



WEAVING TODAY™

Guide to Inkle Weaving: Free Inkle Loom Patterns, Plans, and Projects

SHARON KERSTEN

Make a loom and weave a hatband in two days

STRUCTURE

Warp-faced plain weave with pick-up.

EQUIPMENT

Inkle loom to accommodate at least a 4 ft warp length (this loom allows 80"); smooth string or strong sewing thread for tying heddles; popsicle sticks; kitchen laminate samples to use as shuttles; small pick-up stick.

YARNS

Warp: #10 cotton crochet thread or 5/2 pearl cotton, 25 yd white and 25 yd black (or DMC embroidery floss, 4 skeins light, 4 skeins dark).
Weft: same as light warp, about 8 yd.

OTHER SUPPLIES

See list of supplies and materials for constructing the inkle loom.

WARP LENGTH

34 ends alternating 1 dark/1 light 80" long (this length will depend on the inkle loom).

SETTS

Warp: about 45 epi.
Weft: about 13 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Weaving width: 3/4".
Woven length: 26".
Finished size: hatband 3/4" x 26" plus 5" braided fringe at each end.

WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK!

Here's how to construct a loom, warp it, and weave a project all within a weekend. This lightweight, portable loom is suitable for small projects like hatbands and bookmarks. It can easily be disassembled for travel when needed!

To build this loom, you'll need to gather a few basic handtools and take a trip to your local hardware store or "big-box" home improvement center.

MAKING THE LOOM

Cut the CPVC (chlorinated polyvinyl chloride) pipe into two 16" front pieces, two 2 1/2" back pieces, seven 6" cross pieces, three 5" pieces for castle uprights and heddle string rod, six 1 1/2" pieces for joining T and L connectors, and one 7" shed rod. Push pieces together as shown on page 3.

For the tensioning device: Arrange on each 24" threaded rod: 4" space, washer, 2 nuts, 9" space, 2 nuts, washer, and about a 10" space. The 4" space goes into the back arm; the 10" space into the castle assembly. (The washers keep the nuts from sliding inside the T connector.) Snug the 2 nuts so they are finger tight only. Moving the two sets of nuts toward each other loosens the tension, away from each other tightens the tension. (Place elastics as in Photo a, page 4, to prevent the loom from coming apart when it is not warped.)

Using a ruler, measure from washer to washer to check that both sides of the loom are the same length. The measurements should be within 1/8" of each other.



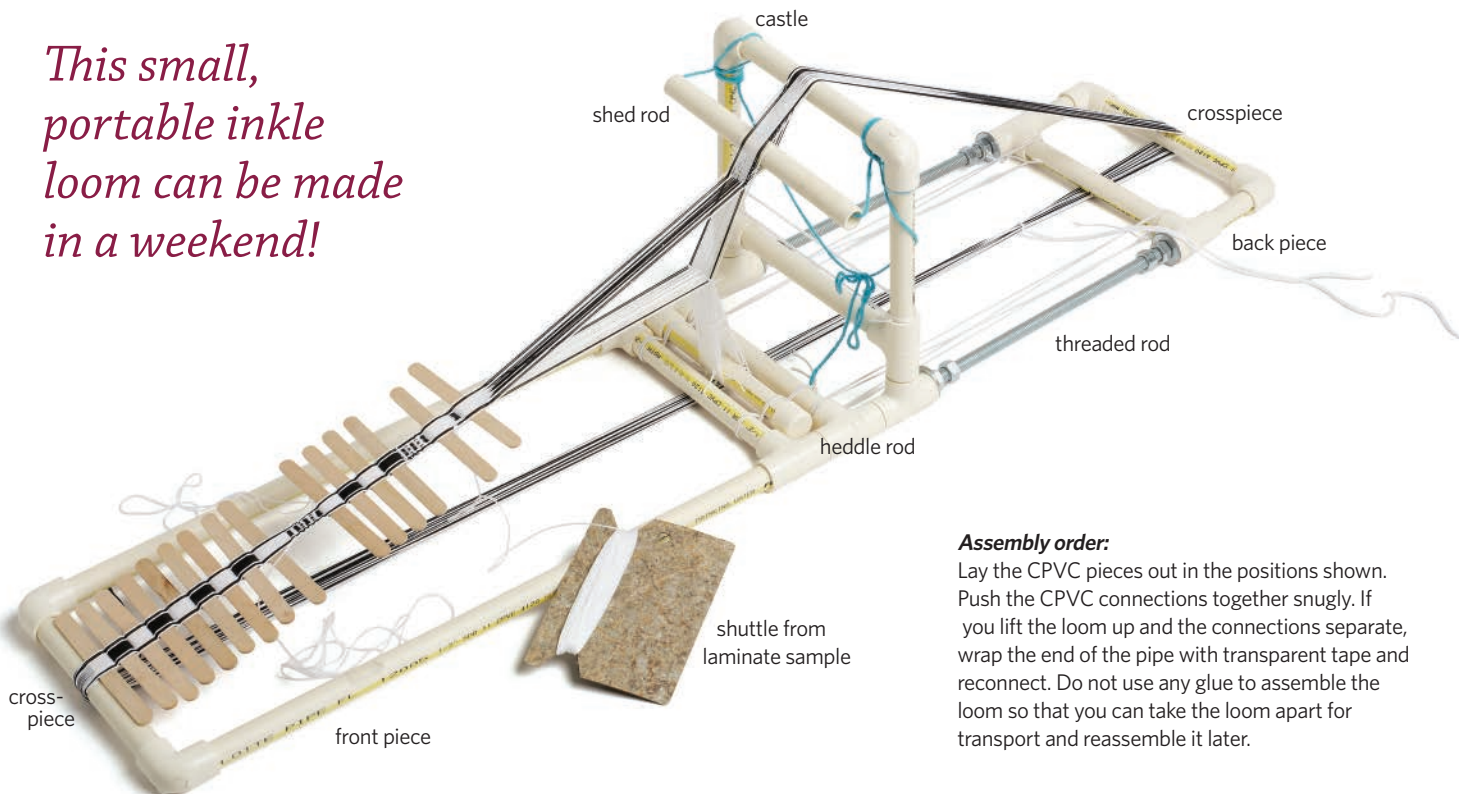
What you'll need

Tools Coping saw, hacksaw, miter box and saw, or PVC pipe cutter (if available); utility knife; *not-your-sewing* scissors; tape measure or ruler; pencil; slip-jaw pliers (to loosen any stuck pipes, if needed).

Materials and other supplies One 10 ft length 1/2" CPVC pipe (you can cut it in half to transport), ten 1/2" T connectors, six 1/2" L connectors, two 1/2" cap pieces, two 3/8" x 24" threaded rods (20 threads/inch), 8 nuts to fit threaded rod, 4 washers with bigger outside diameter than ends of T connectors, transparent tape, 2 packages of 1/4" elastic cord.



This small, portable inkle loom can be made in a weekend!



Assembly order:

Lay the CPVC pieces out in the positions shown. Push the CPVC connections together snugly. If you lift the loom up and the connections separate, wrap the end of the pipe with transparent tape and reconnect. Do not use any glue to assemble the loom so that you can take the loom apart for transport and reassemble it later.

1. Threading W B B W B B B B B B B W B B W open
W B B W W W W W W W W W W W W B B W heddle

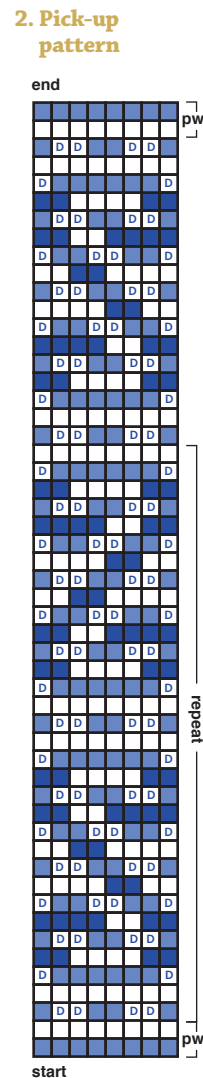
(Discard the extra black thread.)

- 1** Tie 20 heddles (3 extra for repairs or other projects) around the castle upright (Photo c) with a surgeon's knot (a square knot with two twists on the first half).
- 2** Taping the ends on the bottom front cross piece with 6" tails at start and finish, wind a continuous warp of 34 ends holding 1 black/1 white together and keeping a finger between them; do not cross threads as you wind.
- 3** Weave in popsicle sticks (Photo d), picking up the sheds by hand and changing the black/white alternate order to match Figure 1. Slide sticks to bottom of loom frame, smoothing the threads. Discard the extra black thread and tie together end tails.
- 4** Attach and secure the shed rod (Photo e). Push the lower shed down. Insert popsicle sticks to keep the shed down while you are working. Loosen the heddle rod from its elastic (Photo b) and place it about halfway between the end of the loom and

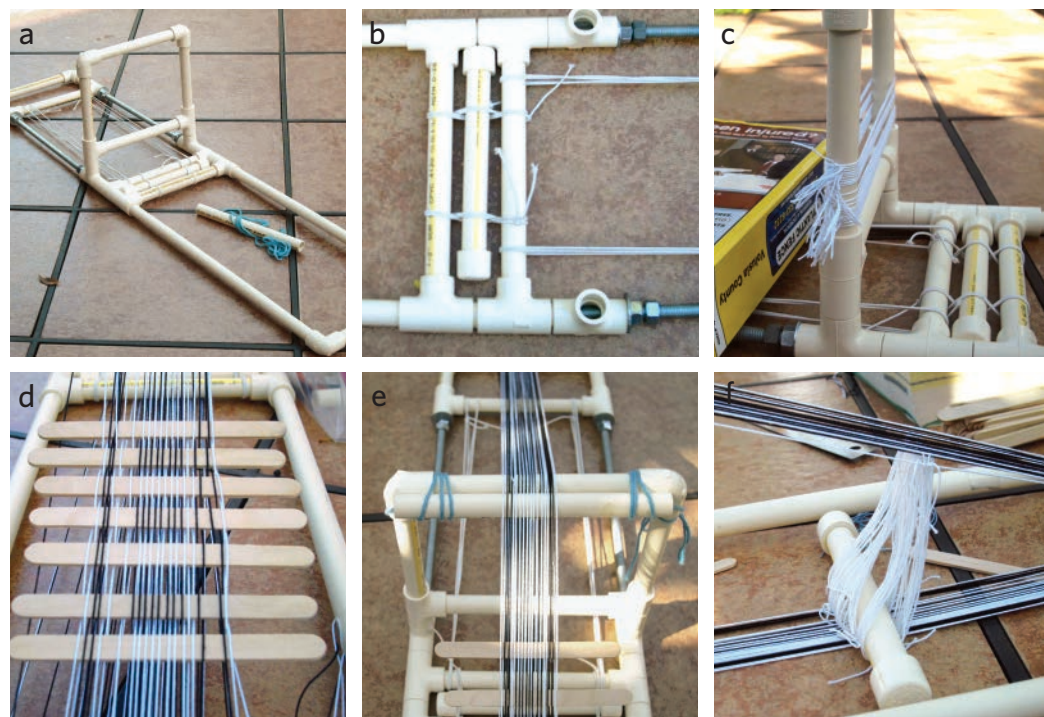
the castle upright. Slip one end of each string heddle around the heddle rod, pass the doubled string of the loop over one warp thread in the lower shed, then pass the other end of the loop around the heddle rod (Photo f). Continue, taking threads from the lower shed in order and making sure you catch only one thread at a time. Then carefully slide the heddle rod back to the bottom of the castle and secure it with the elastics (Photo b).

- 5** Cut a shuttle from laminate sample (see page 3). Weave at least 7" plain weave with popsicle sticks to preserve the fringe. Weave 1" plain weave with white weft (the heddle rod in the down position lowers the mostly light warp threads so the mostly dark threads are on top; the heddle rod released and the shed stick moved forward raises the mostly light threads). Hemstitch over the first 2 rows. Then weave the hatband following Figure 2.

- 6** To weave the pattern: Copy and enlarge the graph in Figure 2 so you can read it easily and use a marker to check off each row. Weave the pattern repeat for about 25" or the length necessary for your use. The graph shows only warp threads 10-25 (count them from the right); the others are controlled by the sheds and not the pick-up stick. The first few rows will look strange the first time through. Stop for breaks only between "S" motifs (it takes 10 to 15 minutes to weave each one). End with 1" plain weave and hemstitch as at the beginning. Weave another 7" of popsicle sticks for fringe and then weave the remaining warp for bookmarks or samples.
- 7** Remove the band from the loom. Divide the warp threads into two halves, then do a 3- or 4-strand braid with each half and secure with an overhand knot, matching all braids for length and knot placement; trim ends evenly. ✂



- thread up in regular shed (heddle down)
- thread up in regular shed using shed stick
- thread brought up with pick-up stick
- thread pushed down with pick-up stick



PHOTOS BY SHARON KERSTEN

Assembly and warping

a. Assembled frame and placement of elastics, b. the heddle rod, c. the heddles tied around castle (the loom is weighted with a large telephone book), d. sheds to straighten thread order, e. the shed rod, f. the position for heddle rod during threading.

Stars & Stripes

AMY ABBOTT

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Many thanks to our readers for sharing creative patriotic fabric projects with us.

After the tragic events of September 11th, I wanted to do something to help lift the spirits of the members of my teachers' team. I decided to make patriotic pins. There were already many pins of the crossed ribbon style being worn, but since I was planning to weave an inkle band for at least fifteen pins, I knew I needed a style that would conserve band length. With this in mind, I designed a bar-style pin.

Using the basic principles of inkle design, I created a pattern of "stars" (a single thread of white between two threads of blue) on one half of the band with stripes of red and white on the other. The weaving is simply a matter of alternating sheds.

As I began to weave the band, I was very pleased with the stylized outcome. My colleagues, too, were pleased, and so many other teachers in my school have requested pins that I have now made nearly ninety of them!

Weaving the band

This is a very flexible project. It can be woven in 5/2 pearl cotton, as given in Project at-a-glance, but doubled 10/2 pearl cotton would work as well. You can use any kind of loom to weave the band.

Wind the warp and prepare the loom following Figure 1 and the directions in Project at-a-glance. If you are using an inkle loom, you will need only a 2-yard warp. For a shaft loom, wind a 2½-yd warp to allow for the additional loom waste.

PROJECT at-a-glance

Weave structure for band

Warp-faced plain weave.

Equipment

Inkle loom or 2- or 4-shaft loom (warp width is ¾"); 12-dent reed; 1 shuttle.

Yarns

Warp: 5/2 pearl cotton (2,100 yd/lb), blue, 30 yd; natural, 35 yd; red, 38 yd.

Weft: 5/2 pearl cotton (2,100 yd/lb), blue, 14 yd.

Yarn sources

5/2 pearl cotton is available from most retailers.

Warp order and length

41 ends, 2½ yd long for shaft loom, 2 yd long for inkle loom.

Warp and weft spacing

Warp: 54 epi (4-5 in a 12-dent reed). Width in reed: ¾". Weft: 10 ppi.

Notions and other materials

Scraps of chip board (a cardboard available at craft stores), heavy drawing paper, craft glue, 16-18 one-inch pin backs, hot glue gun.

Take-up

0% in width, 11% length. Amounts produce a band ¾" × 55" (16-18 pins).



Amy Abbott lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. When she isn't weaving, spinning, knitting, or being a mom, she teaches elementary school art.

INKLE-BAND PINS

Since the warp in this warp-faced band is quite dense, if you are using a 4-shaft loom, thread 1-2-3-4 to spread the threads among all

1. Warp color order

	5x	3x		
12	2	2		blue
14	1	3		white
15			5	red
41				

the shafts. This will make the sheds easier to open than they are when threads are crowded on shafts 1 and 2.

The blue and white “stars” form the upper part of the pin. Although the weft doesn’t show in the band, a blue weft is recommended so it won’t peek through at the top selvage. Place the weft flat in the shed and keep band width at an even $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Weave approximately 55" (the 11% take-up occurs on the loom), remove from the loom, and press.

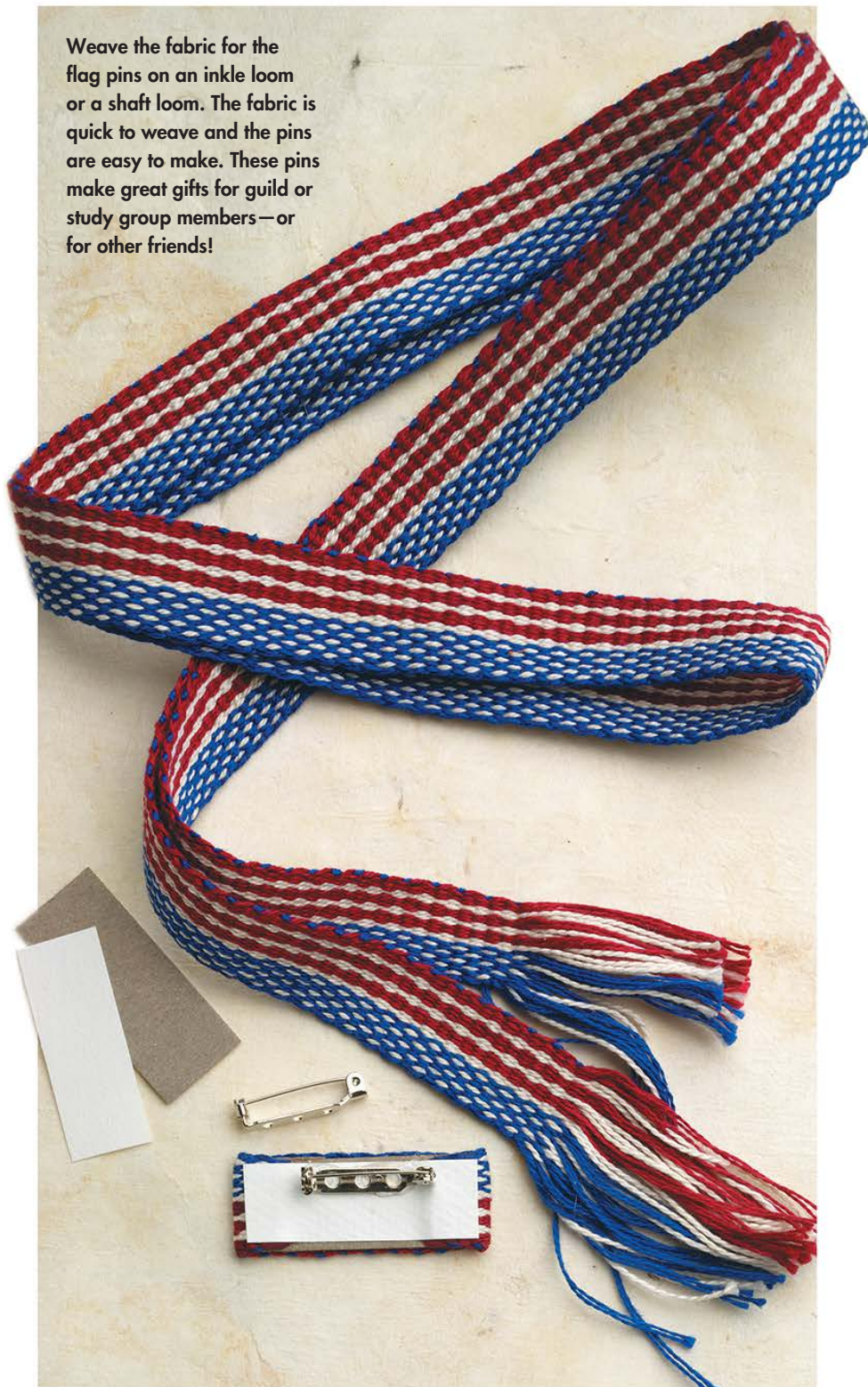
Assembling the pins

To assemble the pins, you’ll need the supplies listed in Project at-a-glance. For each pin: Cut a piece of chip board 2" long and a tiny bit narrower than the width of your woven band. Cut a piece of band 3" long. With the band lying on the work surface wrong side up, spread the craft glue on the piece of chip board and carefully center the chip board on the band. Let the glue dry for a minute.

Next, apply a bead of glue to each end of the band (this can get a little messy) and fold the ends to the back of the pin. Squish the ends around a little and coax the raw edges in so they can’t be seen from the front. Allow glue to dry completely. I sandwiched my pins between two layers of waxed paper and dried them under heavy books. Cut heavy drawing paper a little smaller than each pin and glue it to the back, covering the raw fabric edges. Allow to dry completely. With hot glue, attach a pin back horizontally to the back of each pin near the top edge.



Weave the fabric for the flag pins on an inkle loom or a shaft loom. The fabric is quick to weave and the pins are easy to make. These pins make great gifts for guild or study group members—or for other friends!



CHRISTI EALES EHLER

Bands, bands, bands, and more bands!

STRUCTURE

Warp-faced plain weave.

EQUIPMENT

Inkle loom, belt shuttle.

YARNS

Warp for apron straps: 10/2 pearl cotton (4,200 yd/lb, UKI), Navy, Silver, Dark Sierra, Purple Passion, Yellow, and Cobalt.

Warp for belt (second band from left in the photo on this page): 5/2 pearl cotton (2,100 yd/lb, UKI), Cobalt, Black, Flaxon, Bali, Garnet, Deep Lilac, Hunter, and Gold.

Weft for apron straps, 10/2 pearl cotton, Navy.

Weft for belt: 5/2 pearl cotton, Cobalt.

WARP LENGTH

63 ends 116" long for apron straps, 72 ends 88" long for belt.

SETTS

Warp for apron straps: about 70 epi. Warp for belt: about 52 epi.

Weft for apron straps: 13 ppi. Weft for belt: 10 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Finished sizes: $\frac{7}{8}$ " \times 94" for apron straps; $1\frac{1}{8}$ " \times 68" for belt.

FOR BELTS, BOOKMARKS, STRAPS, HANDLES, AND TRIMS IN COLORS INSPIRED BY GUATEMALAN JASPE CLOTH

Jaspe is the Guatemalan term for ikat. These inkle-woven bands take advantage of the unique design principles of Guatemalan jaspe fabrics as well as their rich and glorious rainbows of colors.

My daughter can see the speedometer from her aisle seat. "It's reading zero," she reports. That makes us laugh, but as we hurtle around another sharp curve, I offer a silent addition to the religious petitions adorning the dashboard—may *diós* protect not just this bus driver but all the passengers, too!

It's Tuesday, market day in Salcajá, a major weaving center in the western highlands of Guatemala. That's where we're headed, bumping over dusty roads in a retired U.S. school bus turned public transport, squashed three to a seat with a lot of local folks who share our destination.

We've come to Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, to study Spanish, and I've made it a point to work textiles into my conversational practice at the language school. Salcajá is the place my tutor told me to look for a kind of cloth I'd been admiring: jaspe. Because jaspe is popular for the traditional skirts—called *corte*—worn daily by indigenous Mayan women, the best quality fabric is found where the Guatemalans shop, not in tourist markets.

Our trip inspired a lifetime of weaving ideas—these bands are just the beginning.



Inkle-woven bands and belts make ideal projects for experimenting with color.

STRUCTURE

Warp-faced plain weave.

EQUIPMENT

Inkle loom with pegs at least 5" long; 75 string heddles (5 heddles for trim); 2 belt shuttles; large-eyed sewing needle.

YARNS

Warp: 5/2 pearl cotton (2,100 yd/lb, Halcyon Yarn), Lipstick, 85 yd; Melon, 75 yd; Soldier Blue, 123 yd; Ruby, 95 yd. Weft: 5/2 pearl cotton, Lipstick, 40 yd.

OTHER SUPPLIES

¼ yd lightweight fusible interfacing; polyfill stuffing.

WARP LENGTH

151 ends 2½ yd long for two pincushions (allows 18" for fringe, 7" for take-up, 15" for loom waste and sampling).

SETTS

Warp: 60 epi. Weft: 10 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Weaving width: 2½".
Woven length: 25" each pincushion and straps.
Finished size: 2½" × 3" each pincushion with straps
1¼" × 16½" and 5" fringe end of straps.

Tubular trim

STRUCTURE

Tubular plain weave.

YARNS

Warp and weft: 5/2 pearl cotton, Lipstick, 17 yd.

WARP LENGTH

11 ends 1½ yd long (4" take-up, 14" loom waste).

SETTS

Weft: 8-10 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

¾" × 1 yd.

INKLE-LOOM PROJECT

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AMY ABBOTT

A pincushion necklace for you or your loom

A WIDE INKLE-WOVEN BAND IS DIVIDED INTO TWO NARROWER BANDS TO MAKE HANDY HANGING STRAPS.

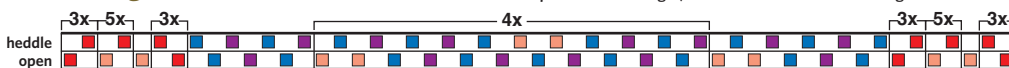
The unique split straps and the tubular inkle-woven trim make this project an interesting departure from traditional inkle bands.

1. Warp color order

	5x			8x						5x					
Ruby					2	1		1	2	1		1	2		38
Soldier Blue					2	2		1	2	2		1	2	2	49
Melon	1	1			1	1		1	1			1	1		30
Lipstick	6	1	6									6	1	6	34
															151

2. Threading

Because inkle looms are warped from left to right, read these drafts from left to right.



- For the pincushions and straps: Thread an inkle loom with 151 ends 2½ yd long following Figures 1 and 2. (Attach the heddles as you warp or after winding every inch or so, since it can be difficult to attach them to such a wide, dense warp after it is completely wound.)
- Sample first to establish width and beat (a wide band requires a very firm beat). Weave 7" for the first pincushion. To weave the straps, divide the warp in half (75 and 76 threads). Bind one half with a bit of string to keep the halves separate (photo a) and begin weaving the other half. When it's time to advance the warp, unwrap the other half and weave it using the second shuttle. When the woven halves are equal in length, advance the warp. Continue, alternating between straps until they measure 18". Allowing 9" for fringe, repeat for a second pincushion and straps. Cut the warp from the loom in the sampling area; machine stitch raw edge. To prevent tangling during finishing, braid the fringe loosely.
- For the tubular trim: Wind 11 ends Lipstick 1½ yd long. Weave a tube 1 yd long with Lipstick by always inserting the shuttle from the same side and drawing the weft up tightly.
- Handwash the pincushion/strap fabric gently in warm water with mild soap. Rinse in cool water. Roll in a towel and then dry flat. Unbraid fringe and cut apart at the bottom of the second pincushion section. For each pincushion section, cut lightweight fusible interfacing slightly smaller than the fabric and fuse to wrong sides. Trim raw edge. Turn this edge under ¾" and then fold the section in half (interfacing inside), bringing the folded edge to just below the straps. With 5/2 Lipstick, handsew sides securely, leaving the top open.
- Attach the tubular trim: Tuck one end of the inkle-woven tube into the pocket (photo b). Sew the tube to the side, bottom, and other side. Tuck the other end of the tube into the pocket. Stuff the pocket with polyfill and sew the top closed, securing the ends of the trim.
- Join the ends of the straps, making sure they hang properly. Take a bundle of 8 or 9 warp threads from each strap and tie them together firmly in a square knot, joining the edges of the straps. Continue until all warp ends are secured in this manner. Then twist the threads from each bundle into a twisted fringe and secure ends with an overhand knot.



a. When you start weaving the straps, tie off half of the warp threads to keep them separate from the side you're weaving.



b. Tuck one end of the tubing into the pincushion pocket and stitch the tubing to the pocket (down one side, across the bottom, and up the other side). Tuck the second end into the pocket, stuff the pocket, and stitch the pocket closed.

c. This project requires an inkle loom with 5" pegs or longer to accommodate such a wide band.



d. Wear the pincushion around your neck or hang it from the castle of your loom.

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