

Spaced and Felted Scarf

Jane Patrick

Fabric Description: Spaced warps and wefts, plain weave, felted.

Finished Size: 5 1/2" x 72".

Equipment: Cricket Loom, 2 10" stick shuttles, 2 1" x 10" strips of cardboard.

Warp and Weft: Brown Sheep's Nature Spun Sport weight Wool (184 yards per ball). 2 balls of different colors. Any similar size wool yarn that felts will work.

Warp Length: 3 yards, which allows 18" loom waste and take-up. If you are weaving on a floor loom, you should allow another 12", or whatever you generally allow (you may need another ball of yarn of each color).

Width in Reed: 9".

Total warp ends: 50 (30 color A and 20 color B).

Ends per inch: 10-dent rigid heddle reed.

Threading Guide:

Color A	10 ends				10 ends				10 ends
Color B			10 ends				10 ends		
Open		Skip 10 spaces							

Note: in a rigid heddle reed, you will either thread or skip both slots and holes, for a width of 1".

Weaving: Weave a balanced weave. That is, weave as many weft rows (or picks) per inch as warp threads per inch. In this project, ten picks per inch should give a balanced weave. The spaces between the warp and weft threads should be square. If there is any unevenness in the weaving, it will be masked when the fabric is felted. This is one of the reasons this project is so great for beginners. Once you have it woven and felted no one will ever know if your selvages were uneven or your beat somewhat irregular.

Weave in this way for the length of the scarf: weave an inch, leave an inch unwoven, weave an inch, leave an inch unwoven, and so on. I alternated stripes of color A and color B throughout. To leave an inch unwoven, I inserted a 1" strip of cardboard the width of the weaving and then wove the next inch and inserted a second strip of cardboard. After weaving the next inch, I took out the first cardboard strip and inserted it in the shed, in essence leapfrogging the two pieces of cardboard between each inch of weaving. You can also just eyeball the distance.

Weave until you can't weave any longer. Your weaving will seem overly long, but once it is washed, it will shrink about 20% in length and about 50% in width.

Finishing: Remove the fabric from the loom and carefully lay it out on a table or floor. Trim all weft tails to about 1" (if you leave them too long, they will mat and felt into the scarf). I recommend a twisted, fairly short fringe. I left my fringe too long and it matted up more than I had hoped.

Felting the Scarf: If you've ever accidentally thrown your beloved wool sweater in the washing machine and found that what went in a size 12 came out a size 6, then you're an experienced, if accidental, felter. This is what you are going to do to your scarf—on purpose. To prepare the scarf for washing, roll it up in cotton dish towels, being careful not to let it bunch up on itself. Make sure that there is a layer of towel between each layer of scarf, otherwise the parts will felt together. When you reach the end, make sure you have the entire end of the scarf contained within the towel. Tie the bundle in several places with string and place in a laundry bag. Wash the scarf bundle on the hot water setting in your washing machine. I used a front-load washing machine and didn't check it during the wash. For top-load machines, I suggest you use a gentle cycle and check your scarf mid-way through the cycle as top-load machines are a bit less gentle and the felting process can happen quite quickly. Once you feel that it is sufficiently felted, remove the scarf from the machine, rinse in lukewarm water, and lay flat to dry. Steam press using a lot of pressure. Trim ends and fringe as necessary.