

When weaving linen, consider the following:

Make the warp nice and taut in one go, with no long pauses or interruptions. See that the strands run off the spools in the same direction. Read Ingela Berntsson's article page 19.

Place the portee at the lower edge of the warp.

Try to position any knots appearing at the upper or lower end peg on the warping mill.

If the warp is wide, make several chains of warp, with a maximum of 50 cm for each warp.

Pre-sley/raddle at the correct width.

See that the warp is placed in the middle of the weaving width of the loom.

Beam on nice and taut, lay in plenty of sticks, if you can, winding on two or three full turns, then laying sticks right round the next turn.

Make tie-ons with ends that span 2-2.5 cm, and when the tension feels even, make a double knot and dampen the knots with a bit of water. This stops them sliding apart.

Check that the shafts are at the correct height, as the warp ends should run through the middle of the heddle eye. The beater height should be adjusted so the warp runs through the middle of the reed.

When weaving, lay the weft slanting towards the beater to avoid any pulling in. If it does draw in, use an appropriately sized stretcher, with its teeth positioned 4-5 mm inside the outermost warp ends. It is more fun and faster to weave, though, without a stretcher.

A typical weaving sequence is as follows: open the shed, throw in the weft, beat down, change shed, second beat if required. But note that when the shed is open, the ends are under more tension - and under slightly less with a closed shed. So have a closed shed at the point when the batten and reed hit the fell. The batten should be pushed back at the point the shed is fully open.

The bobbins should be, according to the manual, firm and slender, which is something learnt by experience, but they can be made a little more pliable and less unruly by leaving them in a damp cloth for a few hours before use. If the ends start breaking, and appear dry and brittle, a damp cloth can be placed carefully over the warp by the back bar.

A light touch works best, avoid getting wound up and think how beautiful it's going to look and what fun it is ...

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