

Weaving

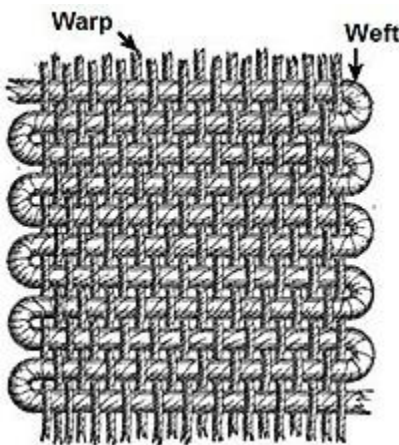
Weaving has been an established practice in a variety of civilizations around the globe for many generations, including South America, China, Medieval Europe, as well as the Native Americans and Colonial settlers of North America.

Weaving techniques, patterns and materials differ between the cultures. Colonial America relied heavily on Great Britain for supplies, but the Wool Act of 1699 restricted these imports to America. So, colonists began using different weaving materials such as cotton, flax and hemp. The industrial revolution brought forth ways to make these supplies more readily available to the weaver, and introduced a factory-styled power loom.

Look closely at your clothing; can you see the tight weave of the fabric? The fabric used to make your clothing was probably made on a factory loom.

Weaving is a method of fabric production where two sets of yarn or thread are interlaced at right angles to form cloth. Crocheting and knitting are similar to weaving – they too intertwine two sets of yarn to form a cloth. The vertical threads are called the warp and the horizontal threads are the weft. There are three basic weaving techniques – plain, satin and twill. The image below shows an example of plain weaving. A loom is used to move the warp yarn up and down allowing the weaver to pass the weft yarn through creating the almost checkerboard pattern you see below.

If you were going to weave a blanket, which two colors would you use?



Popsicle Stick Loom Craft

1. Glue four popsicle sticks together at the corners to form a square. Let dry completely. (Use the larger popsicle sticks if you can find them.)
2. Tie yarn or string to the top and the bottom of the square at least six times. The more times you do this, the tighter the weave will be.
3. Cut strips of different color ribbon or fabric. The strips should be about six inches long.
4. Starting at the bottom right of your loom, take one strip of fabric or ribbon and weave it through the strings you tied onto the popsicle sticks. You alternate going under and over the strings. The first string under, then over the second string, then under the third, repeating as you go across.
5. For the second row, take another piece of ribbon or fabric and start at the bottom right corner of your loom above the first row you just weaved. Go over the first string, under the second, over the third, repeating as you go across. Repeat the alternating pattern of the first and second row as you add rows to the loom.
6. You can leave your loom as is and use it as a decoration or you can pull the ribbon and fabric strips out to weave over and over again.

