

London Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers



Information Sheet: Weaving

The Guild meets once a month on a Saturday afternoon at St Stephen's, 48 Emperor's Gate, London SW7 4HJ. As well as general information, news and a textile-related lecture there is a small library and a notice board.

We don't run courses but there is a weaving group which meets four times a year in the morning before the main meeting to study different weave structures, explore techniques, show work done, and share tips and information on suppliers, materials and anything that's going on in the world of weaving.

What is weaving?

There are various different kinds of weaving. Tapestry weaving is generally quite artistic, low on essential equipment costs, quick to set up, and relatively slow to do. It's regarded as quite different from loom weaving and it's not covered here; we have a separate information sheet on it.

Rigid heddle weaving is the most straightforward form of loom weaving. In its simplest form you only have a choice of two "sheds", ie possibilities of how you pattern the weft threads (the crosswise threads) through the warp (lengthwise) threads, so it's great for playing with colour and texture. It's also relatively cheap to buy a rigid heddle loom.

The next step up is shaft weaving, either on a table loom or floor loom. Some looms have four shafts but most people these days start with eight shafts. The more shafts you have, the more pattern possibilities are open to you. The shafts may be raised by hand (on a table loom), by foot-operated treadles (on a floor loom), or by mechanical or electronic means (on a dobby loom).

How do I learn?

Workshops and classes

Far and away the best way to begin to learn is by taking a workshop or class. The following are the main places in London (or accessible to London) where you can learn to weave. There are other teachers around the country.

The Handweavers Studio

140 Seven Sisters Rd, London N7 7NS

Tel: 020 7272 1891

www.handweavers.co.uk

One-day workshops on rigid-heddle weaving and four-day courses (over two weekends) on shaft loom weaving are held several times a year, taught by Dawn Willey. There are also weekly classes, both daytime and evening, taught by Charlotte Grierson, Bobbie Kociejowski, and Taslima Sultana.

Weavers Unlimited

www.facebook.com/WeaversUnlimited/

Weekly classes near Clapham Junction, taught by Brenda Gibson.

bjg@brendagibson.com

Kingston Adult Education

King Charles Centre, Surbiton

www.kingston.gov.uk/adulteducation

Weekly classes on Tuesday mornings or afternoons, taught by Jan Rumball.

Chesham Weavers

White Hill Centre, Chesham

<http://cheshamweavers.weebly.com/about.html>

Weekly classes on Wednesday mornings and/or afternoons, taught by Bobbie Kociejowski.

Janet Phillips

<http://www.janetphillips-weaving.co.uk/>

One to four day courses throughout the year. In Somerset, but many people travel from London to study with Janet.

Online Resources

Tutorials

There are a lot of video clips, especially on YouTube, demonstrating various parts of the handweaving process. These are not generally a good learning tool (and some of them are downright bad). But if you do decide to go this route, it's important to pick a series made by the same person so that all the parts of the process are compatible - if you try to mix and match, they probably won't match!

A good basic series is *Weaving with Jette: Weaving Basics*, <https://www.youtube.com/user/weavingwithjette>

If you simply want a good general overview of weaving and the preparatory steps, go to YouTube and search for [Brenda Gibson Weaving Film](#).

Social media and online communities

Facebook has quite a number of weaving groups. Most are closed and you have to apply to join, but that's simply an anti-spamming measure and they can be very welcoming and a great resource for problem-solving, including helping with weaving software queries.

www.facebook.com

Ravelry is a site for knitters, crocheters, weavers and anyone who works with yarns, to share ideas, tips and projects.

www.ravelry.com

Weavolution is specifically for weavers.

www.weavolution.com

Other online resources

There is a wonderful repository of weaving books and patterns at www.handweaving.net. This is a free resource (although if you need to pay a small annual fee if you want to download files).

Some popular suppliers

The Handweavers Studio

140 Seven Sisters Rd, London N7 7NS
Tel: 0207 272 1891

www.handweavers.co.uk

Bricks & mortar shop and also online. Very extensive range of yarns and equipment.

George Weil / Fibercrafts

www.georgeweil.com

Online supplier of equipment and yarns.

Frank Herring & Sons

27 High West St, Dorchester DT1 1UP

www.frankherringandsons.com/

Bricks & mortar craft shop and online supply of weaving equipment and yarns.

Books

These are some of the books beginning weavers generally find most useful. Some may be out of print but you will quite likely find secondhand copies.

Jane Patrick

Weaver's Idea Book: Inventive Cloth on a Rigid Heddle Loom

Syne Mitchell

Inventive Weaving on a Little Loom

Peggy Osterkamp

Weaving for Beginners: An Illustrated Guide

Debroah Chandler

Learning to Weave

Marguerite Porter Davison

A Handweaver's Pattern Book

Anne Dixon

Handweaver's Pattern Book

Margo Selby

Contemporary Weaving Patterns

(also called *Colour and Texture in Weaving*)

Magazines and journals

Väv Magazine

A Scandinavian weaving magazine, published quarterly (in English), with articles and weaving projects.
<http://en.xn--vvmagasinet-l8a.se/shop/>

Handwoven

Published quarterly by Interweave Press in the US, mainly focusing on weaving projects.

The Journal for Weavers Spinners and Dyers

Published quarterly by the (UK) Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers.
www.thejournalforwsd.org.uk/

P & M Woolcraft

www.pmwoolcraft.co.uk

Online equipment supplier.

The Loom Exchange

www.theloomexchange.co.uk

The place to look for preloved equipment.

Uppingham Yarns

www.wools.co.uk/index.php

Online yarn supplier of yarn of all sorts on cones.

William Hall & Co

<http://www.williamhallyarns.com/>

Online and mail order yarn supplier, especially of Swedish linen and cotton.