Slash Loom Variation: Boxes with Bottoms

It is possible to weave a box shape using a rectangular form as a loom. When choosing the form you wish to weave over, think about the properties that you want the loom to have or accomplish. First, it should be the right size for what you want. In addition, it should be stiff enough that it can hold the warp taut as you work. Forms and boxes you wish to use can be reinforced with cardboard or foam core, and glue.

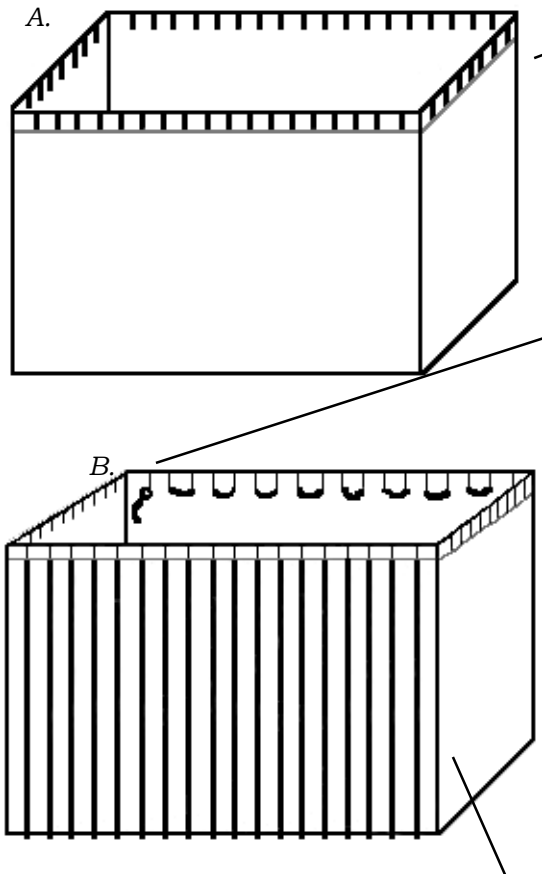
Materials:

Box. Choose a box that is open at the top. Reinforce the box so that it won't draw in as you're weaving. If it has a lid that folds down, it can be used as part of the box to create a lid and flap or as reinforcement (cut off the lid and shove it back down to the inside of the box). If you use the top as a lid or flap, it should also be reinforced before it becomes part of the loom.

Xacto™ or mat knife.

Pencil.

Low temperature glue gun. (optional)

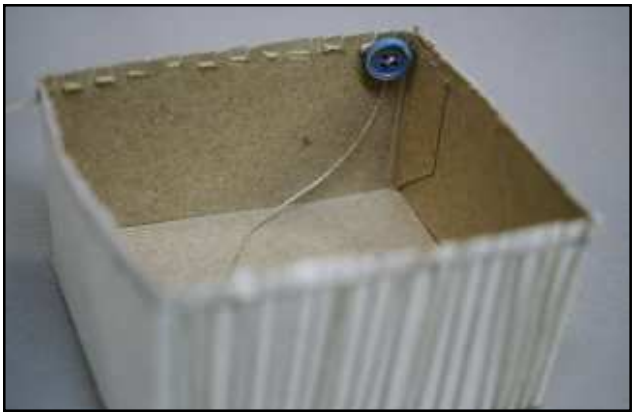


Making, Warping and Weaving on the Box Loom

A. Choose a warp and a warp sett. Choose a weft that is appropriate to the warp sett. (See Section Two, Materials, page 27, for information on choosing warp and weft yarns.) Mark the top of the box with a dot for each warp. Draw a line around the box about a quarter of an inch from the top of the form. Slash with a Xacto™ knife to the line.

B. Tie an overhand knot in the end of the warp. Put the warp through the first slit and pull the knot to the back of the slash. Optional: Dot the end of the warp with craft glue or use a glue gun to make a dot of glue on the end to create a bead that can't be pulled through the slit. Another solution, if you have trouble with the knot pulling through the flap as you weave, is to tie a button to the end of the warp and pull the button up to the slash but not through it.

Using button to keep the warp knot from pulling through to the front.



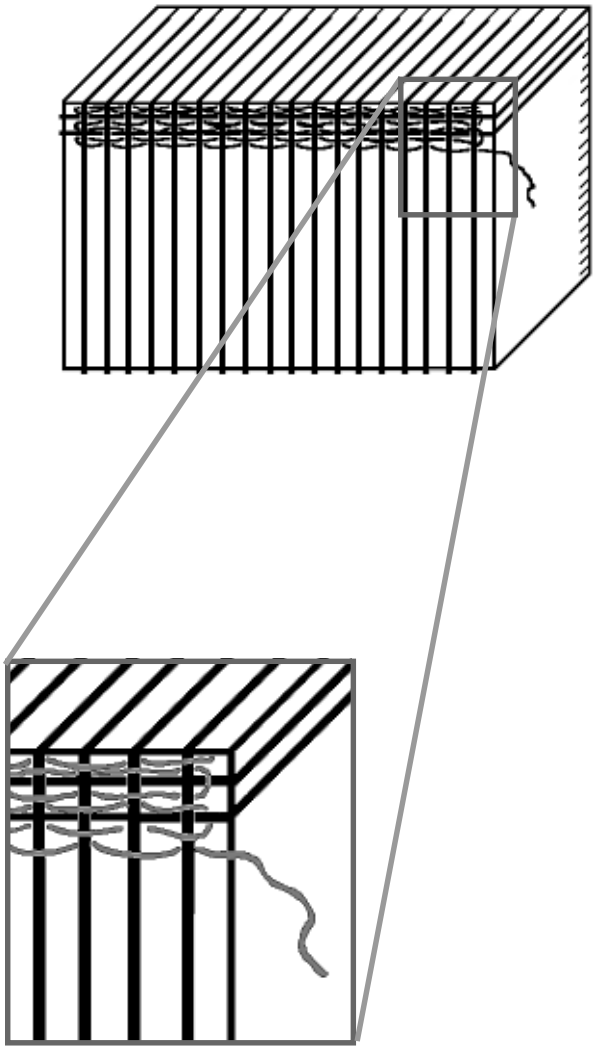
C. Go around the box with the warp. Pull the warp around the slash and back through the next slash on the other side of the form. Reverse directions and warp clear across only two sides and the bottom of the box. Think of the box as a topless cube. This part of the warping process will cover 3 sides of the cube.

C. End by bringing the warp to and through the last slash on one of the sides.

D. You may need to add an extra warp at a corner to make an uneven number of warps.

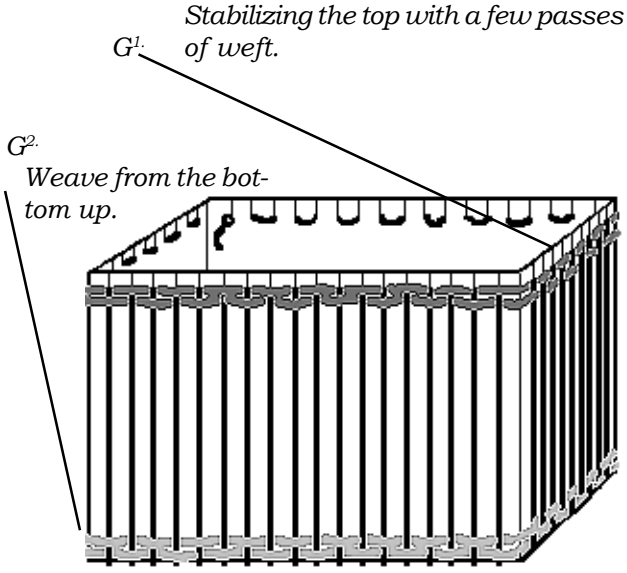
E. In the next part of the warping process, each of the warps for last two sides of the box functions as a weft yarn at the bottom of the cube while warping the other two sides of the box or cube. Weft yarn passes fill in the spaces between the warps. Begin by needleweaving a pass of the weft bundle at one edge of the bottom.

F. To begin warping the sides of the box, a half pass of warp should begin at the top slash and be woven across the bottom and then be carried up to the slash and paused on the other side. Weave another pass of weft (enough weft passes should be woven between the warp half pass to fill in the proper spacing between the warps) and then weave the warp again from the side slash across the bottom and up to the next slash on the other side. Continue this process until all the slashes at the top have been looped around. Note: This is a good time to assess the need for strengthening the box loom. Does it need reinforcing? If so, you can add more cardboard to the inside. Are the slashes collapsing and liberating individual warps? If so, apply a hot glue bead across the ends of the warps at the top back. Make sure this is a type of glue that can be pulled off easily. (See information on page 23 about glue guns.)



Zoom in view of weft passes being woven between each bottom warp. (E. & F.)

G. [1.] You can, if you wish, weave at the top of the box for a few passes to stabilize the top edge. [2.] Then weave from the bottom up. The weaving should proceed all around the box. Designs can be marked on the warp for the image you wish to weave. Better yet, mark the cartoon on the box and weave over the cartoon. When weaving the sides, make sure that the weft doesn't pull in at the corners when you weave around them. Use a large bubble of weft when doing each pass. This is very important for keeping the shape of the box, so that it doesn't become wedge-shaped. Once the shape begins to angle in, it is very difficult to bring it out square again. If this happens, my best advice, hateful as it will feel at this point, is to tear out the weaving, structurally strengthen the box, and reweave it again into the proper shape.



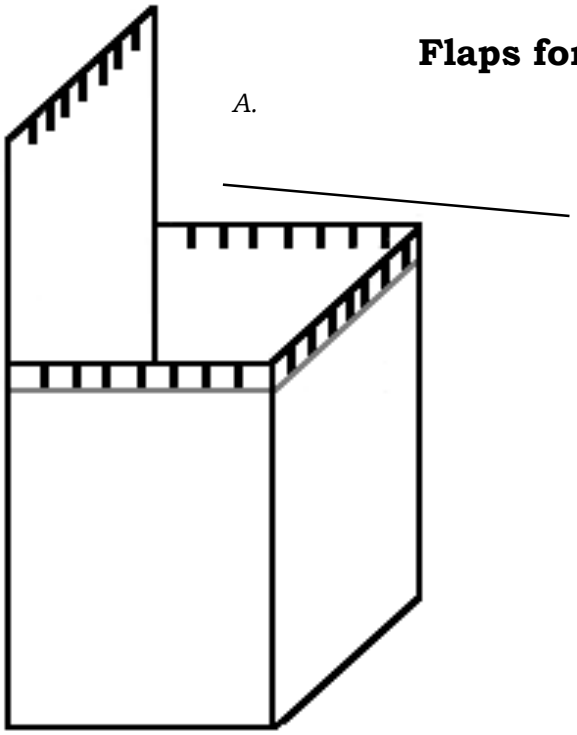
H. Beat firmly as you go. But try not to beat so hard that you collapse the form or unseat the warps. Use a scraping motion with the side of a bobbin or the needle to push the weft in tightly against the pass of weft that preceded it.

I. If you want a very firm top edge, weave a heavy cord through the warp loops as the last pass around this edge of the shape.

J. Pull off the hot glue if you used it. Remove the tapestry from the form.

K. The tapestry can be wet finished (washed and slightly fulled), lined, handles attached, zippers sewn in, protective corners, and all such things added if you wish.

Flaps for Boxes



A.

A. To make a box with a flap, extend one side of the form the length of the opening, plus a little extra to turn over the box so it can be folded down. Glue on some extra cardboard to strengthen the extended flap edge.

B. If there are an uneven number of slashes on the long edge, start the warp on the flap. If there is an even number of notches, start the warp on the side opposite the flap, because the extra warp has to end on the box itself to enable the weaving to be woven in a spiral fashion without the need to change sheds or have a slit.

C. Warp the loom as described for the slash loom previously. Tape or use a glue gun to cover the ends of the warps with a bead of glue if needed. (See information about glue guns on page 23.)

D. The box and lid should be woven with the flap in the "open" position.

Various slash looms.