

# MAKING MERRY HOLIDAY STOCKING

Designed by Constance Hall

red stocking woven on rigid heddle loom by Constance Hall

blue stocking woven on floor loom by Deb Gerish



The Scandinavian weave structure called krokbragd makes a thick, sturdy fabric that is perfect for this festive holiday stocking. It's a weft-faced variation on twill. Traditionally, krokbragd is woven on a 3-shaft floor loom. Constance used a rigid heddle loom and two pick-up sticks for her red, white, and green stocking. Deb wanted to try krokbragd on her Baby Wolf with blue, white, and yellow yarn.

Beyond trying out krokbragd, this project provides other fun opportunities: improving your selvages, stashbusting, and playing with color.

- You'll weave fabric panels for the front and back of the stocking, then you'll seam and cut out the stocking shape. Experiment with different techniques to perfect your selvages, because they'll never be seen.
- Knitting yarns and handspun yarns work beautifully for the weft. Dive into your stash and have fun!
  - ♦ Choose smooth, high-twist yarns without a halo to keep the patterns crisp—fuzzy mohair, for instance, will “blur” the top border.
  - ♦ All three colors should be the same weight, and handspun yarns need to be fairly consistent, or krokbragd will look unbalanced.
  - ♦ The lighter the yarn, the more you'll need to create weft-faced fabric. If you want to use very skinny yarn, try doubling or tripling it.
  - ♦ If you want to use bulky yarn, you may need a wider sett. Constance and Deb used the same sett of 8 EPI for their worsted-weight and fingering-weight stockings.
- Go for high-contrast colors, and choose bright (saturated) hues for a traditional Scandinavian look. White plus two medium- or dark-value colors will work very well. Or try white for the background color with a variegated accent yarn in the allover pattern.



It's easy to fall in love with krokbragd, especially when you start seeing a color pattern develop. You can use the same warp for multiple stockings, changing the color combinations or color patterns for each one. See *The Weaver's Idea Book* for more patterns—Constance used the zigzag border from this book (p. 162) for the top band.



Find out more at [schachtspindle.com](https://schachtspindle.com)  
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## PROJECT DETAILS

**WARP YARN:** Maysville 8/4 cotton rug warp in white, 160 yards

**WEFT YARN:** Fingering, sport, DK, or worsted weight yarn in 3 colors

- Constance used worsted weight yarns in 100% wool: Valley Yarns Northampton in White (approximately 123 yards) and Red (approximately 650 yards) and Knit Picks Wool of the Andes in Grass (approximately 5 yards). Total yardage for worsted weight yarn: 778 yards.
- Deb used fingering weight yarns in a mix of fibers: Knit Picks Gloss Fingering (70% merino, 30% silk) in Dusk Blue (approximately 770 yards), Rowan Wool Cotton 4-ply (50% cotton, 50% merino) in Natural (approximately 195 yards), and some handspun 2-ply she didn't document (maybe a wool and silk blend) in bright gold (approximately 10 yards). Total yardage for fingering weight yarn: 975 yards.

### RIGID HEDDLE WEAVING EQUIPMENT

- 15" Cricket or Flip loom with 8 dent heddle
- 2 pick-up sticks
- 3 stick shuttles
- tapestry beater or fork (optional—for beating weft to cover the warp)
- 15" dowel (used as a heddle rod)
- 31 string heddles or Texpolv heddles at least 5-7/8" long—Constance made 7" string heddles from cotton rug warp
- masking tape

### FLOOR LOOM WEAVING EQUIPMENT

- 4-shaft loom of at least 15" weaving width—Deb used her 8-shaft Baby Wolf
- 3 shuttles—Deb used boat shuttles and spent a lot of time winding bobbins; stick shuttles will hold more yarn
- tapestry beater or fork (optional—for beating weft to cover the warp)
- warping board or warping pegs to make the warp chain

### SEWING NOTIONS & EQUIPMENT

- 5" decorative cord for hanging loop—you can purchase cord or make your own with a fringe twister or the Incredible Rope Machine
- 1/2 yard lining fabric (optional but highly recommended)
- paper for the sewing pattern
- water-soluble marker or tailor's chalk
- sewing thread to match woven fabric; sewing needle
- sewing machine
- steam iron and press cloth
- your preferred tools for cutting and sewing: scissors, rotary cutter & mat, pattern weights, sewing pins or clips, etc.

## PROJECT SPECS

**WOVEN FABRIC:** 12-1/2" wide and 36" long after finishing

**ASSEMBLED STOCKING:** 9" wide at foot x 16" long

**WEAVE STRUCTURE:** krokbragd

**TOTAL WARP ENDS:** 104 (for floor loom, add 2 ends for floating selvages)

**WARP LENGTH:** at least 60" (18" for front panel + 18" for back panel + 24" for loom waste)—add more length for space between panels and/or sampling

**WIDTH IN REED:** 13

**EPI:** 8

**PPI:** 48

## WEAVING KROKBRAGD ON A RIGID HEDDLE LOOM

Pattern drafts for krokbragd don't look like drafts for other weave structures. They have 3 columns, for the 3 picks we'll use here. Picks may use the same colors, as on the back of the stocking, or different colors to create patterns, as on the front of the stocking. The color patterns will develop row by row. Work 3 picks for each row.

**Always read the draft from the left to right, top to bottom.**

**Always follow the same weaving sequence of 3 picks to complete each row of the draft.**

The weaving sequence:

1. Heddle up and pick-up stick A forward; weave across.
2. Heddle up and pick-up stick B forward; weave across.
3. Heddle down; weave across.

### SET UP YOUR LOOM FOR THE WEAVING SEQUENCE

**PICK-UP STICK A:** Place the rigid heddle in the down position. Behind the heddle, use a pick-up stick to pick up every other raised thread across the warp. Push pick-up stick A to the back of the loom. For Step 1 of the sequence, you'll lift the heddle and bring this stick forward. Weave across, then push stick A to the back of the loom.

**PICK-UP STICK B:** Place the rigid heddle in the down position. Behind the heddle, use a pick-up stick to pick up the raised threads that were skipped for stick A. Leave the pick-up stick in place.

### OPTIONAL BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Tie string heddles: If you want to make your own string heddles, it's important to make them all the same length. You'll need 31 string heddles, one for each warp thread on the pick-up stick. Cut 18 lengths (11") of strong, smooth cotton yarn, like cotton carpet warp. Now tie each length into a loop, using your rigid heddle as a template. Make a square knot so the loop won't slip or come apart. Tie all the heddles on your heddle, trim the tails to 1/4", then slide them off the heddle. See the photo on the next page.



The heddle rod and heddles “save” the pick-up pattern. Each time you need pick-up stick B, lift the heddle rod and insert a pick-up stick. Remove pick-up stick B after the pick.

## MANAGING COLORS AND SHUTTLES

## TOP BAND PATTERN

[illegible]

## STOCKING FRONT ALLOVER PATTERN

[illegible]

12 rows in a repeat  
(36 picks)

## STOCKING BACK PATTERN

1: Heddle Up & Pick-up Stick A	2: Heddle Up & Pick-up Stick B	3: Heddle Down

1. Direct-warp the loom with cotton rug warp.
2. Spread the warp with waste yarn.
3. Weave the Top Band pattern once. Some rows of this pattern repeat—see the right column. The 25 rows of solid red will become a border at the top edge and the hem allowance inside the stocking.
4. Weave the Stocking Front Allover pattern, repeating until the total length of the front fabric measures 18".
5. Weave the Stocking Back pattern, repeating until the back fabric measures 18".

- You can weave the back of the stocking first to perfect your krokbragd skills.
- In krokbragd, the weft should completely cover the warp. Beat firmly with the heddle on every pick. If you still see warp yarn peeking through, use a tapestry beater or fork to pack in the weft.
- On each pick, make sure the weft yarn “catches” the selvedge thread (to help limit draw-in). For some picks, you’ll have to manually place the yarn over the selvedge. This is a good project for practicing clean selvages; try different things to improve them. Don’t worry if these experiments look odd when you’re done, because the selvages will get cut off later.
- Like all weft-faced weaves, krokbragd has a tendency to draw in. Make sure to place the weft at a big angle—try 45 degrees—before beating. Advance the warp often. If you are weaving a wide piece, try bubbling the weft instead of laying the shuttle at an angle.
- Start and end new yarns at a selvedge. Don’t overlap or tuck in weft tails—this can leave blips of exposed warp.

- Krokbragd fabric needs weft protection when it comes off the loom—finish the cut panels with zigzag stitch on your sewing machine.
- (Weaving nerd alert) Pattern drafts for krokbragd don't look anything like the woven fabric. Why? Steps 1 and 2 in the weaving sequence create small weft floats on the fabric. Each of these rows lays down 25% of the pattern's colors. Step 3 is a plain weave pick, laying down the final 50% of the pattern's colors and stabilizing the fabric.

## WEAVING KROKBAGD ON A SHAFT LOOM

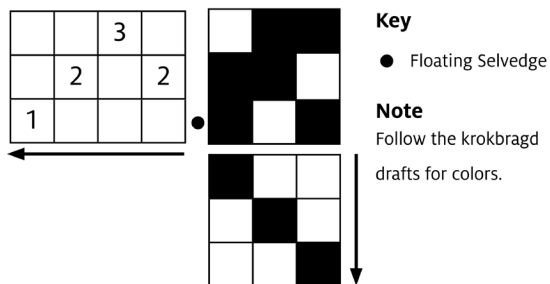
For color patterns, use the krokbragd pattern drafts. You'll see 3 columns—one for each pick—and rows that create the pattern. Each row of the krokbragd draft represents a complete repeat of the treadling sequence above. Always read the krokbragd draft from the left to right, top to bottom.

1. Make a warp chain with cotton rug warp. Warp the loom using your preferred method, following the shaft loom weaving draft.
2. Spread the warp with waste yarn.
3. Weave the Top Band pattern once. Some rows of this pattern repeat—see the right column. The 25 rows of solid red will become a border at the top edge and the hem allowance inside the stocking.
4. Weave the Stocking Front Allover pattern, repeating until the total length of the front fabric measures 18".
5. Weave the Stocking Back pattern, repeating until the back fabric measures 18".

## TIPS & NOTES

- You can weave the back of the stocking first to perfect your krokbragd skills.
- In krokbragd, the weft should completely cover the warp. Beat firmly with the heddle on every pick. If you still see warp yarn peeking through, use a tapestry beater or fork to pack in the weft.
- Start and end new yarns at a selvedge. Don't overlap or tuck in weft tails—this can leave blips of exposed warp.
- Use floating selvedges to prevent excessive draw-in and to keep the selvedges tidy. On each pick, pass the shuttle **over** the first floating selvedge and **under** the second one.
- Krokbragd fabric needs weft protection when it comes off the loom—finish the cut panels with zigzag stitch on your sewing machine.
- (Weaving nerd alert) Pattern drafts for krokbragd don't look anything like the woven fabric. Why? Steps 1 and 2 in the weaving sequence create small weft floats on the fabric. Each of these rows lays down 25% of the pattern's colors. Step 3 is a plain weave pick, laying down the final 50% of the pattern's colors and stabilizing the fabric.

## KROKBRAGD SHAFT LOOM DRAFT



## TOP BAND PATTERN

[illegible]

## STOCKING FRONT ALLOVER PATTERN

[illegible]

## STOCKING BACK PATTERN

1: Heddle Up & Pick-up Stick A	2: Heddle Up & Pick-up Stick B	3: Heddle Down

65 rows in a repeat  
(195 picks)

## ASSEMBLY

Note: Krokbragd makes a thick but delicate fabric. We strongly recommend adding a lining if you want to place things in the stocking after it's hung: the lining seam will support items without straining, where unlined krokbragd fabric may strain at the seams.

Use the zigzag stitch on your sewing machine to stitch along the top edge, bottom edge, and between the front and back fabric panels. Cut off loom waste close to this stitching, then cut apart the front and back panels.

Steam-press the fabric panels from the wrong side. If your yarn has a high acrylic content, use a press cloth.

Print the sewing pattern (pages 7 and 8) on two sheets of letter paper or one sheet of legal paper. If you used letter-size paper, overlap the gray sections and tape. If you used legal paper, you can line up the overlap lines and fold the paper.

If you are lining the stocking, cut out the paper pattern along the cutting line. Fold the lining fabric with right sides together. Lay the top edge of the stocking pattern along the fabric's lengthwise or crosswise grain, allowing about 1" additional hem allowance above the top edge. (See the diagram for placing the pattern on the stocking fabric—the lining and stocking should be the same length.) Use scissors or a rotary cutter and cutting mat to cut the lining fabric.

### SEAM THE STOCKING FABRIC

Note: We're adapting the normal methods of sewing because krokbragd fabric is so delicate. Typically, we'd cut out the fabric pieces (on the cutting line) and then seam them (on the stitching line). For this fabric, we'll draw the stitching line on the fabric, seam the stocking, and then cut the fabric outside of the stitching line, leaving a generous seam allowance.

Lay out the paper pattern to draw a stitching line. Cut out the paper pattern along the stitching line.

Place the front and back fabrics right sides together, with the front fabric on the top. Pin, clip, or baste the layers together at the zigzagged edges and the selvages.

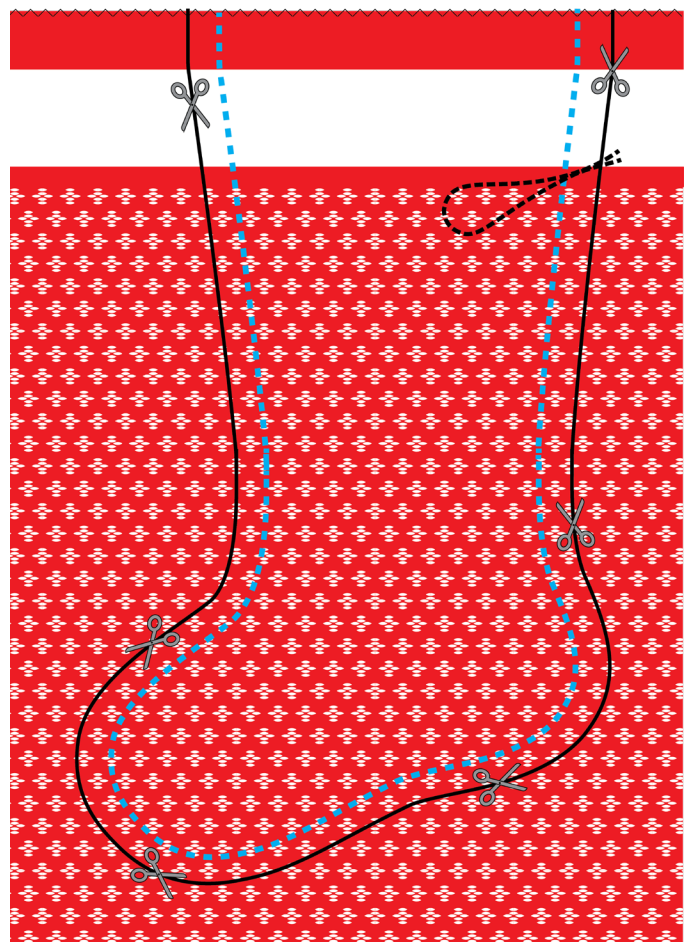
Place the pattern on the front fabric, setting the fold line at its top about 1/4" above the top band pattern, in the solid red/blue area. (If you want the toe to point to the right, flip the paper pattern over.)

Draw around the pattern with tailor's chalk or water-soluble marker. Extend the cutting lines through the hem allowance on each side of the stocking, so they run up to the zigzagged top edge of the fabric. It's important that the top edge of the hem allowance is finished with zigzag—this finish won't be seen, but it will protect the fabric as you assemble the stocking.

Cut a 5" length of decorative cord for the hanging loop. Fold the cut ends together and slip the loop end between the stocking front and stocking back. Set the loop into position at the X on the paper pattern, with the loop inside the stitching line and the cut ends poking beyond the stitching line.



LAYING OUT THE PAPER PATTERN



CUTTING OUT THE STOCKING AFTER SEAMING



Stitch the stocking pieces, right sides together with a long stitch. You may want to stitch again over the hanging loop for extra strength. If your sewing machine has an adjustable presser foot, lighten how much weight the presser foot puts on the fabric. This thick fabric will want to slide out from under the presser foot.

Press the seam from both sides of the fabric.

Cut around the outside of the seam, leaving at least a 5/8" seam allowance. You may want to cut one layer at a time because the fabric is so thick.

Turn the stocking right side out and press the seam again.

Fold the hem allowance of the stocking to the inside, leaving 1/4" of red or blue showing above the white of the top band. Steam-press this fold line.

### **FINISHING AN UNLINED STOCKING**

For an unlined stocking, the hem allowance gets folded twice. From inside the stocking, turn the zigzagged edge of the hem allowance under to meet the fold line. Press and pin/clip/baste in place. Sew the bottom edge of the hem into place by hand.

Steam-press the completed stocking, using a press cloth if you wish.

### **FINISHING A LINED STOCKING**

For a lined stocking, the hem allowance gets folded once to reduce bulk. Stitch the top edge of the hem through all layers. Deb used a long stitch on her sewing machine, about 3/16" from the folded edge; you can sew by hand if you prefer.

Seam the lining pieces right sides together, using a 1/2" or 5/8" seam allowance. Press the seam open, clipping as necessary so it lies flat. You can also turn the lining right side out and press this seam from the outside, then turn the lining wrong side out again. Slip the lining, wrong side out, inside the stocking, pushing the lining down as far as it will go into the stocking toe.

From inside the stocking, fold under the top edge of the lining so that this fold sits about 1/4" below the top edge of the stocking fabric. Stitch the lining to the stocking along this fold—Deb sewed invisibly by hand, or you can stitch by machine.

Press the completed stocking, using a press cloth and plenty of steam.

Hang by chimney with care, and enjoy your beautiful handwoven stocking!

### **RESOURCES**

Patrick, Jane. *The Weaver's Idea Book*. Interweave, 2010.



UNLINED STOCKING



LINED STOCKING

