

Full On Coasters

a workshop project by Liz Gipson



Coaster Specs

Yarn

2 colors of worsted- or DK-weight non-superwash wool, something that shrinks in the wash.

Tools Rigid-heddle loom with at least an 8" weaving width; 8-dent rigid heddle; 1 shuttle.

Warp Yardage 65 yd

Weft Yardage 40 yd

Warp Length 40" (allows for 21" loom waste; add 8" for each additional coaster)

Warp Ends 56

Width in Rigid Heddle/Reed 7"

EPI (Ends Per Inch)/Sett 8

PPI (Picks Per Inch) 7-8

Finished Size Two 4" square coasters



Using a variegated warp, and different colors in the weft, is a way to get a lot of color in your weave without a lot of extra work.

Fulled fabrics are addicting. You get all the fun of learning to weave, and then you throw the fabric in the washing machine to hide any of the imperfections you may be fussing over. To finish them, all you have to do is cut the fabric in the shape you want. Shown here are coasters, but you can also make cup cozies, scarves, or even slippers, using this technique. Try adding decorative fringes such as beading, or the blanket stitch, for a bit of extra flourish. (See Words to Know on page 2 for the difference between “fulling and “felting”).

Warping Following the project specs, warp the loom as follows: Center the warp in the rigid heddle for 7". Using the direct warping method demonstrated in class, thread slots for 7". Wind the warp on the back beam, adding packing paper between the layers. Move one thread in each slot to a hole to its left. Tie the warp on the front apron rod and adjust for even tension.

Weaving Wind the shuttle with your weft yarn.

To give yourself a good foundation and to spread the warp, start by weaving about 1½" of weft until the gaps formed by tying on the apron rod are closed. You can leave your weft tail hanging free.

(With projects that aren't being fulled, you will want to incorporate your tails into the cloth while on the loom and weave a header using a smooth yarn that stands out from your project and is easy to remove.)

This will begin the start of your first coaster. Each coaster takes about 8" of woven cloth, the fabric shrinks a little bit more in the length than width.

Continue weaving, maintaining your weft angle and advancing often. Press the yarn gently as you weave to maintain a consistent number of picks per inch.

You can weave each coaster with a different color—try swapping colors with your fellow classmates.

Keep weaving until it is hard to get a clean shed. While the fabric is still on the loom, you can leave the tail hanging free.

Finishing Remove the fabric from the loom by cutting the warp behind the heddle, then untie the warp from the front apron rods. You want to leave your fringe about 4" long so it helps keep the weft in place in the wash.

Washing Machine wash on the gentle cycle with a towel. Lay flat to dry. Cut the fringe from the fabric—it will be a gnarly mess. If the weft is working itself free from the fabric, you may need to run it through the washing machine again. Cut the coasters into about 4" squares.

WORDS TO KNOW

For more weaving terms and rigid-heddle resources, visit yarnworker.com.

Beat The act of pressing the yarn into place with the rigid heddle.

Ends per inch (epi) The number of yarns in an inch of warp.

Felting/Fulling Felting and fulling are terms that are used interchangeably, technically, they are separate processes. Felting refers to fusing fiber. Fulling refers to fusing fabric.

Header Waste yarn that is woven at the beginning of a project to spread the warp to its full width, and to provide a firm even surface to start your weaving.

Picks per inch (ppi) The number of weft yarns in an inch of weaving.

Rigid-heddle A piece of the loom comprised of molded plastic forms held rigid by two wooden supports, forming a slot/hole configuration.

Selvedge The edge of woven cloth.

Sett The spacings of the warp yarns in the rigid-heddle.

Shed The open space created when the rigid-heddle is lifted or lowered. Think of it as the place that shelters the weft.

Shot One pass of the weft also referred to as a "pick".

Shuttle Used to store weft yarn and designed to easily pass through a shed. There are many different types of shuttles. Stick shuttles are the most common shuttles used in rigid-heddle weaving, but there are also boat, belt, tapestry, rag, end-delivery, and rug shuttles.

Warp The yarns held taut on the loom.