# Block Pattern Drafting, what is it?

UNDERSTANDING HOW A BLOCK DRAFT WORKS is very useful, not to mention fun! There are so many exciting things to be done with different patterns. A major advantage is the time saved with the help of block drafts when there are lengthy threading sequences, simply by not needing to follow a complete threading draft. Moreover, in my experience threading mistakes occur less frequently.

The block draft is a **picture** of the prospective weave, which does not represent each separate warp end and pick, but where groups of threads are shown as what are termed blocks. This does not indicate anything about which weave structure has been selected. The same blocks can be applied to different types of interlacements. Each square corresponds then to a number of threads in the threading and shedding order that are interlaced in the same way: each interlacement has its own sets of conditions.

The block pattern draft here has two different blocks. B = Block
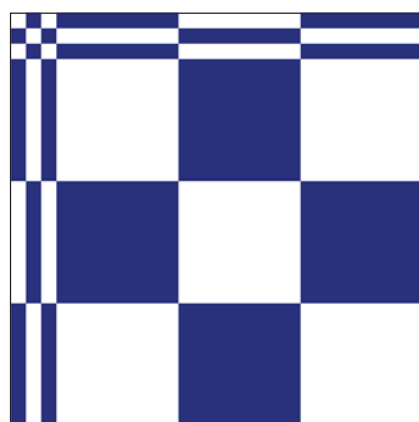
Block pattern draft
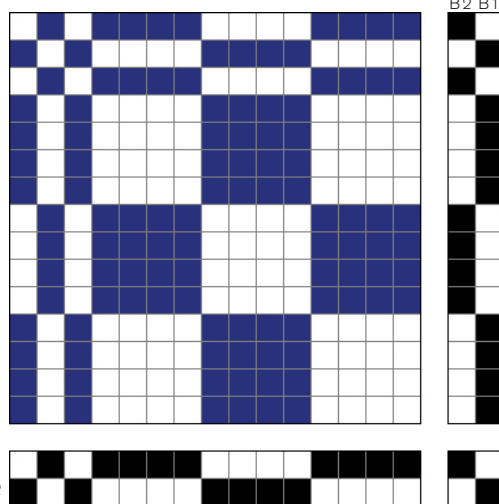
Left A simple pattern with two blocks in both warp and weft directions.
Right, Each square in its respective block corresponds to a number of threads in the threading and shedding order that are interlaced in the same way.
The picture shows that in the **entry or threading** we have:
4 repeats of block 1
4 repeats of block 2
4 repeats of block 1
1 repeat of block 2
1 repeat of block 1
1 repeat of block 2
In the shedding sequence we have:
4 repeats of block 1
4 repeats of block 2
4 repeats of block 1
1 repeat of block 2
1 repeat of block 1
1 repeat of block 2
The block tie-up shows how the two blocks form the basis of the pattern.

PLATT WEAVE/MONK'S BELT

Now comes the moment for deciding on the weave structure and the size of the different blocks. Below is a plain weave with weft floats, a platt weave or Monk's belt (when the pattern forms a star) as it is also called. The size of the pattern is restricted by the length of the floats. The block draft above indicates that two different blocks warpways and weftways are required to produce the pattern desired.

Each square in the block pattern draft corresponds here to two warp ends and two plain weave picks + two pattern picks. The structure requires two shafts for each block and is woven alternating plain weave with pattern picks. The resultant draft in detail for our block draft looks like this, with grey plain weave and red pattern picks.

Pattern draft in detail
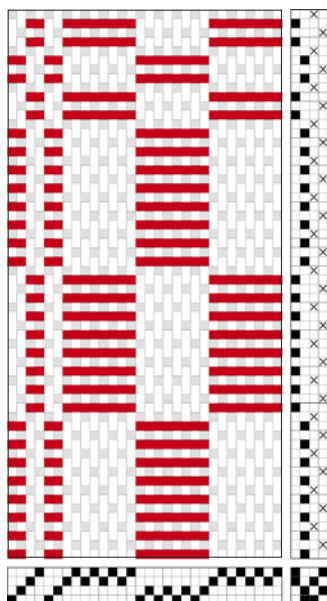
Each block in the block pattern draft above has been replaced here with a detailed entry, tie-up and shedding order. The pattern appears elongated, which is because the pattern picks in the picture occupy the same amount of space as the plain weave picks. In reality, the plain weave sett is more alike both warpways and weftways and the pattern floats between the plain weave picks.
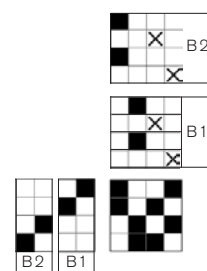
To the right are the "keys" for the different groups of threads for each block.
One square in the block entry = 2 ends
One square in the block shedding order = 2 plain weave picks + 2 pattern picks
In the draft shown on the left, you can see that four squares of the block pattern draft above correspond to 8 ends in the full draft x 3 and then 2 ends x 3.

Draft detail

DRÄLLS

Each square in the block draft could also be substituted with a ground weave unit/repeat in different twills or satins. Shown here are four drälls, with four different interlacements. All these weaves will have their own properties and characteristics such as firmness, sheen and durability.

A satin structure can produce a high degree of lustre on the cloth surface, depending on the length of the floats. A closer sett, such as for 3-shaft twill, can be more durable. Each square in the block pattern draft corresponds to one repeat in the entry and the shedding order.

The directions for the dräll 6-shaft project on page 50 are based on this pattern.
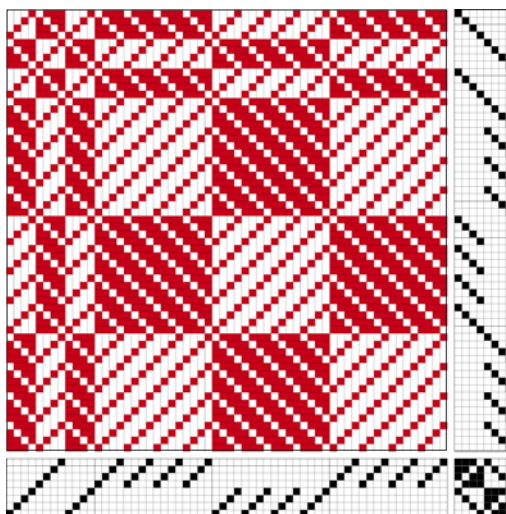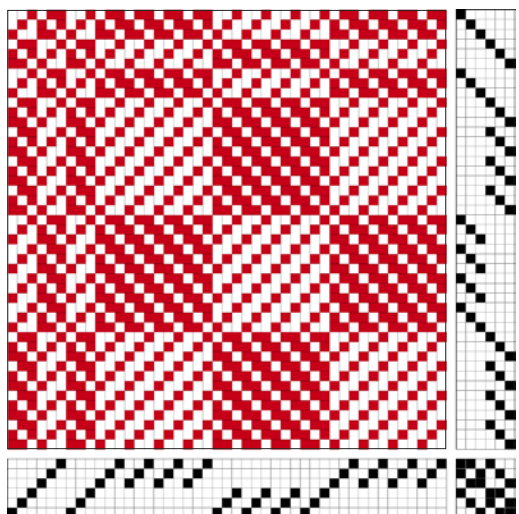
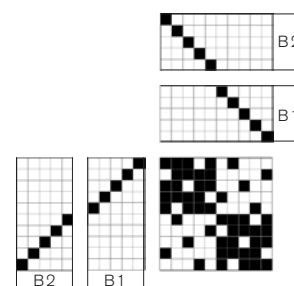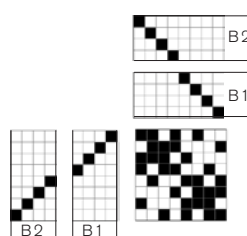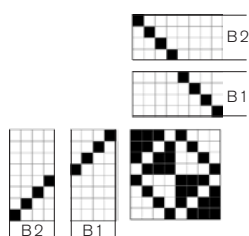**Left** 3-shaft twill.
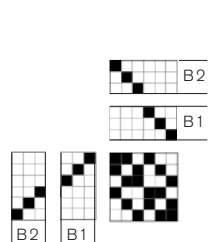One square in the block pattern = 3 ends

Right 4-shaft twill.
One square in the block pattern = 4 ends
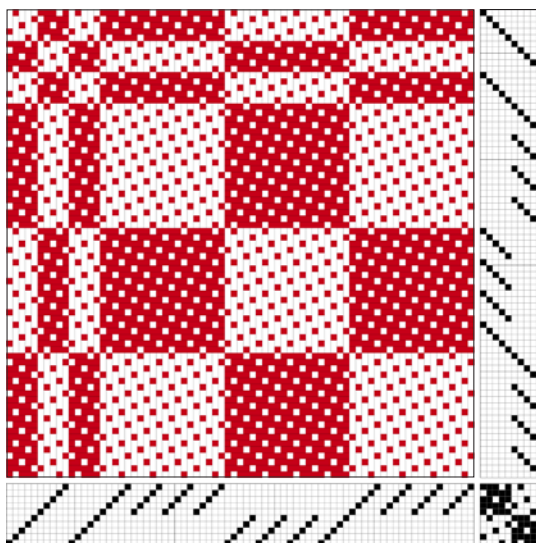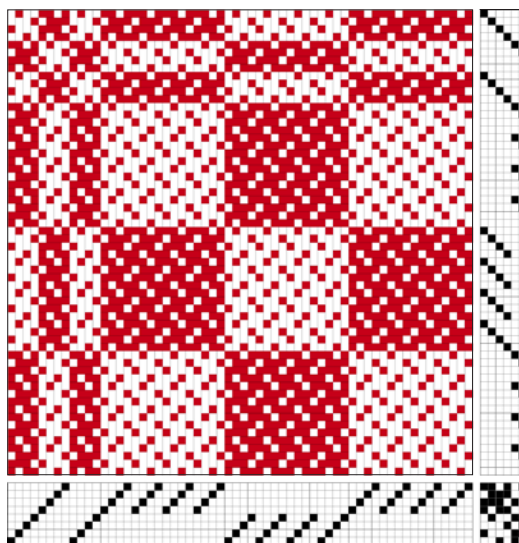
Left 4-shaft cross (broken) twill.
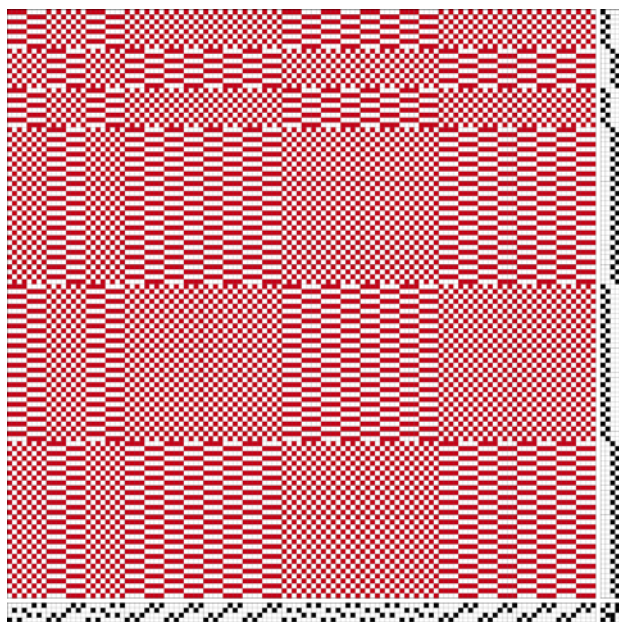One square in the block pattern = 4 ends

Right 5-shaft satin.
One square in the block pattern = 5 ends

## DRAFTS IN DETAIL FOR THE DRÄLLS

MS & OS

Where plain weave and weft-faced rib are combined, as for Ms & Os, the draft works out like this for four shafts and four pedals. We used the block pattern draft on page 42. Each square in the two blocks corresponds to the entry as given in detail to the right.

One square in the block entry = 8 ends
One square in the block shedding order = 8 picks

The number of picks/pattern square gets adjusted according to the weft thickness and the desired length of the pattern blocks..
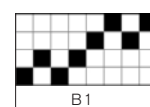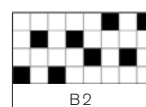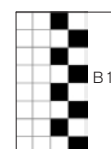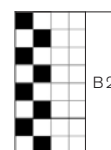
HALF DRÄLL

We used the block pattern in a half dräll. The two blocks each make use of two shafts, as shown in the detail. This structure has stitching ends, to avoid the floats getting too long.

The stitching ends are entered as shown on the alternate shafts not used by the block. Enter one end on an even numbered shaft and the alternate on an odd numbered shaft for the plain weave to work out right.

One square in the block entry = 10 ends
The stitching ends (marked with a stroke) are left out between blocks.

The weft alternates between a plain weave weft and a pattern weft. When changing block, two pattern picks are woven consecutively (you can also have plain weave between every pattern weft).
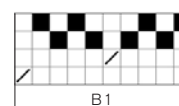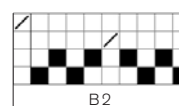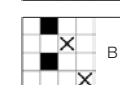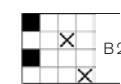The number of picks/pattern square gets adjusted according to the weft thickness and the desired length of the pattern blocks.

Here two different tie-ups and shedding-orders are shown.

■ = pattern weft
✕ = plain weave

╱ = pattern stich

27 ends   39 ends   39 ends   39 ends

HUCKABACK

Here, the block pattern has been translated into a combination of plain weave with warp and weft floats. After washing, the whole surface can turns bubbly, as the plain weave does not shrink much while the floats draw in and crinkle. Woven in part linen or linen, the cloth has a nice rough feel. Perhaps a weave for a bathtowel or something similar? The same cloth will have a totally different character woven in a porous cotton with a velour weft. Soft and luscious! The technique is also useful for curtains and table cloths.
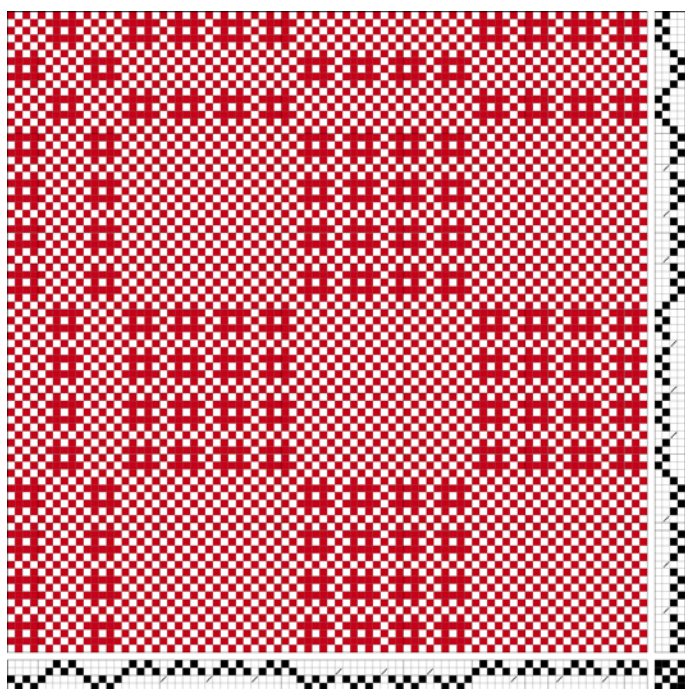
One square in the block entry = 6 ends
One square in the block shedding order = 6 picks

One block is entered on shafts 1 and 2, while the other is entered on 3 and 4. They are bound every 5 ends by a stitching end threaded on one of the other block's shafts, marked with a stroke.
Stitching ends are left out between blocks.

The number of picks/pattern square gets adjusted according to the weft thickness and the desired length of the pattern blocks.
The plain weave picks are left out between blocks.

╱ = pattern stich
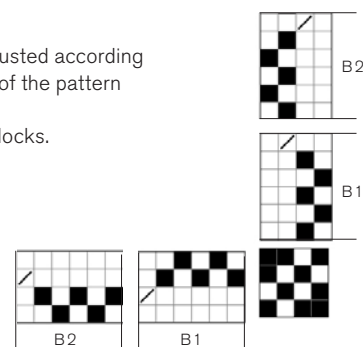
TAQUETÉ

A block pattern draft can also be used for a taqueté, a weft-backed plain weave which can also be called a checked double-faced weave. The detail below shows one part of the block pattern.

The wefts lie on top of each other at the transitions between blocks. The pattern shows in reverse on the other side. This cloth does not have a face and reverse weaving it in two blocks.
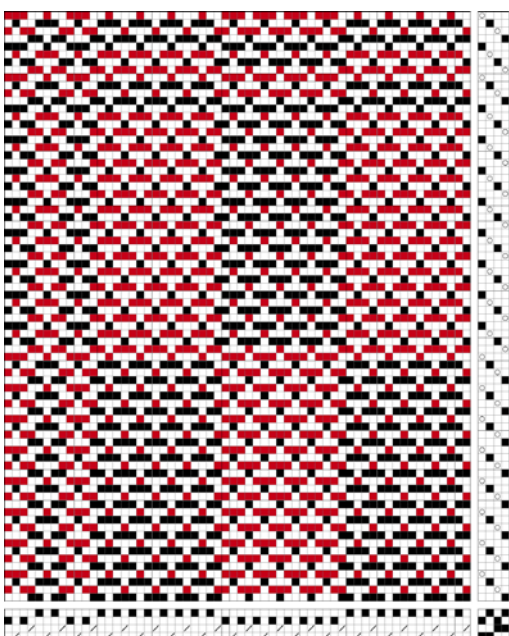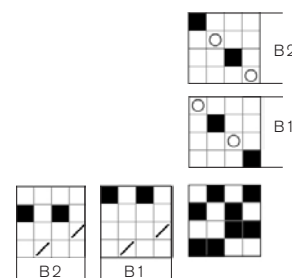

One square in the block entry = 4 ends
One square in the block shedding order = 4 picks

The pattern ends are entered on shafts 1 and 2. The ends that act as the stitching ties are entered on shafts 3 and 4, marked with a stroke.

When changing block in the weaving, two picks of the same colour are woven in one after the other.

╱ = pattern stich

The pattern/block pattern draft on page 42 is the basis for all these variations. With different colour combinations and materials, you can now develop your design ideas into many different areas of usage. Throw yourself into the fascinating world of block pattern drafting and give yourself and your weaving a real boost! Try making your own block pattern drafts! Meanwhile, take a look at the qualities shown on the following pages for inspiration. In the next issue we will continue with block drafting, using more blocks.