

TIPS AND TRICKS

(Compiled by COSW Members)

- Assume a take-up and shrinkage of 10-15% in the width and length of a woven piece. Keep records for future use of the same yarn/thread. For more accuracy, make a sample first.
- Relax tension on warp first before measuring.
- To join strips of fabric for rag rugs, mats, etc., use water soluble fabric glue, a small knot, or overlay of ends. Another approach is not to cut clear to the edge of the fabric but leave a small amount intact to provide a continuous strip.
- To make a foolproof knot for sewing and one that can be made invisible, wrap thread around needle and slip through similar to a French knot used in embroidery.
- Use cream rinse for human hair to soften and relax handspun yarn after knitting, if it seems stiff.
- If you find hanging over the loom breast beam painful or uncomfortable when threading, buy a piece of PVC foam pipe insulation in the diameter large enough to cover the breast beam.
- Use drapery cord pulls as adapters for fitting loose bobbins on the bobbin winder.
- Rather than tying repair heddles onto the heddle bar, use safety pins on the top and bottom for easy removal and reuse. With Texsolve heddles, use two and join the tops and bottoms with safety pins, placing one heddle in back and one in front. Thread through both heddles.
- To make a hem on a woven item with less bulk than would occur using the weft yarn, use sewing thread for the last 1/2 ". Place spool of sewing thread directly on the shuttle.
- Use strips of twill tape to mark weaving directions, such as the distance between pattern units to ensure consistency and match (e.g. plaids). Pin tape directly onto weaving and move as weaving advances.
- On the warping board to ensure threads do not tangle, tie every yard before removing.
- To keep track of how much you have woven, attach a string to the front apron rod. Tie a knot, or mark with a felt tip pen, the beginning and every yard thereafter.
- To keep track of how much warp is left on the warp beam, beam a piece of string the same length as the warp, marking off one yard increments. As the weaving progresses let string fall over the back beam and count how many yards have been woven, subtract from the total beamed.
- To save time and avoid math errors, prepare tables that provide amounts of warp needed for various lengths and widths at different setts.
- To ensure an even twist of fringe and length of fringe use twister and place piece to be tied to a piece of acoustical tile with T-pins.
- Tape a guide for tying and cutting evenly.
- To reduce static electricity when carding fibers such as llama, use room humidifier or spray water bottle in space around carder.
- In knitting, use a larger needle size than the balance of piece for casting on and ribbing.
- A niddy-noddy works great for winding small narrow warps (72" or less).
- To increase height of heddles for threading the loom, fold loom to degree desired, if it has the capability.
- Keep records of finished work for future reference. Include pictures, samples, drafts, etc.
- Bamboo knitting needles are kinder on arthritic hands!
- Use left over yarns to make "free-form" weft-faced rugs. Don't worry about whether you have enough of any one color; pay attention to analogous colors. Keep track of what you have done already to ensure balance overall.
- If you ever prick your finger and get lood on your weaving, your own saliva (not water) will remove it.

(Kay Flynn's tip)