

## A holiday tapestry project

with Rebecca Mezoff



Loom: Hokett loom, Lost Pond, Purl & Loop, Schacht School loom, copper pipe loom, Mirrix loom, C. Cactus Flower, any other tapestry loom upon which you can get the sett you'd like.

Warp: I used 20/6 cotton seine twine and recommend this warp above all others. It comes in many sizes (20/6 is the size designator).<sup>1</sup>

Weft: Weft for this project was fingering and lace-weight sock yarn. You need small amounts of a background color, a tree color, a decoration color, and a small bit of something for the trunk.

Substitutions: You can use whatever loom you have. But as you change how many warps are in one inch, you'll have to change the warp you use and the weft that will fit between the warps. I recommend using a warp of about 8-12 epi. Most of this sock yarn will weave at an even finer sett (like 14 epi) if you're ambitious.

### The pattern

At the end of these instructions you can find a drawing for this pattern. I recommend printing it out so you can draw it on your warp.

I wove it from bottom to top. Consider that you could weave this design sideways. This would mean that the sides of the tree could be quite smooth as you'd be forming diagonal lines instead of the steps you see when weaving it bottom to top.

I created this pattern to go with this blog post

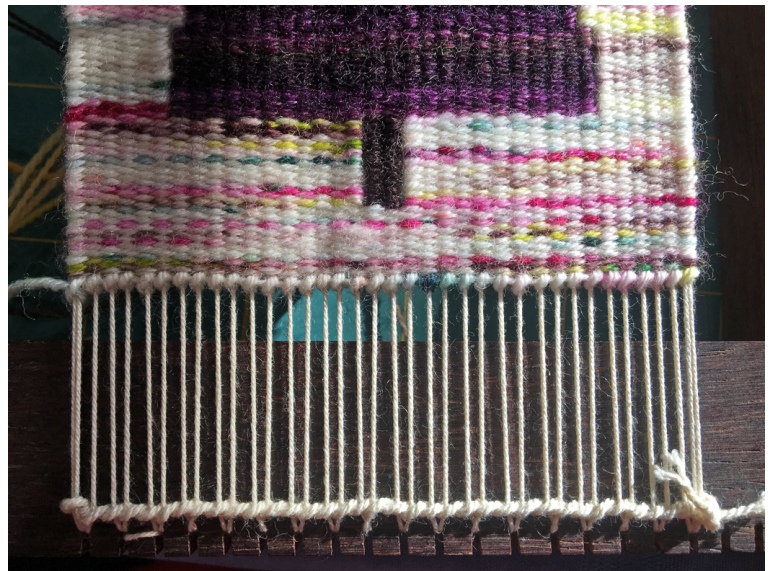
<https://rebeccamezoff.com/blog/2017/11/8/iwewsqhvyib0ds4z4sk0kc5stln0nc>

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<sup>1</sup> Cotton seine twine is a very strong warp made in Egypt and sold by Swedish yarn manufacturers. Eugene Textile Center and The Woolery are online sources in the USA. 20/6 is the thinnest warp for setts of 12 epi and higher. For wider-spaced warping consider 12/6 or 12/9.

## The instructions

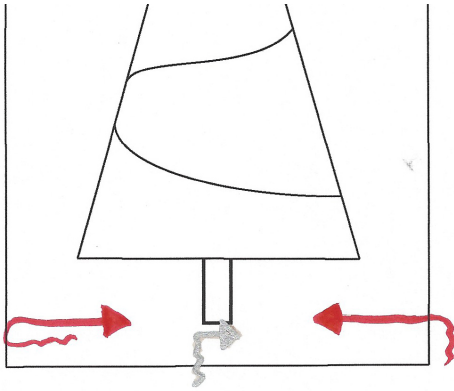
1. Print out your pattern and choose your yarns. I have included two designs depending on what sett you have chosen, 8 epi or 12 epi.
2. Warp your loom at the sett you have decided to use. If your sett is 8 epi, you can double the sock yarn as you weave. In my example, I have warped an intermediate 6-dent Hokett loom doubled at 12 epi. I also like to double the selvedge warp.
3. I like to draw my cartoon right on the warp. On a Hokett loom, I put the drawing behind the warp and using a black Sharpie, I put a dot on each warp thread as it crosses the line on the pattern. Without these indications right on the warp, it is difficult to match the shape accurately. (Be careful with permanent markers. They are not all permanent and if you're using a light-colored weft, the marker could bleed through your yarn when you steam or finish the piece.)
4. In the photo below, you can see that I have done a row of twining at the very bottom of the warp with a fatter warp thread (you could use any sort of thicker yarn or twine if you don't have some fatter warp. If need be, double the 20/6 warp and twine that way). This twining helps evenly space the warp before I start weaving. It is optional and on some looms you won't need it.



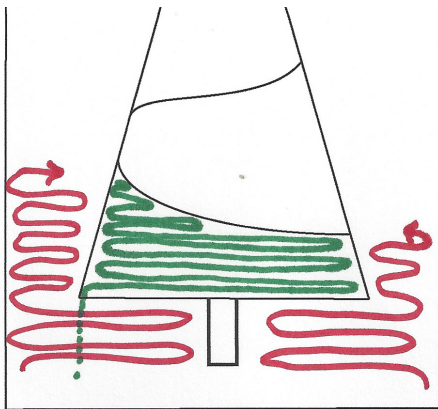
5. Make some kind of a header. In this example, I have made a simple double half-hitch header with the weft yarn at the bottom. I pulled it quite tight but if you're worried about those knots sliding, you could include a row of the same double half-hitch using a strong thread such as Coats and Clark upholstery thread. If you don't know how to make this double half-hitch knot, I have put a free video on my Vimeo site which shows you how to tie it.

(<https://vimeopro.com/user22938426/rebecca-mezoff-tapestry-videos>)

6. Start your weaving! I started with a little over  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of plain weaving.
7. When you are ready to add the tree trunk, you'll need to add another butterfly of your background color plus one butterfly of the trunk color. Continue weaving until your trunk is as long as you'd like. I made mine short enough that I didn't have to sew the slit on the trunk. If you want to sew that slit, there is a video of how I do that in the Vimeo portfolio linked above. (Yes, I know that these arrows don't show meet and separate being maintained. The trunk is straight with slits, so this doesn't matter. If you're using joins, it might. At the end of the weaving I want the two background colors to remain in meet and separate. In fact you can start the piece with two butterflies moving in meet and separate and it'll work for the whole weaving. If none of that made sense, that is just fine! You can ignore it.)



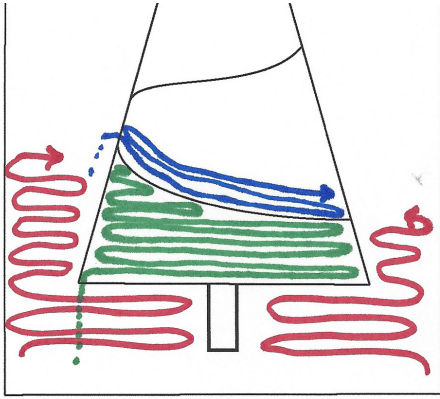
8. At the top of the trunk, drop the trunk color and start the color you are using for the tree. I used a deep purple, so don't tell me it has to be green! The background colors will continue as set up. As you weave the tree shape, you'll decrease the width to create the vertical triangle.
9. I used an eccentric outline for the yellow streamers on the tree. If you want to do this you'll need to build up the shape of the tree under that first line. Like this:



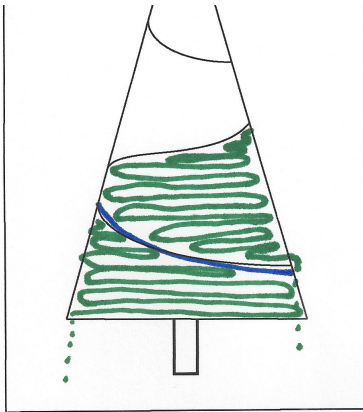
At a fine sett like 12 epi, you'll need many sequences to build up that curve (many more than I was able to indicate in this drawing).

10. After building up the curve, you'll do an eccentric outline. With the thin Julie Spins lace-weight yarn I was using for the yellow, I had to do 3-4 sequences to make the line thick enough. Weave along the curve until you get a thick enough line to suit you. Make sure to bubble a lot more when laying in an

eccentric outline (a weft pick that does not run perpendicular to the warp).



11. Continue filling in the tree color. You'll want to return to weaving perpendicular to the warp, so start where the shape is lowest and build back up until your weaving line is perpendicular to your warp.

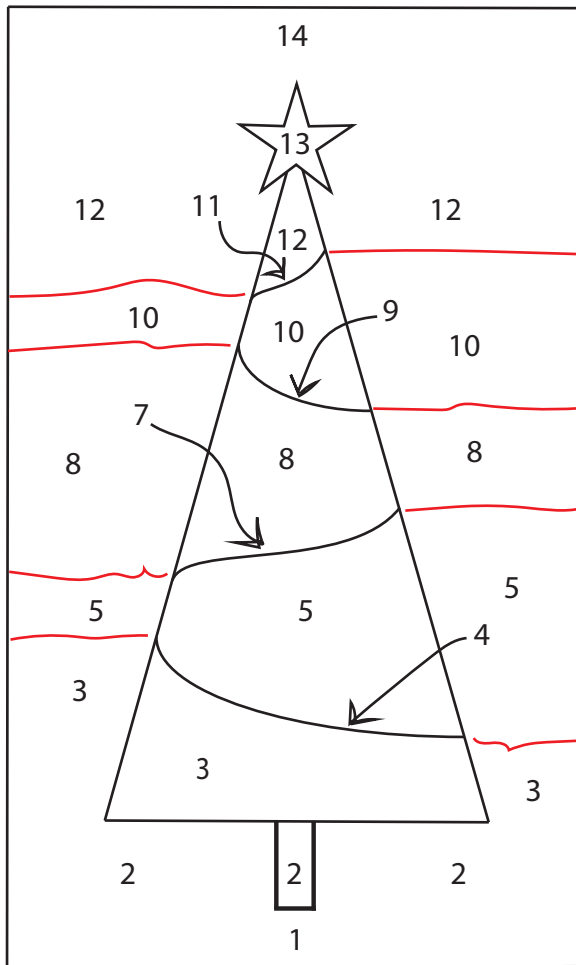


12. Weave each successive tree decoration like the first.
13. The star: I will admit that this shape is not easy to weave and you may want to just leave it off if it seems too challenging. My star is but an approximation of a 5-pointed star and with the busy background, you can't really tell that it isn't perfect. Alternate tree toppers could be used—a round shape perhaps imitating a ball of light? Do your best or leave it off. It is much easier to make it star-shaped at the smaller sett (12 epi versus 8 epi).
14. Finish the weaving with the background color. At the top do another header like you did at the beginning.
15. Finishing: A gentle steaming does wonders for wool pieces woven on cotton warps. Be careful with this if you have used yarns that are of various fiber contents however. They can shrink differently. I like to Cut the fringe with a rotary cutter and ruler to get it nice and even, but scissors will also work. You can mount your piece on paper or fabric. For more information on mounting see this blog post: <https://rebeccamezoff.com/blog/2017/10/12/how-to-mount-small-tapestries-so-they-look-great-and-sell-well>.

## Order to weave the shapes

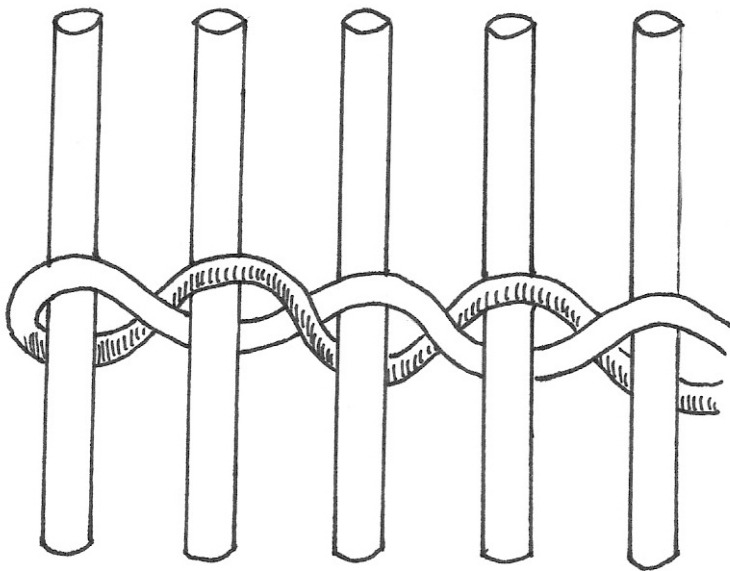
Tapestry weaving should build like a brick wall. You should never weave a shape in the middle of a warp. This is unsound practice and will result in a textile that is not stable over time. In tapestry weaving, always start at the bottom. The header provides a firm foundation for your weaving and everything should build upwards from there.

This diagram illustrates the order in which you should weave the shapes included in this project. Somehow #6 went missing. When you get to the star, you'll have to weave bits of the background underneath the points that are going right and left. Shapes underneath must be woven first.



## Resources

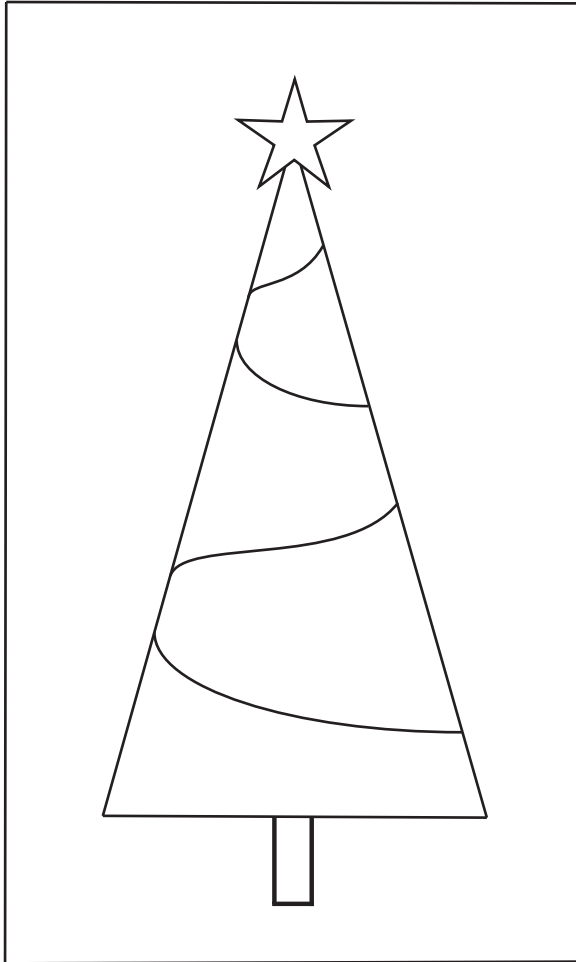
- Weaving Tapestry on Little Looms. This online course shows you all the tricks to weaving small things like this on a variety of small tapestry looms. Find out more on my website here: <http://www.rebeccamezoff.com/weaving-tapestry-on-little-loom/>
- YouTube: I have a channel with many free videos. Find it here: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChjPnwX7yFjsdzEC\\_bznjWQ?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChjPnwX7yFjsdzEC_bznjWQ?view_as=subscriber)
- The blog. I have talked a lot about tapestry weaving in the ten years I've been writing this blog. Use the search bar to find what interests you. <http://www.rebeccamezoff.com/blog/>
- The American Tapestry Alliance. This organization is well worth belonging to. They also have lots of free information on their website. Start with the Artist Pages and the Education tab. <https://americantapestryalliance.org/>
- There is a great tapestry group on Ravelry. If you use Rav, check out the group "Tapestry Weaving." If you don't use Ravelry, it is free and there is a lot of great collaboration happening there.
- Diagram for twining. Cut a piece of warp 3 times the width of your warp and fold it in half. That middle fold is what will start your twining and is what you see on the left side of the diagram below. The two threads are crossed once between each warp. Put the thread in front behind the next warp thread and cross it over the one still laying in front. Then put the one in front behind the next. The two threads will alternate all the way across the warp. If you're in the online classes, there are videos showing this.



# Holiday Tree Design

Rebecca Mezoff

Design for weaving at 12 epi.



Design for weaving at 8 epi.

