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TRAPEZE USER INSTRUCTIONS

Using a Warping Mill or warping board with the Trapeze

When using a warping mill or warping board, double check that choke ties are in place (1) at both end pegs, in four places on both the top (threading cross and the bottom (raddle) cross, and (3) every two yards along the warp length. Then with a plastic grocery bag hanging on your left arm by one handle, and holding the warp with the right hand, pull the top peg with the left hand, freeing the warp “chain” from the mill or board. Pull the warp, slowly unwinding it from the mill or warping board, and feed it hand-over-hand into the bag held by the right arm. There is no need to actually “chain” the warp like crochet, which saves a lot of time and unnecessary wear on the warp, and the warper. When the raddle cross falls off the bottom peg, tie the two bag handles together around the warp end, leaving the raddle cross exposed for inserting lease sticks. It is recommended to wind most warps into two halves, having two bags of warp attached to a set of lease sticks for carrying to the loom.

Even tension carefully built into the warp will make the beaming go smoothly, which in turn will keep that evenness intact. Tension prevents tangles. With springy linen, keeping tension on the warp during beaming is especially important. This technique gives a single pair of hands complete control for a perfectly beamed warp.

Needed equipment

In addition to the warping trapeze, you will need the following items:

1. Weights – Number required depending on width of warp; rule of thumb, one weight per foot of warp width.
Weights can be such as barbell weights, milk jugs filled with sand or water, or other objects in the range of 2-10 pounds.
2. Two large “s” hooks (the 6 ½” long, square-cornered hooks which fit 2x4s, with plastic coating on one end are perfect. (Available from Wal-Mart, Lowe’s or Home Depot)
3. A raddle to spread the warp evenly for a firm, smooth warp roll.

Begin

Set the bags of warp on the floor under the top bar of the warping trapeze. With the lease sticks in the cross of both sections, lead them up over the top bar, across the raddle teeth, and to the warp rod on the warp beam. The warp will draw out of the grocery bags as needed.

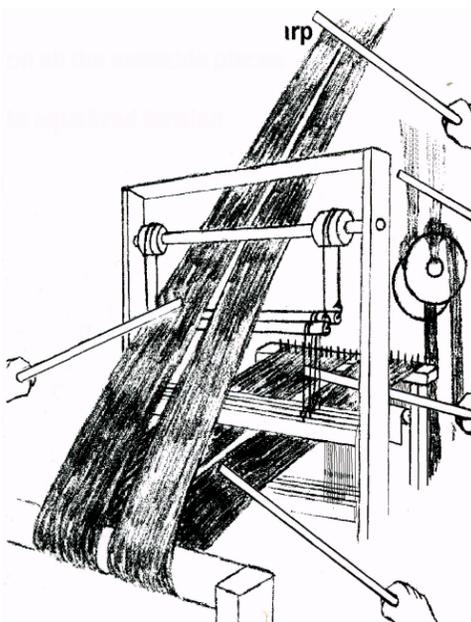
Insert the warp rod through the end loops of the warp, secure the rod to the warp beam with cords, and engage the warp beam brake. Now apply light weights for a bit of tension.

Grasp a warp “chain” about a foot above the floor where it emerges from the bag. Pull through a loop of warp in a slip knot and put the coated end of the “s” hook through the loop. Put the other end of the “s” hook through the hole in one 2 lb. Weight and ease it down till the weight is hanging on the warp. Repeat with the warp from the other bag. The working end of the warp is now under light tension. The end loops of the two warp “chains” are pulling against the warp rod on the beam, and the lease sticks are suspended between the back beam and the top rod. Now it is safe to untie (never cut) all choke ties that are visible, and time to position the raddle. If the top rod is far enough behind the loom, the warp will rub the inside edge of the back beam. This is the perfect place to set the raddle which is tied to the back beam or secured with two nails that serve as pins to hold the raddle in position.

A piece of canvas, cardboard or heavy plastic over the raddle pins will protect the warp until it is positioned in the raddle spaces. Raddle 2% - 3% wider than the width in the reed to aid good selvages. Also, start from the middle, work to one side, then work from the middle to the other side. This avoids re-counting and re-doing. Rubber bands stretched over the pegs keep the warp in it's assigned space. Working center-out has many advantages, not the least of which is increased ambidexterity, which promotes creativity.

Spanking the warp

Change from the light weights to 5 lb. or 10 lb. weights. The tension on the warp for beaming is near to the tension at which you expect to weave. With the warp tensioned by the weights, the warp spreads very quickly and the loops around the warp rod align themselves in the process, but make sure they are all straight. Before beginning to crank the warp onto the beam, it is recommended to do the first "spanking," a lovingly-done discipline that all warps seem to thrive on, with linen being especially responsive. Using a spare lease stick, a packing stick, or any smooth, flat stick 24" -30" (61 - 76 cm) long, strike the tensioned warp sharply and repeatedly over its entire width. This jiggles and vibrates every warp end, separating it from its neighbors, releasing tangles and kinks, and equalizing the tension like magic.



Spanking the weighted warp on all the available places vibrates each warp end to equalize tension

It is best to spank the space between the raddle and warp rod, then between the raddle and lease sticks, between the lease sticks and top rod and between the top rod and suspended weights. All the exposed, tensioned warp gets the spanking treatment. While spanking the warp just above the weights, fan out the warp halves over the top rod, making sure there are no twists between the weights and lease sticks. Then push the lease stick away from the raddle toward the high rod and begin cranking on the warp, inserting packing sticks all around the first revolution, then paper to build a solid and even warp package. When the lease sticks are near the raddle and the weights have been lifted near the high rod, it's time to unhook the weights, shake out the original slip knots, make new slip knot loops near the floor, and untie the newly-exposed choke ties. Insert the "s" hooks in the new slip knots, reattach the weights and spank the newly exposed warp. Slide the lease sticks up again, fan out the new warp over the high rod, spank both sides of the tensioned warp, and wind on the next length. This takes longer to say than to do. Wind on, move the weights, spank, fan, slide the lease sticks, spank and wind again. Your beamed warp will be smooth, firm and perfectly tensioned for pleasant weaving and beautiful cloth.

As the end of the warp nears, but before the end loops go over the high rod, attach 4-yard lengths of cord to each warp half, using larks head knots through the end loops, to extend the weighted tension through the last yards of the warp.

When the warp is beamed, leaving just enough to reach through the heddle eyes plus 7 inches, stop winding, unhook the weights, and untie the extension cords. With the scissors blade in the end loop, cut through the very center, then slip knot the cut warp ends, using small bundles from two to four raddle groups. If necessary, re-route the warp and lease sticks around the back side of the warp beam into proper weaving position. Suspend the lease sticks behind the heddles at heddle-eye height. You are now ready to settle on a low stool in front of the heddles and thread.

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