

Weaver's Bandana

a square scarf for neck and head

by Liz Gipson



Weaver's Bandana worn by Graciela Garcia, friend and fellow weaver.

When my mom was diagnosed with cancer and was facing a short round of chemo, I started looking for a chemo cap to gift her. Then I thought, "Wait, why not weave one?" The cotton yarn used in this scarf makes it unbelievably soft and conforms to the head nicely. The long fringe provides additional coverage at the neck (see page 4). I wrote this pattern to weave two scarves, one in plain weave and the other in pick-up lace. They can be worn separately or make a great combo worn together. I gift this pattern to anyone out there who is or has a loved one facing this kind of treatment or simply needs a little bit of comfort and joy.

Scarf Specs

Yarn

Warp: Caterpillar Variegated Cotton from Cotton Clouds, 100% cotton, 743 yd (680 m)/7 oz (200g) cone in Berries.

Weft: 8/2 Aurora Earth from Cotton Clouds, 100% unmercerized cotton, 890 yd (814m) /4 oz (200 g) spool in Beauty Rose (#24).

See page 3 for kit information.

Structure Plain Weave with pick-up lace option.

Tools Rigid-heddle loom with at least a 22" weaving width and 12-dent rigid heddle, 2 shuttles, optional: 25" pick-up stick.

Warp 590 yd

Weft 303 yd

Warp Length 82" (allows for 38" loom waste, 32" of this will be used to work the fringe. See page 4 for more details.)

Warp Ends 259

Width In Reed 21½"

EPI (Ends Per Inch) 12

PPI (Picks Per Inch) 10

Finished Size Two scarves, plain weave version 19" by 19" with 5" fringe; spot version 17¾" by 19" with 5" fringe.

Warping Warp the loom so both selvages are in a slot.

If using the direct method, use more than one warping peg. This allows the warp yarn to travel a relatively straight path between the rigid-heddle loom and the peg, avoiding any foreshortening that can happen with steep angles.

If you only have one peg, line up the peg with the first third of your warp, wind that section, then remove it from the peg, cut the loops, and secure the warp with an overhand knot. Reposition the peg for each of the next two sections and repeat.

If using the indirect method that utilizes a choke tie to secure the warp to the front beam while threading, wind the warp in three separate sections. After winding, work each section separately by securing the first section to the front beam so it is aligned with the first third of the weaving width in the reed, then thread that section. Repeat with the next two sections. This allows the yarn to travel in a relatively straight line from beam to heddle.

Weaving Wind one shuttle with the weft and one with scrap yarn. Start by weaving about 1½" of scrap yarn to spread the warp. You need at least 8" of warp length to work the full fringe. If you used less than this to tie on and spread the warp, weave a few more inches of scrap.

Leaving a tail 5 times the width of your warp, weave 1" of the pattern (see below), then work a row of [hemstitching](#) around two warp ends and two weft picks.

Plain Weave Version

Weave 22" of plain weave and work another row of hemstitching at the end of the first scarf.

Leave 16" of open warp between scarves. This will allow enough warp length to work the fringe on both scarves.

If necessary, use additional packing material on the front beam when packing the unwoven section of the warp. After advancing about 14", insert a 2" cardboard spacer to give you something to beat

against and weave a few picks of scrap yarn to build a foundation for the next scarf. If you don't have a single strip of cardboard 22" wide, you can use more than one piece and overlap them across the width of the warp. Remove the spacer after weaving 4 or 5" inches of the next scarf.

Weave a second scarf as you did the first or use the lace versopm.

Pick-Up Lace Version

Starting in the down position weave four picks of plain weave (down, up, down, up).

Charge the Pick-Up Stick

With the heddle *in the down position*, pick up across the warp as follows: *2 down, 2 up, repeat across the warp from *. End with 2 down. (Use units of 8 ends to increase or decrease the weaving width.)



To create a warp float, place the heddle in the up position. Then slide the pick-up stick to the back of the rigid heddle. In the directions, this position is called "up and pick-up stick."

Weave the following pick-up pattern for 22":

1. down
2. up and pick-up stick
3. down
4. up and pick-up stick
5. down
6. up

End with 3 picks plain weave. Note, you are borrowing the last "up" from the pattern repeat to create 4 plain weave picks to mirror the start of your scarf.

Work a row of hemstitching.

Finishing Remove the scarf from the loom, preserving as much warp length as possible. Cut the scarves apart.

I recommended securing the fringe in some way. The soft cotton warp yarn has a tendency to puff out in the wash.

In the plain weave version, I tied two warp ends together with an overhand knot 5¼" from the edge of the scarf. This preserved the look of open fringe while also securing the ends.

For the lace scarf, I worked a classic twisted fringe. I worked my fringe over 4 ends. Because there is

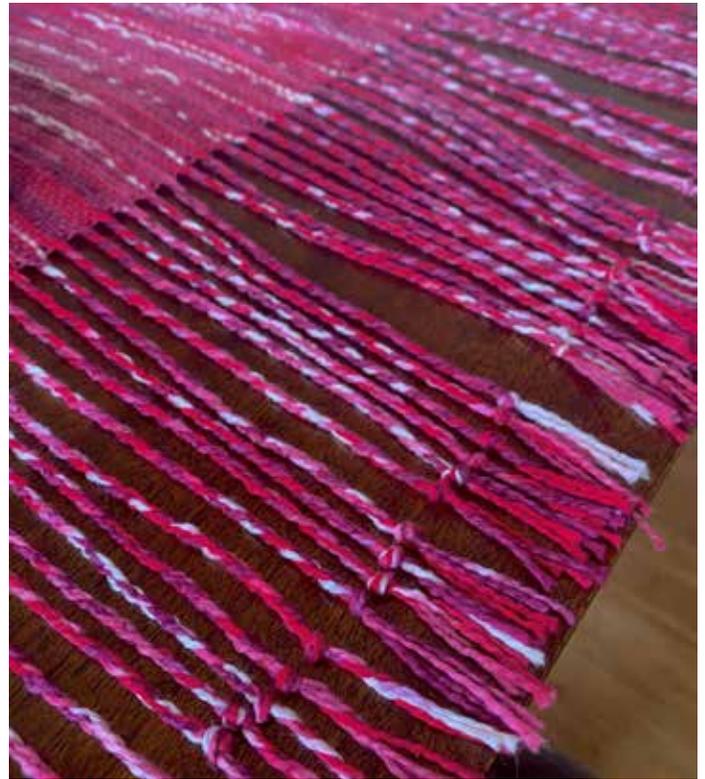
an odd number of total warp ends, one fringe will be worked with an odd number. I work this fringe an inch or two from the edge so as not to call attention to it.

Divide your chosen number of ends in half. In my case, I had 2 ends in each section. Twist each section separately in the direction of the ply twist. Hold both ends together and then twist in the opposite direction. In both cases, I generally twist enough so the yarn just begins to kink back on itself. Secure with an overhand knot.

Don't be overly concerned about lining up your knots. The scarf is worn so their alignment won't show that much.



To secure the ends and keep them from fraying, either tie a knot (above) at your desired fringe length or work a twisted fringe (at right). For the twisted version, hemstitching isn't strictly necessary, but it will keep your yarns tidy at the fell of the cloth. In both cases, I use a comb to align the fringe before working.



The warp yarn used in this is made of unmercerized cotton, a fine core yarn is spun with a thin strip of sliver to create a spiral yarn. The weft yarn is a classic 8/2 unmercerized cotton. The combination makes a pretty dreamy fabric that is cool to the touch, insulating, and breathable, a nice combination of qualities for a chemo scarf.



The pattern offers two variations on a single warp (bottom left). A classic plain weave version combining a variegated color with a coordinating solid creating a watercolor effect. The pick-up pattern combined with this yarn and sett selection creates a nice texture without leaving too many gaps in the cloth. The floats highlight the variegated yarn, making it pop out just a bit more. [Cotton Clouds has kitted a number of color combinations](#) with convenient 2 oz cones of weft. This put-up is not typically available. No affiliate link here, just something to make weaving the pattern a little easier.

For other finishing ideas and photos on working a twisted fringe, check out my [Winter 2015 Knitty column](#).

Washing Using mild soap, machine wash on the gentle cycle with a small towel or t-shirt to keep the long fringe from intermingling; alternatively you can use a lingerie bag. A bag is particularly helpful if your machine has a central agitator.

Machine dry on low heat for 10 minutes, and then lay flat to dry, straightening the fringe to prevent kinking.

Trim ends of fringe to a uniform length.

A Few Thoughts on Fitting

To wear the scarf, fold it in half to form a triangle. Use the points of the triangle to tie it around the neck or head.

Use these measurements and shrinkage amounts to adjust the warp width or length to suit your needs.

When folded, the scarf measures about 30" wide. My head circumference measures about 22". This leaves about 8" to tie the scarf, which is plenty of length for my head. (My mom is a similar size.)

Keep in mind that you can also use some of the fringe length to secure the scarf.

The plain weave version shrinks about 8% in the width, while the lace version takes up a bit more, about 12%. The length take-up is about the same at 14%.

The warp length was determined using the following logic:

- 6" to tie on
- 2" to spread the warp
- 22" for first scarf
- 16" for intermediate fringe
- 22" for second scarf
- 14" for loom waste behind the heddle

At some point, it is a good idea to do a [loom waste](#)

[audit](#) to determine how much loom waste you actually need. If you think you will use more than what is outlined here, increase the warp lengths appropriately. When weaving multiple projects on a single warp, it is always a bummer to run out. ♻️



The scarves can be worn separately or as a combo. Shown here is the lace version worn on the head and the plain weave version around the neck.



Liz Gipson is the host of the [Yarnworker School](#), a community-funded, online weaving school for rigid-heddle weavers. She hosts free quarterly weave-alongs and offers classes to hone your skills. To discover more resources for rigid-heddle weavers, visit her website at [yarnworker.com](#)