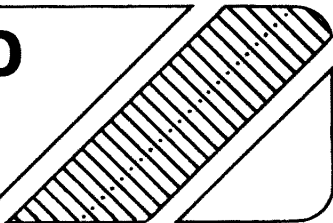


# THE RIGID HEDDLE



## INLAID WEAVES by Karen Searle

Inlay, also known as laid-in, brocading and embroidery weaving, is a very versatile technique for the frame loom weaver. It works on any warp at any sett, although its appearance on a 5 epi fabric is drastically different than on a balanced weave fabric.

An inlaid fabric is a plain weave fabric decorated by using a second, or supplementary weft in pattern areas only (discontinuous) or from selvage to selvage (continuous—i.e. the pick up weaves). The supplementary weft is usually put into the same shed with the tabby weft, although in the more complex inlay weaves, it follows a different path. The one common characteristic of both simple and complex inlay weaves is that the tabby weft sequence is never interrupted. If you were to pull out all of the pattern threads, an undisturbed tabby weave cloth would be left.

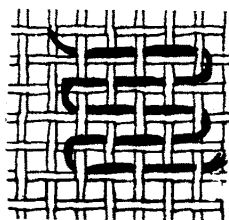
### Materials

Balanced weaves are most effective as backgrounds for inlay. Both warp and weft should be of the same material, such as linen, cotton, linnay, or weaving wool. The pattern yarns should be just thick enough to fill in the "holes" in the weave and soft enough to beat down without distorting the lines of the plain weave ground. It takes some experimenting to arrive at just the right combination of yarns. Knitting yarns, Persian yarn and Lopi-type yarns work out well as pattern yarns. Several strands of fine yarn often pack more easily than a single strand of thicker yarn. Novelty yarns and handspuns are ideal for giving texture to inlaid areas. Use a butterfly or a one-yard strand of pattern yarn for each motif to be inlaid.

### To weave plain-weave Inlay:

First, weave the ground-cloth's tabby pick. Then, in the same shed, insert the pattern yarn. (In weaving a design with several discontinuous patterns across the warp, it is less confusing to have all shuttles and butterflies moving in the same direction across each row.)

Plain weave inlay — supplementary weft in the same shed with ground weave pick



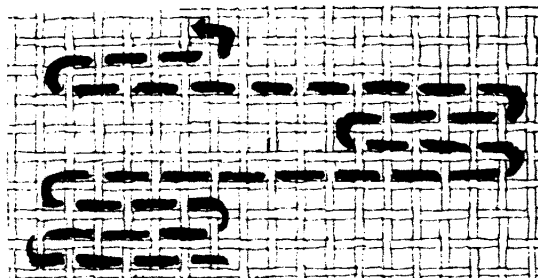
Where the pattern weft turns to come back in the next inlay row, a small loop is formed. These turns show on one side of the fabric only. If the turns are very obvious, you may wish to use the other side of the fabric as the right side.

### Variations

Plain weave inlay cloths are found the world over, but many areas have developed their own special variations on the theme.

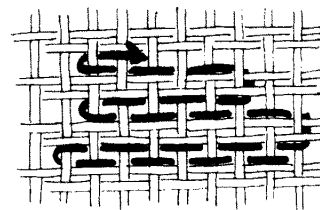
1. French style inlay is used with staggered pattern motifs. The butterfly moves from one motif to the next across the warp, and the resulting horizontal lines add interest to the design.

French style inlay — pattern motifs are connected



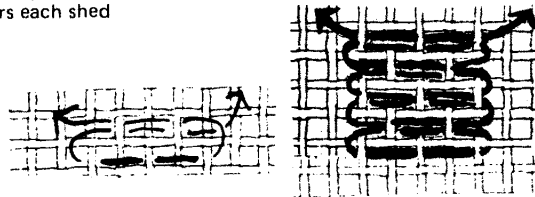
2. A Scandinavian variation (although I have seen this in Peruvian textiles as well) weaves two rows of pattern weft (one in the same shed with the ground weave, one in the next), then weaves two rows of tabby (one in the same shed with the inlay, one in the next). An interesting striping effect is produced.

Scandinavian variation — two supplementary weft picks and two ground weave picks



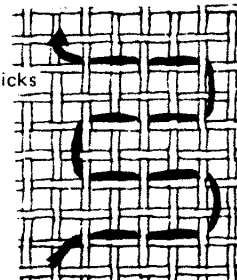
3. Italian style uses a double-ended pattern weft. Both ends are placed into every shed, forming turns at each edge of each row to emphasize the outline of the shape being woven. This method is useful for a very bold effect.

Italian style inlay — double ended supplementary weft enters each shed



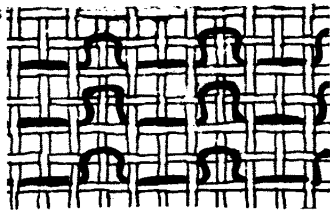
4. A fourth variation, seen in Guatemalan rugs, is an inlay placed in every other plain weave shed. The pattern area takes on a vertical striping effect with this method. If you are an experimenter, try this one in French and Italian style, too. Inlay in every third or fourth plain weave shed is another possibility.

Guatemalan variation — two ground weave picks after each supplementary weft



5. A Greek variation on the inlay theme is loop inlay. This is really inlay in every other plain weave shed, with the addition of loops being pulled up from the pattern weft at regular intervals. A knitting needle or pencil can be used to keep the

Loop inlay — loops of supplementary weft pulled up between top layer warps



While we're mentioning variations on plain weave inlay, remember that soumak and rya are actually supplementary weft weaves and can be used in your inlay pieces to give textural interest.

So far, we have only covered plain weave inlay. The complex inlay weaves include the continuous inlay designs or pick up weaves, and free float designs. For more information on these weaves, consult the "Telas de los Muertos" article elsewhere in this issue, and the bibliography below, and keep in mind the Brocades class offered each year at the Guild.

#### Designing for Inlay

Plain weave inlay designs may be charted on graph paper, with each vertical row of squares representing a warp end, and each horizontal row representing a weft row—read the lines as tabby weft and the spaces as pattern weft. Charted cross stitch and needlepoint designs are a ready source of patterns to weave.

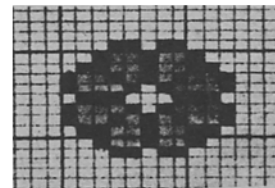
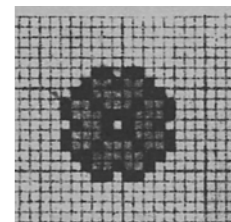
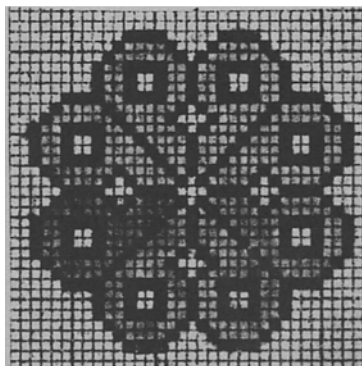
Another option in designing an inlay project is to make an actual size cartoon of the image(s) to be woven, as in tapestry weaving, and follow its lines with the pattern weft as you weave.

A very effective device often used in inlaid wall hangings is the contrast between a very sheer tabby background and dense pattern areas. 10/2 or 12/2 linen can be used for the ground fabric at 10 epi, and Persian yarns or yarn of similar thickness and softness used to achieve the density of the design areas. Finer linens or cottons used with the 16 epi heddle, and embroidery floss or similar weight material in pattern areas will create the same effect on a more delicate scale.

Designs that make use of negative and positive space, or the overlapping of shapes or color areas are especially effective when woven in an inlay technique.

#### References:

- Baizerman-Searle, Latin American Brocades
- Black, Mary, New Key To Weaving
- Hoppe, Ostlund & Melen, Free Weaving
- Ica-Forlaget, Small Webs
- Tidball, Harriet, Brocades
- Wilson, Jean, Weaving is Creative



**NEEDLES GALORE, INC.**  
**DIAMONDHEAD MALL**  
**230 W. BURNSVILLE PKWY.**  
**BURNSVILLE, MN. 55337**  
**890-6110**

Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. weekdays,  
9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturdays

## **NEEDLEPOINT CLASSES**

**Starting in mid-February.**

**Call for information.**

**New Unger yarns: Cozy & Kurlie**