes during the past year by Dec. 1. Pieces should be labeled with student's name, insurance value, and class. The show will be up for one day only. Pieces may be picked up immediately after the Open House. For more information, contact Verna Kaufman.

### THOUGHTS ON THE JANUARY INTERIM PROGRAM

You probably know that the Guild is offering, for the second year, two classes especially designed for college students who have a month-long break between semesters. Colleges have designed the "interim session" as a time of exploration and enrichment for their students.

Where better to go than the Guild for exploration and enrichment, we say!

BUT -- the same exploration and enrichment is available to all Guild members too. Here's an opportunity for really intensive immersion in fiber crafts--three weeks of involvement, capped off by daily instruction from excellent teachers. You don't have to be a college student to take either of the two interim courses:

- Basic Spinning, Weaving, and Dyeing
- Ethnic Weaves (Navaho, Bolivian, and Turkish)

So think about it!

Incidentally, these courses do represent a financial bargain, as well as a unique study experience.

Jennifer Dean

### ASSISTANTS NEEDED

Would you like to be an assistant in beginning frame loom or beginning floor loom classes? When a class is large, the Guild often hires an assistant for the first one or two class sessions. Duties include helping the students with warping problems and performing whatever tasks requested by the teacher. If this kind of experience interests you, please call Margaret at the Guild, to have your name put on the Assistants List. Teachers will consult this list when they need assistants.

### NOVEMBER CLASSES

Here's a quick overview of the Guild classes starting in November:

Floor Loom Fundamentals, Monday and Wednesday evening November 1 - December 6. Taught by Char Miller. Our well known complete introductory course.

Intermediate Floor Loom Skills, Tuesday and Friday mornings, November 2 - December 3. Taught by Betty Peter. Learn by doing - weave several interesting swatches to learn basic weaves.

Advanced Multiple Harness Weaves, Monday and Wednesday mornings, starting on Wednesday, November 3. Taught by Irene Wood. A "must" course for serious weavers.

Introduction to Drafting and Fabric Analysis, Monday evenings, November 8 - December 13. Taught by Peggy Dokka. Another "must."

Finishes and Embellishments, Tuesday afternoons, November 2 - 23. Taught by Sue Baizerman. Finishes are sometimes the weakest links in a weaver's chain of skills. And the right embellishments can do wonders for your work.

Texturing, a one-day seminar, originally scheduled for Monday, November 1 and Saturday, November 6. Now scheduled for Monday, November 1 and Saturday, November 13 (because of the change in the Walter Nottingham workshop). Taught by Karen Searle. A frame loom course demonstrating again the versatility of this weaving equipment.

Natural Dyes II, Monday evenings, November 8 - December 13. Taught by Connie Magoffin. If you've taken Natural Dyes I, here's your chance to develop even greater knowledge in this area.

### CHANGE IN CLASS BULLETIN

Please make note of a change in the Guild class bulletin:

Texturing, a one-day seminar for frame loom weavers, has been re-scheduled because of the change in dates for the Walter Nottingham workshop. This workshop has been changed from Saturday, November 6, to Saturday, November 13. It still will be given on Monday, November 1.



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