

Kathrin Weber Workshop – Dummy Warp

The design process starts with using a dummy warp.

Notes on Dummy Warps: A dummy warp is a warp that is threaded through the heddles and the reed and secured to the back rod but is not long enough to actually weave. We will use the dummy warps to tie onto. If you haven't used the tie on technique before, this will be another aspect you can look forward to learning. If you are not changing your threading pattern with every project, tying on can be a time saver and sight saver. For me, it is a valuable design tool, too.

How to start a dummy warp?

The easiest dummy warp is to just leave the last bit of the last warp you wove on the loom - as long as it is a stable yarn, not much bigger than an 8/4 carpet warp and it will weave a plain weave as one option.

If you are starting from scratch: Wind the dummy warp threads just long enough to set up and weave an inch or so to check for threading errors. Time spent re-threading errors will take valuable time away from your workshop experience. (You will thread your reed, your heddles, secure on the back rod. Tension onto the front rod and weave an inch or so to check for errors. In whatever order or method works best for you. Leave it that way for safe travelling.)

What to use?

Use inexpensive yarn. It needs to be small enough that it will pull through the reed and heddles after it is tied to another thread. It needs to be strong enough not to break during that action. The dummy warp will end up being loom wastage so it doesn't matter the color or fiber content as long as it is a stable yarn, not much bigger than an 8/4 carpet warp

How many?

You should have 200 to 300 threads in your dummy. Either will be adequate for the workshop. 300 will give you more options.

What threading?

The threading is entirely up to you as long as whatever you choose can be woven as a plain weave. If you are on a multi-harness loom, go ahead and use them all. A complex threading might be pretty exciting, but make sure it will weave as a STANDARD plain weave, too.

What sett?

These projects will be warp-predominant in order to showcase the hand-dyed warp yarns. You might choose to do a light weight fabric or a dense fabric. Please use a 10 or 12 dent reed. Sley the reed two threads per dent and one thread per heddle. That will mean that you have it sett at 20 epi or 24 epi. If you have other reeds, consider bringing them in case we think of something awesome that would work better in another reed size.

Don't stress over this. Keep it simple. Everything will work out great no matter what you come with. That is my Super Power. What is yours? Whatever it is, bring it with you!