

Over and Under: Weaving

Warp and Weft are the two basic components used in weaving to turn yarn into fabric. The warp is the vertical lines of yarn on the loom. The weft is the yarn that is threaded over-and-under the warp to build up the fabric. The following instructions show you how to start weaving using a loom made using the instructions in the previous activity DIY Loom.



Eugenio Carmi, The Cat tapestry, late 1950s



Gio Ponti, Chairs rug, 1935

You can use any of the following

- Yarn- any colour- can be found in charity shops or pound shops
- Plastic bags- cut around the shape of the bag to get a continuous long strip.
- Old clothes cut into strips- socks are good
- Strips of recycled paper

You will need

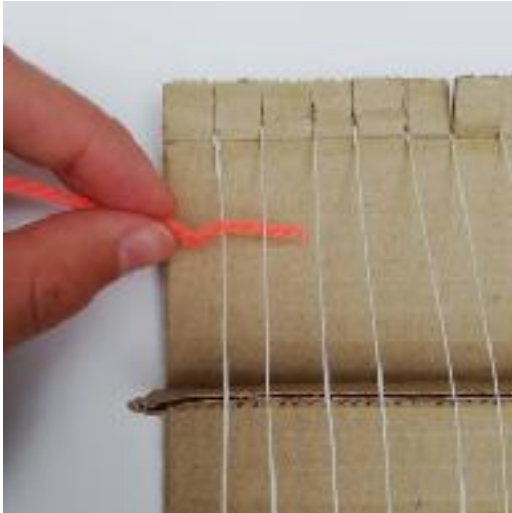
- Scissors
- Material (see above) to weave with
- Stick (see if you can find a nice one in the park)



1) Cut your material the length of both your arms stretched out (roughly a metre) to make it easier to thread it through your loom without getting in a tangle.

2) Start by taping one end to the back of your loom.

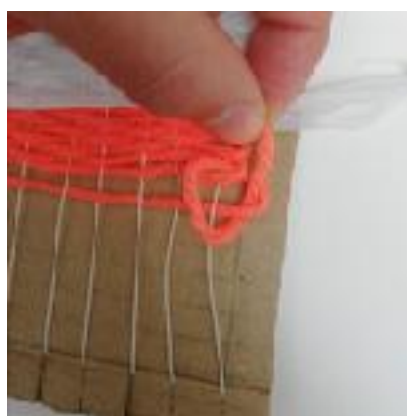
- 3) Take your yarn and thread it over and under the warp strings of your loom. You want to keep it loose so your finished weave is straight and not tucked in the middle.



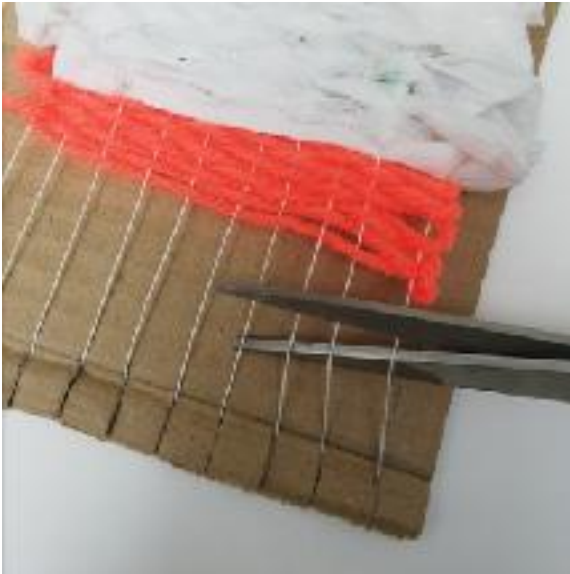
- 4) Gently push the yarn up the loom with your fingers.
- 5) Tape the end on the remaining yarn on the back of the loom. Repeat this using different yarns or materials. We used yarn and plastic bag for this weave.



- 6) When you've finished weaving carefully un-tape all your loose ends at the back. You can either knot these to the yarn above or neatly tuck them down the weave using a pencil or fork to help prod it down.



- 7) When you have filled your loom with a 1-2cm gap at the bottom you can cut your warp threads off the loom and knot them together to secure and finish your weave.



- 8) Another way to complete your weave is by gently lifting the warp threads from the top and bottom of the loom and thread a stick through the loops for the weave to hang from. Tie the two loose strings to your stick to secure it.



Top Tip: Take your time and keep your weaving loose. It's helpful to remember that it's a 3D thing rather than 2D and needs to have room to move.

Experiment: Try weaving using a variety of materials. Reclaim old clothes, paper, foil, plastic bags, plants etc.

Research: Explore fabric and objects around your home or school and observe what's been woven or not.