

TABLE MATS FOR BUSY HOUSEWIVES

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The three tablemats illustrated in this article, although very effective, can be woven so quickly that I hope they will prove as useful models to busy housewives, business or club women who are weaving enthusiasts as they have to me.

How fortunate we weavers are to have our faithful old friends — bags, scarves and table-mats to fall back upon when we require some piece of weaving at short notice!

Table-mats always have a sales value. As wedding gifts, the donor, will be blessed by the bride-to-be for years to come and no matter how long a friend has been married, a new set of table-mats, especially woven to suit her taste, is always welcomed. Even bachelor girls must eat and dainty table linen has not lost any of its feminine allure. Moreover they are easy to raffle or sell at bazaars. Perhaps best of all, however, they are a never failing source of pleasure and satisfaction to the average weaver herself.

Linen thread should be used to weave table-mats whenever possible because of its long wearing quality. The cost is small — much less than one pays for mats at the stores. Handwoven mats will stand up to endless washing without damage if fast colours are used. I have found the Bernat linen threads most reliable in this respect as I have been able to use the same table-mats for several years without any loss of colour or running. After one once becomes accustomed to handwoven linen on the table, it is surprising how uninteresting and cheap machine woven fabrics seem.

What a joy it is to be able to match the colour scheme of one's dining room or to enhance it by the careful use of contrast! My only difficulty is that, as I am a busy woman, I sometimes find it hard to find time to make enough of them. The very simple but colorful models described in this article are very practical to make when time presses.

All three models can be woven either on a two harness loom or without harnesses if a rigid heddle is used. This saves time as the threading is simple. Moreover Model 1 and 3 have the same threading so that if desired two sets, entirely different in appearance, can be woven on the same warp. Unquestionably rigid heddles allow the weaving of Tabby fabrics faster than harnesses; unfortunately they are rather expensive to buy, hard to make and not as readily obtainable as the ordinary reed.

Table Mat 1. Finished Measurement, 10 inches wide, 16 inches long. The texture of this mat is obtained through the threading. Once this is completed, the mat is very quickly woven.

Warp. For one mat. (No allowance is made for warp wastage as this varies with every loom. It is advisable from the point of economy to make a warp long enough for at least 6 and preferably 12 table-mats at once.)

Cut 80 threads of Bernat's Linen Floss, each 20 inches long. Colour L245 Rose.

Cut 32 threads of Bernat's Linen Special or Linen Weaver, each 20 inches. Colour 223 Blue.

Cut 144 threads of Bernat's Linen Special or Linen Weaver, each 20 inches long. Colour 245 Rose.

The Threading. Use 14 dents to inch reed.

(a) Thread 16 Linen Floss threads through reed, one through each dent;

(b) Take 4 Linen Special threads Colour 245 and thread all four through next dent.

(c) Then thread 1 thread of Linen Special, Colour 223, through next dent. Alternate (b) and (c) until 9 sets of pink — Colour 245 — and 8 threads of blue — Colour 223 — are threaded through the reed. This completes this section of warp.

Continue alternating Sections (a) and (bc) until all warp threads have been threaded through reed.

Note. The 20 inch length has an allowance of 4 inches for a 2 inch fringe at each end. If a hem is preferred, be sure to allow for this.

Weft. Linen Floss, No. L245, is also used as weft for two sections of border and main section of mat; Linen Special or Weaver, colour blue, 4 strands wound together on a shuttle, is used for other sections of border.

To Weave. (There is no allowance in any of the directions given in this article for loss of width in material, due to pulling in at sides in weaving. Each weaver must know how much to allow for her individual narrowing, when working.)

Weave 1 inch, using Linen Floss as weft. Then 1 inch of Linen Special; 1 inch of Linen Floss; 1 inch Linen Special. This completes one border. Weave 8 inches with Linen Floss. Repeat border.

There should be 14 weft rows to the inch.

If a shorter table-mat is preferred, cut out the first inch of Linen Floss weaving at either end.

Table-Mat 2. Finished width 11 inches, length 17 inches.

This model, woven in delicate shades, calls to mind tulips and daffodils and is especially designed to act as a background for these spring flowers.

Warp. Use either No. 50-2 or 40-2 white linen warp and thread singly through each dent of a 25 or 26 to inch reed.

Weft. Green Linen Special or Weaver, No. 217, 2 strands wound together on a shuttle, for main section of mat. Yellow Linen Special 220, 2 strands, is wound on another shuttle for one of border stripes and Orange Linen Special No. 239, 2 strands, is used for other stripes.

To Weave. Beat weft down so that there will be 23 rows of weft to the inch.

Weave 2½ inches with orange weft; then 1 inch with yellow thread. This completes border. An even more interesting effect can be obtained if an inch of either lavender or blue is woven as well before beginning main section of mat. Without this, however, weave 13 inches with green weft next. Repeat yellow and orange for other border.

Remove material from loom, turn in ½ inch at end and make a 1 inch hem being careful to sew so that the sewing will not show. Wash and press.



Table-Mat 1

Table-Mat 2

Table-Mat 3

Table-Mat 3. This model looks like open work as can be seen in illustration. Therefore the colors must be chosen with this fact in mind. A very pretty effect is obtained if different colored linings are used under it.

The warp and threading for this model are the same as for Model 1.

Weft. Either 4 strands of Linen Special or Weaver wound together on a shuttle or Linen Floss single thread can be used for this mat. In the model, Linen Special, Blue, No. 223 was used.

To Weave. Although there are the same number of warp threads used as in Model 1, the different method of weaving will result in a narrower fabric. This mat, when finished, measured $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width and 14 inches, including a 2 inch fringe at either end, in length.

(The technique used in weaving this mat is very similar to that described in my article on Weaving Leno Without Harnesses in the Oct.-Nov. number of *The Weaver*, 1939, but for the convenience of weavers who do not wish to pick up the twisted threads by hand each time, a simple method of avoiding this by the use of long heddles is explained towards the end of this article.)

(a) Weave 4 rows Tabby weaving and beat down into place.

(b) Pick up 3rd and 4th warp threads with one finger of left hand and bend back over 1st and 2nd warp threads. Pass a flat pointed stick through the loop formed by this twist and leave there. Repeat (b) until all warp threads have been twisted in like manner and a shed has been formed by passing stick through these loops. Turn stick on end and slip weft thread through the opening or shed. Remove stick and beat into place with reed as usual, as far as twisted warp threads permit.

Note. Be sure to avoid too much slack in the weft, left in this row, as loose weft in leno does not wear or look well. Next repeat (a).

(d) Then take up flat pointed stick again and slip it through loops formed as before in (b) but with this difference. Instead of crossing the 3rd and 4th warp threads over 1st and 2nd threads, reverse the order, and cross the 1st and 2nd warp threads over the 3rd and 4th threads. Repeat until end of warp, make shed with stick as in (b) and pass weft through as before.

Weave alternating rows as follows (a), (b), (a), (d), (a), etc., until mat is 10 inches long. Remove from loom; stitch along edges to prevent pulling while knotting fringes; knot and cut fringes.

This is a table-mat which looks like lace and can easily be used for a luncheon party or if made in white for a small informal dinner party. No one would believe that it is so quickly made; of course it will not stand the hard wear which the other two mats will. The leno twist can be made without picking up the twist every time in a very simple manner. Some weavers find the method described above too slow or too trying to their eyes.

If a string is passed around each thread or set of threads, which are to be crossed over the others, and each in turn, fastened to a stick, so as to form loops, it will easily be seen that if this stick is moved towards the right far enough so as to cross the threads which are not caught by the loops, these latter threads can be readily picked up with a pointed stick, to form a leno shed. The stick on which the loops are fastened must be in front of the reed and the loops must be long enough — a little longer than half the width of reed seems enough usually — so that when not in use they will not interfere with the making of the Tabby sheds.

This particular leno weave would require two separate sticks with alternate sets of warp threads on each, because the pick up is not the same each time. If preferred, only one stick can be used and the (b) row used instead of the (d) throughout the model.