

SIZING

your linen warp

Even when all kinds of precautions have been taken to ensure a linen warp stays intact during the weaving of it, ends can still sometimes snap. This might be to do with the warping, the beaming, the yarn being spun of short fibre or the room being too dry. Sizing a linen warp will make it stronger. We are giving several different recipes and methods here. Choose the one that suits you best. Winnie Poulsen sizes her warps with a linseed decoction, which we did too (page 58). Another recipe was taken from Alexander Berger's weaving book mentioned in the article about Stina Larsson. Elsa Persson sizes her warp when it is on the loom, which is also Doris Konradsson's and Anita Lundgren's (Östgöotalin) method, as passed on to us by Berit Grybäck at Capellagården.



Boil up 100 g linseed in 1–2 litres of water until the seed is overcooked. 5–10 minutes.



Sieve into a larger pan.



Add boiling water to make the solution up to ca 3 litres.



Spoon up a little and let it drip. It should be a bit viscous, but not too thick.



This amount is enough for sizing 20 metres of handtowel warp.



Squeeze out the liquid. Hang up to dry. Be patient, it takes time to dry out, at least a week. Do not separate out the threads. When dry, it turns rough and papery.



Winnie uses a warping paddle for warping, so the resultant raddle-cross is based on the number of ends running through the paddle. The singles-cross is at the other end of the warp chain. The warp is beamed with the help of a raddle. Each alternate cm of warp has been shifted slightly to produce an ikat effect.



The warp beamed with its raddle-cross. At the other end of the warp is the singles-cross. Keep both sets of cross-sticks in place, when you are weaving. Place the singles-cross sticks right up by the heddles – ca 30 cm – so the ends have no room to tangle. After advancing the warp, push one shaft at a time back towards the cross-sticks, to check if small bits of flax fibre have stuck any warp ends together. If a warping paddle was not used and the warp made with 2 ends at a time, it is good practice, all the same, after setting up to insert a pair of cross-sticks to establish a singles-cross. If set up for plain weave, simply open the different sheds, or else manually lift the shafts that raise alternate ends and insert one of the cross-sticks. Repeat for the opposite shed.



Use a long, flat, weighted shuttle. Holes were drilled into the one shown for holding the lead weights. Sheds should only be opened a little way when weaving. Make bobbins the day before and keep them in a damp handtowel.

SIZING WITH FLOUR AND WATER

Elsa Persson sizes the warp when it has been set up on the loom, brushing the size first on top of and then underneath the warp ends.

Brush towards you, not back and forth, from the heddles to the back bar.

Do the sizing the day before weaving so that the size can dry off.

- 2 coffee cups of water
- 1 teaspoon potato flour
- 1 teaspoon plain wheat flour

Boil for 5–10 minutes into a slimy mixture.

SIZING WITH TALLOW, SOAP AND FLOUR

from Alexander Berger's book on weaves from Jämtland and Härjedalen:

When sizing linen yarn, it is recommended that linen hanks are sized before warping. This saves time compared to the long winded task of sizing at the loom. Tie off the hanks in several places. Dip into the sizing mixture and squeeze well so that the hank gets thoroughly soaked through with the size. Twist hard so most of the size runs out. Hang up to dry. Evenly sized yarn will not have ends getting stuck together. Start winding off the bobbins when the yarn is almost dry.

Size for 1 kg:
 10 g clean tallow and 10 g Swedish yellow soap (gul såpa) melted into 2 ½ litres boiling water. Into ¼ litre cold water stir 75 g plain wheat flour and 25 g potato flour until the batter is smooth, then add it to the simmering mixture. Whisk while simmering for 20–25 minutes. Continue whisking until the mixture is lukewarm and ready for use as size.

SIZING WITH STEARIN AND FLOUR

Doris Konradsson and Anita Lundgren brushes the size from the back bar to the heddles. Start weaving straight after or open the sheds to prevent ends sticking together.

- one half of a Christmas candle 100% stearin wax
- 1 tablespoon plain wheat flour
- 1 litre water
- + Atamon (preserving agent) if required.

Melt the wax in the water, whisk/stir continuously to avoid separation. Add the flour, and Atamon if used. Keep stirring/whisking until the mixture has cooled. Atamon is added to make the mixture last longer and stop it going off.