

# Introduction to Tapestry Weaving on a Metal Frame

*Curious Fox Fibres*



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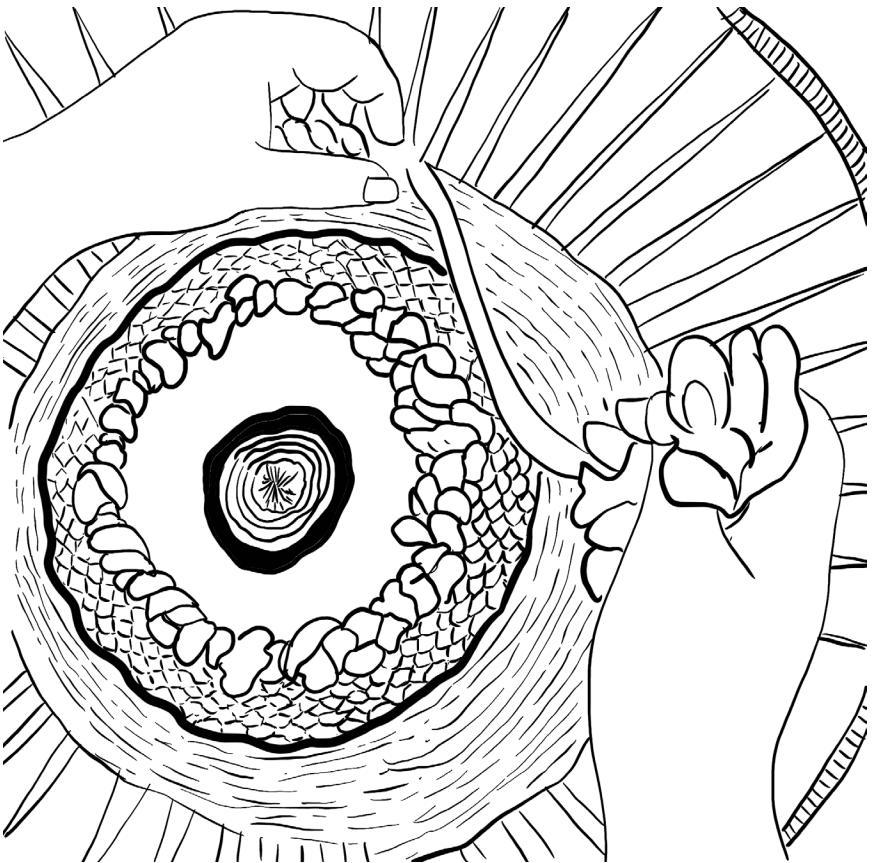
# Introduction

Welcome to weaving on a metal frame! Weaving on hoops and frames is a newer form of tapestry but it has developed from a rich tradition of weaving and shares many techniques. In this class we'll be focusing on art pieces where the weaving is created with the intention of staying on the hoop.

To access video tutorials of the techniques discussed and other resources, visit:

[curiousfoxfibres.com/pages/weaving-on-a-metal-frame](https://curiousfoxfibres.com/pages/weaving-on-a-metal-frame)

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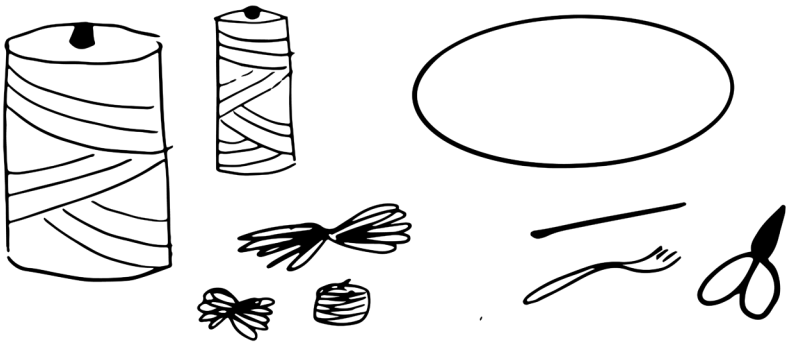


# Weaving Basics

Weaving is the process of creating fabric by interlacing two sets of threads, the warp and the weft. The warp threads are typically attached to the loom, while the weft threads are threaded through and manipulated by the weaver to create cloth.

Different effects can be created depending on the type of loom and how the weft threads are woven and manipulated through the warp threads.

## Tools and Supplies

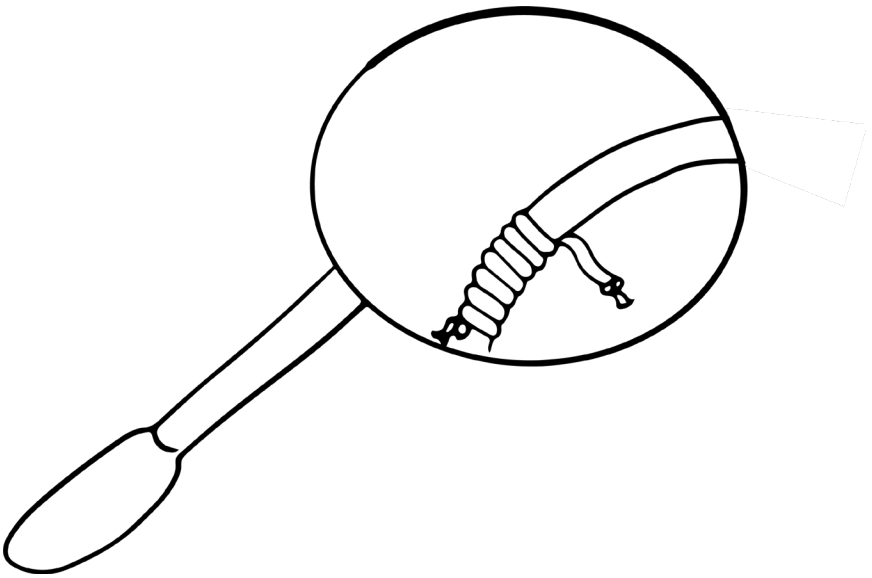


The basic supplies you'll need to get started are: a frame or hoop (we're using metal hoops), cotton rope, warp thread, a small pair of scissors, a fork (or another tool to push down your thread), a weaving needle, and a selection of yarns for your weft.

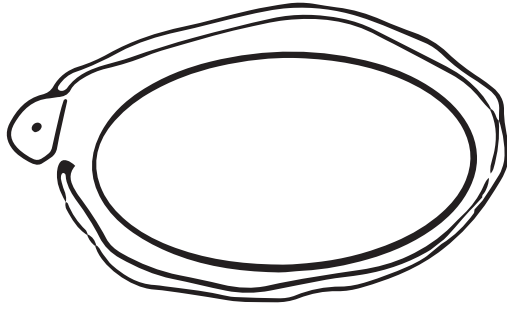
*Looking for warping thread options? Two alternatives I like include cotton butcher's string or 2/8 cotton weaving yarns.*

# Preparing Your Loom

The first step to any weaving project is warping your hoop! When working with a metal hoop, this takes an extra step: wrapping your hoop with cotton rope. This creates an aesthetically pleasing edge for your tapestry and offers a surface for your warp threads to grab onto.



To begin wrapping your loom, take a small piece of the rope you intend to use and wrap it snugly around the hoop. Wrap the piece of rope around the hoop until you've covered an inch of the hoop; unwind the rope and measure how much it took - and write this number down. Next, use a soft tape measure or use a string to find the circumference of your frame. Write this measurement down. Multiply the measurement of rope needed to cover an inch of the frame by the circumference of your hoop.



**Amount of rope needed to cover an inch of your hoop X the circumference of your hoop = the amount of rope needed to wrap your hoop**

*For example, it took me 7 inches to wrap an inch of my hoop. My hoop measured 42".  $7 \times 41 = 294$ . 294 inches divided by 12 is equal to 25' of rope.*

Once you have the measurement of rope that needed, cut that length and gently knot the ends if needed to prevent unravelling.



Attach the end of your rope to your hoop with a knot and begin wrapping it around your hoop. Do so snugly and as you have done a few wraps, take a peek at your rope - make sure it's not untwisting; if it is, wrap in the opposite direction. Wrap all the way around the hoop, keeping it even. Once you get all the way around, tie the end of the rope to the end you started with, double knotting tightly to secure.

# Warping Your Loom

To begin warping your loom, tie one end of the warp thread to the hoop, with a snug double knot, letting the string settle between the rope wraps. Stretch your warp across the frame and let the warp settle between two of the wraps at the opposite side of the hoop. Bring the string around and back up; at this stage, count 8-10 wraps to the side of where you tied on your warp string and once again fitting your warp string between two of your wraps, bring it back down and around. Continue doing this, going all the way around the hoop. Finish back at the top of your hoop.

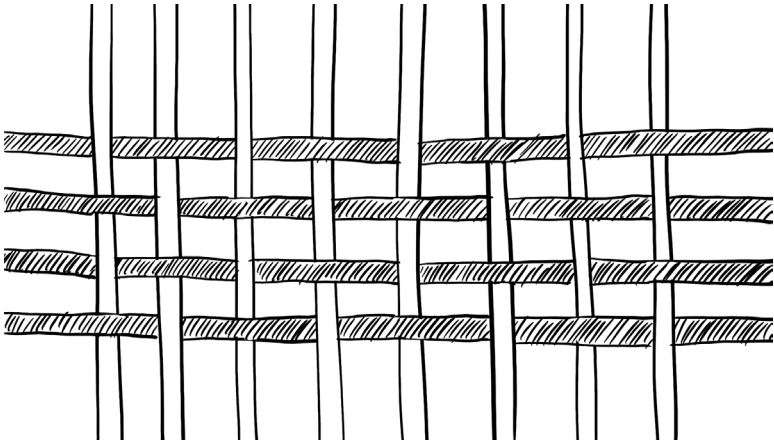
## ***Let's start weaving!***

### Plain/Tabby Weave

This technique is the core of weaving - a simple basket weave that is a direct “under, over, under, over” pattern. In addition to being a lovely classic, it is also great for adding a couple rows of structural stability intermittently while using more delicate techniques and weave structures.

*As you change weft threads, leave a tail of a few inches and pull it to the back of your project. At the end you'll sew these in to create a smooth and tidy finish. As you start and finish this new thread, adding a few stitches in the opposite direction (similar to adding a backstitch while sewing) will lock in your weaving. These extra stitches won't stick out in your finished piece.*



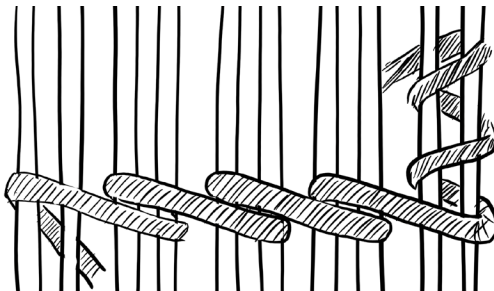


A simple tabby weave is created by weaving the weft under and over in an even, repeating pattern.

A fun way that you can manipulate plain weave structures is to alternate the number of warp threads you go under and over! Depending on the pattern you use, it can create a fun spiral effect.

## Soumak

This technique creates a lovely braided effect when you stack multiple rows of it. When creating soumak, decide on the number of strands you'll loop around based on the effect you want - a thick yarn + more warp threads per loop will give a lovely braid, while a thin weft and fewer warps will give a tight chain.



Start with your weft above your warps and lightly lift the warp threads and wrap the weft around them. You'll end up back where you started, it's a bit like a bunny hop - two steps forward, one step back! Lift the next set of warp threads and repeat the process. When you reach the end and want to turn around, do the loop around the last set of warps and then do two additional loops. Proceed in the opposite direction by doing the same process.

## Creating Texture in Your Weaving

In addition to formal stitch techniques, you can create textural interest in your weaving by organically twisting, wrapping, and knotting your weft threads around the warp. Give yourself the freedom to play with the yarn - you can always gently unknot it and pull it out if you don't like how it looks!

As you weave, especially using creative unstructured stitches like this, keep an eye on the structural integrity of your weaving. It's important that the fabric of your tapestry is secure and that your stitches aren't slipping out of their intended spots. If needed, alternate some plain weave within your organic stitches.

## Using Roving

Roving is a fun material to experiment with - there are no limits to how you can use it!

My favourite way to use roving takes advantage of the fibre's natural loftiness and body to create volume instead of using large quantities of fibre. This allows me to be more efficient with my materials and gives me increased control of the variation of bubbling.

To start, separate a small section of roving and lightly pull on the ends to taper them. From there, have fun! Wrap and twist the roving around your warp threads and experiment - skip threads, leave extra roving and fluff it, see what feels good to you. Try to minimize how much the roving rubs against the warps as you pull it through.

## Finishing Your Tapestry

Once you've finished weaving your tapestry, it's time to look at the back of your new piece of art! Use a tapestry needle or a needle with a nylon loop at the top to gently sew in the ends of yarn at the back of your tapestry.

