BONSAI WOMAN

WEAVE A WALL HANGING WITH A CARDBOARD LOOM

HAVE FUN!

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MATERIALS

- Cardboard – shoe box, packing box. A bit thicker than a breakfast cereal box, but you need to be able to cut through it
- Sharp scissors
- Yarn needle – needle with a large eye
- String/yarn for warp
- Materials for weft – knitting yarn, string, paper strips, raffia, strips of fabric, twigs, feathers, wire, pipe cleaners
- A rod, branch or chopstick – for hanging your finished weaving
- Sticky tape, ruler, pencil & fork

STEP 1 >

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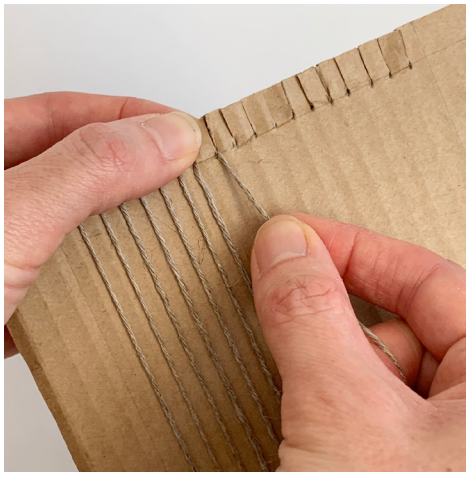
STEP 1:

MAKING THE LOOM

Making Loom (1)



Making Loom (2)

Making Loom (3)

1. TAKE your cardboard and cut it into a rectangle approx. 20cm by 15cm

2. On the short sides of the rectangle, MEASURE 1cm and mark a line.

3. On the long sides, MEASURE 2cm and mark a line.

4. On the shorter sides, mark out increments of 6mm and CUT a slit at each increment. This creates a row of cardboard "pegs" at the top and bottom of your loom (Making Loom 1).

5. Using your warp yarn, STICKY TAPE a 7cm tail to the back of your loom and bring the yarn through the first slit and up to the corresponding slit at the top of the loom. Make sure the yarn is slightly tensioned and not loose. Wrap the yarn around the "peg" created between the slits and bring it down the loom again to wrap around the pegs at the bottom (Making Loom 2, 3). Continue wrapping until you reach the end of the pegs. Check to see that you have an even number of warps. If not, take off the last warp you wrapped around a peg. Leaving a 7cm tail, cut the warp yarn and tape it to the back of the loom.

6. You're now ready to START WEAVING!

HAVE FUN!

STEP 2 >

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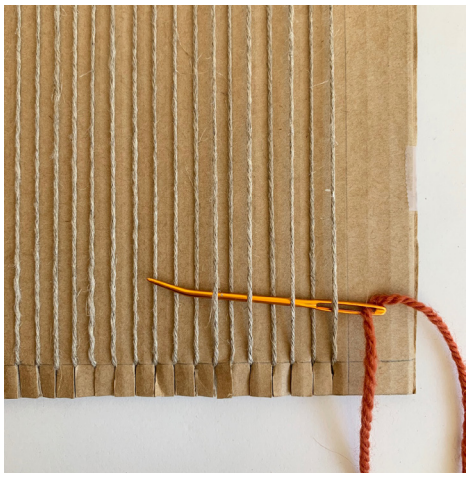
STEP 2:

PLAIN WEAVE

Plain weave is also called "TABBY" and it's the basis of all weaving.



Plain Weave (1)

Plain Weave (2)

1. CUT a length of weft yarn about the length of your outstretched arms.

Hint: this first bit of weaving will be hidden in your final work, so don't use your favourite yarn yet!

2. THREAD UP your needle with your chosen yarn, then starting from one side, take the needle over then under alternate warp threads (Plain Weave 1). Pull the yarn through leaving a tail of approx. 10cm. Weave that tail under the first 6 warps of the row above it and leave it to hang at the front of the work. Using the fork, press all the weft yarn down as far as it will go toward the bottom pegs.

3. For row 2 you will come back in the OPPOSITE DIRECTION going over warps where you previously went under, and under where you previously went over. Do not pull tightly when you get to the end, instead create a "bubble" shape with the yarn (Plain Weave 2), then beat it in with your fork from the centre of the bubble outwards. This will give your work a nice, even tension so it doesn't pull in at the sides.

4. CONTINUE WEAVING until you have at least 1cm of woven fabric, making sure to "bubble" each row before beating it in with your fork. At the end of your last row, don't cut the yarn but leave it aside as we make a row of Rya Knots to create a fringe at the bottom of your weaving. You can continue with this length of yarn when the knots are complete.

STEP 3 >

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STEP 3:

RYA KNOTS TO CREATE A FRINGE

We will now create a fringe that will hang at the bottom of your work.

Rya Knots (1)

Rya Knots (2)

Rya Knots (3)

1. DECIDE how long you would like the fringe to be. It should be no less than 15cm. It is better to make the fringe longer and cut it at the end.

2. CHOOSE your material for the fringe – it can be knitting yarn, strips of fabric or raffia. The thicker the material you are using, the less pieces you will want in each knot. Cut 3 or 4 pieces of your material that are double the length of your fringe - e.g. 20 cm fringe means that you will cut pieces of material 40cm long.

3. HOLD the pieces of yarn together and fold them in half. Place the fold in front of the first two warp threads and wrap the left tails around the left warp thread and the right tails around the right warp thread (Rya Knots 1).

4. GENTLY PULL the knot down until it sits against your plain weave rows (Rya Knots 2). You can tighten the knot by lifting the tails of the knot upwards, but be careful that you don't tighten too much. You want your warp threads to remain straight and not pull inwards. Work your way across the warp yarns creating a row of Rya Knots. (Rya Knots 3) Once you have finished your knots, beat them down with your fork.

5. COMPLETE at least 3 rows of plain weave on top of your Rya Knots to lock them in. You can add more rya knots at any point in your weaving. You can put them across a whole row, or just a few here and there. Remember that the tassel below the knot will hide the weaving behind it.

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STEP 4:

CHANGING WEFT YARNS

Changing Weft Yarns

If you wish to change colours, or if you've run out of weft yarn and need to add more, leave a tail at the end of approximately 10cm. Weave this tail through 6 warps in the row above just as you did to begin your weaving. Leave this tail hanging at the front of the weaving. We will tidy it up at the end. Start the new yarn from the opposite side of the weaving and repeat the process to leave another tail at the front (Changing Weft Yarns).

STEP 5:

ADDING TEXTURE TO THE WEAVING

There are lots of different ways you can add texture and interest to your weaving. You can start by choosing interesting weft materials such as strips of fabric, paper or cardboard; ribbons and raffia; twigs and leaves.

There are also lots of different weaving techniques for adding texture and patterns.

Adding Texture (1)

Adding Texture (2)

Adding Texture (3)

Adding Texture (4)

HERE ARE 3 SIMPLE ONES TO GET YOU STARTED

1. TABBY LOOPS

This is a variation on plain weave that creates loops in the fabric. Before you beat in your row, use a pencil, knitting needle or chopstick to pull up loops in the yarn where each weft crosses over the warp. Work your way towards the needle end of the yarn as you pull up the loops (Adding Texture 1). Leaving your chopstick in, slide the loops down to the weaving. Weave the next row, (Adding Texture 2) then carefully remove the chopstick before beating in with the fork (Adding Texture 3). Follow up with at least two rows of plain weave to lock them in. For a less uniform effect, just pull the loops up individually with a needle. You can also do this technique with a contrasting piece of yarn by putting it on top of the current weft, even skipping a few warp yarns if you wish (Adding Texture 4). Beat down with your fork to hold it in place.

STEP 5 CONTINUED >

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STEP 5 CONTINUED:

Adding Texture (5)

Adding Texture (6)

2. CREATE A LOOSELY WOVEN, TRANSLUCENT SECTION AT THE TOP OF YOUR WEAVING BY NOT BEATING IN THE WEFTS WITH YOUR FORK.

Just lightly position the weft leaving space between each row. This is particularly effective if you use the same yarn for both weft and warp (Adding Texture 5).

3. INSTEAD OF USING JUST ONE THICKNESS OF YOUR WEFT MATERIAL, TRY USING MULTIPLE THICKNESSES AND LEAVING THE ENDS HANGING AT EITHER SIDE OF THE WEAVING.

This works particularly well for plant material such as twigs, pine needles and raffia (Adding Texture 6).

Keep weaving until you reach 5cm from the top of your warp threads.

STEP 6:

REMOVING THE WEAVING FROM THE LOOM

Removing the weaving

STOP WEAVING 5CM FROM THE TOP OF YOUR WARP THREADS.

If you have a loosely woven, translucent section at the top of your weaving, place a strip of sticky tape over it to hold it in place before removing the weaving from the loom.

Slightly bend forward the top pegs so you can slide off the loop of warp thread. Use your needle to help lever them off (Removing the weaving).

Remove the taped tails from the back of the loom and slide the weaving off the bottom pegs.

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STEP 7:

FINISHING TOUCHES

Finishing touches (1)

Finishing touches (2)

Finishing touches (3)

Finishing touches (4)

Finishing touches (5)

Finishing touches (6)

1. TIE KNOTS in the top warp threads, pressing them towards the weaving to secure it (Finishing touches 1).

2. TURN THE WEAVING OVER to the back. Take a warp end that was taped to the back of the loom and thread it on your needle. Skipping the first weft, thread it under 3 wefts (Finishing Touches 2). Pull the tail through and cut it close to the end without cutting your weaving.

3. THERE MAY BE SEVERAL WEFT TAILS HANGING AT THE FRONT OF YOUR WEAVING.

To tidy up a weft tail, start by threading it onto your needle and passing it through to the back of your weaving being sure to go over an adjacent warp (Finishing Touches 3). Then thread the tail straight down through at least three rows of weft yarn and snip close to the weaving (Finishing Touches 4,5).

Hint: If your tail is very short, work your needle through the wefts BEFORE you thread the needle with the tail.

4. PASS A ROD THROUGH THE LOOPS IN THE TOP WARPS.

Tie each end of a piece of string to either end of the rod (Finishing Touches 6). This will prevent the weaving from sliding off and enable you to hang the weaving on a hook.

TRIM THE FRINGE TO YOUR DESIRED LENGTH AND ADMIRE YOUR WORK!!

GLOSSARY >

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GLOSSARY

Finished Weaving

THE LOOM

A tool that enables you to interlace individual threads and turn them into fabric. It may be a simple frame made from cardboard, or a complex commercial machine.

YARN

A continuous strand of thread made from animal, plant or synthetic fibres. Wool used for knitting and crochet is a type of yarn.

WARP

This refers to the threads that run lengthwise in a weaving, the ones that are attached to the loom.

WEFT

This refers to the threads that run side to side in a weaving. An easy way to remember is “weft goes left”.

YARN NEEDLE

A blunt needle with a large eye. Some yarn needles have a bend in them which makes them easier to weave with, but it is not essential. Yarn and yarn needles are available from craft stores.

RYA KNOTS

Knots created with short bundles of separate pieces of yarn. These knots are often added to form a decorative fringe at the bottom of a weaving.

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