



E-news - coming to you monthly!
Each issue includes a project,
helpful tips & Schacht news.



Get connected: Visit schachtspindle.com for helpful hints, project ideas, product manuals and information. Follow our blog, like us on Facebook, pin us on Pinterest, visit Schacht groups on Ravelry, follow us on Twitter.

Project

Double Corduroy Rag Rug

by Chase Ford

After weaving off the mohair blanket on the Cranbrook Loom (see pictures on our Facebook), Jane and I decided that a double corduroy rug would be fun to try. Corduroy is a pile weave that is created by weaving floats along with a ground weave. The floats are cut after weaving to form the pile. Corduroy can be either single or double. Generally, double corduroy is used by handweavers because it is the denser of the two weaves. Many variations are possible. Peter Collingwood's *Techniques of Rug Weaving* explores corduroy in detail and is an excellent resource.

Sampling

I began with a sample. For inspiration, I looked at Loie Stenzel's "Madras Double Corduroy Rug" featured on page 16 of *Handwoven's Design Collection 8* (Interweave Press) as well as Joe Ben Wheat's book



Blanket Weaving in the Southwest. We liked Loie Stenzel's suggestion for using patterned as well as solid fabrics, so I spent some time familiarizing myself with the color palettes that appeared in the blankets in Wheat's book. I found several colors and prints of a lightweight 100% cotton fabric to sample with.



Rug sample

Sampling can seem like a hassle but it really is worth all the extra work. I learned which colors worked

well next to one another and which didn't offer enough contrast, how long the floats should be in order to make the right length pile, how best to cut my weft strips to minimize fraying. These are the things I learned just having to do with the weaving!



Chase threading the Cranbrook

Designing

After finishing the sampler for this project, I decided which colors I liked together and set out designing the final rug. During my sampling, I found that by alternating colors on the odd and even pattern picks and alternating again every few repeats of my

What is a countermarche loom and why do we love it for rugs?

Before I tell you why we love our countermarche Cranbrook loom for rug weaving, I want to give you a very brief overview of three systems for creating sheds.

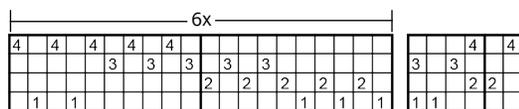


On jack looms, when the treadle is depressed, some shafts raise and the others remain stationary. Jack looms are the most popular style of looms

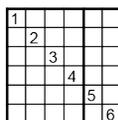
in the U.S. and is the system we use for our Wolf and Standard Floor Looms. Weavers love jack looms because they are easy to tie up and very flexible, with each shaft working independently.

For counterbalance looms, when a treadle is depressed, some shafts lower (called a sinking shed) and are balanced by other shafts which automatically go up. On a counterbalance loom, there are rollers or pulleys that balance each other, so if for example, shaft 1 and 2 lower, 3 and 4 automatically go up. While counterbalance looms have a light treadling action, they are not as flexible because shafts must be balanced against each other.

On countermarche looms, shafts are both raised and lowered. The Cranbrook Loom has a set of overhead jacks, which when the treadle is depressed, the center lowers and the outside raises. There are two sets of lamms: the lower lamms connected to the overhead jacks and the upper lamms attached to the bottom of the shafts. On a countermarche, you tie both what goes up and what goes down (rising



Draft for rug
EPI: 4
PPI: 6

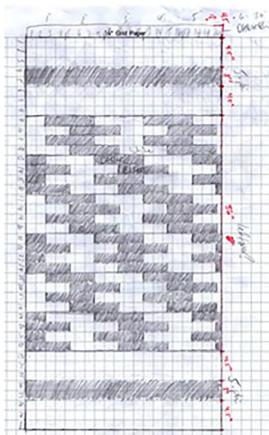




Double Corduroy, continued

treading I could create a nice checkerboard pattern with the floats. I decided to use this pattern as the main section of the rug with contrasting borders on either end.

Once I had a rough idea of what I wanted the rug to look like, I sat down with some graph paper and started to play with proportions. I ended up using phi (pronounced fee), a mathematical number not unlike pi to determine the size of my borders and central section. Phi, also known as the "Golden Ratio", is often used to determine proportions. It owes its popularity to the fact that many things in nature, such as the leaves of plants, grow proportionally according to phi. I developed a design of 12" long borders on either end with a central section of 36".



Developing the design

I decided to make the hem on either side of the rug 5" in order to have plenty to work with as the pile will determine how much of the hem is seen. I'd rather have a little extra waste than not enough woven.

Since the warp is all but invisible underneath the rags, the only place it shows is in the hem at the beginning and end of the rug. For this reason I chose a deep navy 8/4 poly-cotton rug warp that contrasted with the pile borders and matched the darker sections of the middle.

According to Peter Collingwood's *The Techniques of Rug Weaving*, it is a good idea to always thread a whole number of repeats or a whole number plus a half in order to avoid unnecessary complications. At 4 ends per inch, with 20 ends per repeat, the total number of warp ends fit perfectly into 6 threading repeats to give my desired weaving width of 30". The block threading used in this rug has five warp ends on each shaft. An important thing to remember is that the length of the pile will be half the length of the float because the float will be cut. A way to lengthen the floats and make a deeper pile is to manually pull up on each float as you weave. This will require more weft and will be slower to weave than simply throwing the shuttle and beating.



Rug on Cranbrook with temple

Calculating Fabric Yardage

To determine how much yardage of each color I would need for weft, I calculated the area of my sampler and learned that 2 yards of fabric would roughly yield 252 sq. in. of tripled rag weft strips at 3/4" wide. I tripled the weft in order to allow colors to blend more subtly as well as for added thickness. I then calculated the area I wanted the final rug to be and got 1800 sq. in. I then took the dimensions of each section of color and calculated the area to know just how much of each color I needed. I added an extra

What is a countermarche loom, continued

shafts are tied to the lower lamms; sinking shafts are tied to the upper lamms). For more on loom systems, see the excellent discussion in *Warping Your Loom & Tying on New Warps* by Peggy Osterkamp.

For rug weaving, to make a solid and dense rug, you need a lot of tension. The Cranbrook loom serves well for this purpose. It is a heavy and sturdy loom with a worm gear that allows you to crank up the tension incrementally, as well as easily loosen the tension



Cranbrook worm gear

when the warp needs advancing. The swinging overhead beater can be adjusted to meet the fell at just the right angle. With the addition of the optional beater weight, the beater powerfully packs the weft without strenuous effort. Another feature we love about the Cranbrook for rug weaving is the locking treadles, which enable you to press down on the treadle and slide it into a groove to hold it in place when you need to adjust the wefts in the shed.

In talking to our friend Tom Knisely, teacher and rug weaver at [The Mannings](#) and author of *Weaving Rag Rugs* and several DVDs including *Weave a Good Rug*, he reminded us of the features he loves: the tapered treadles which automatically adjust the shed (generally Swedish style countermarche looms require much knot-tying to adjust the shed) and the convenient, pre-marked Texsol cords that make tying the treadles to the lamms convenient and easy.

For more information on the Cranbrook loom, now in its 85th year, go to schachtspindle.com/cranbrook.

Visit schachtspindle.com/newsletter for more project ideas and instructions.



Double Corduroy, continued

yard or two to all of my numbers to be sure I'd have enough. I found I would need 6.5 yards of the white in the borders, 2 yards for the light blue stripes in the borders, and 6 yards each of both light and dark fabrics for the center patterned section of the rug. This made the total amount of fabric I needed around 20.5 yards.

Cutting Strips

I found the simplest way to cut my strips was to use a straight edge and a rotary cutter on a self-healing mat with a measured grid. Connecting the strips was made simple with a washable glue stick. The glue is invisible when dry, and once the weaving has been washed, the glue will disappear completely. Whenever I noticed two strips that had been glued together acting as a float I tried to center the glue seam in the middle of the float so that when the glue dissolved in the wash the consistency of the float length would not be affected.



Cutting fabric strips

Weaving

The weaving of this rug goes very quickly as each treadling repeat yields about 1". It is a simple, straight treadling. This was my first time using a temple and while I'm always mindful of my selvages it really helped keep them nice and straight under all the tension from the rags. Due to the threading as well as switching between weft colors, the selvage

warp is not caught from time to time. To remedy this I simply paid attention to what was happening at the selvages and placed my shuttle over or under the edge thread as necessary.

Finishing

After cutting the rug off the loom, the first order of business was to zig-zag stitch at either end to protect the hem weft from raveling. Before finishing the hem, I cut the pile. The floats are not directly on top of one another but are staggered, so it is important to be careful to not accidentally cut into the sections above or below. My final step was to hem the rug, making the hem wide enough to just peek out from underneath the pile.

The first project I wove on the Cranbrook Loom was the mohair blanket mentioned at the beginning of this article, and I had never warped a countermarch loom. Warping and weaving on the Cranbrook seemed daunting at first, but with a little patience, it was a piece of cake. I can't wait to do it again!

Chase Ford, a student of the Kansas City Art Institute, interned with us for 9 months this past year.



Before cutting the pile



After cutting the pile

Inspiring Makers One Post at a Time

Historically, here at Schacht we haven't blogged much, a few posts every month or even every month or so. This year, we decided we wanted to connect more with our readers, to provide content on our blog that was deeper and richer.

Over the year, [our blog](#) has evolved into a project- and inspiration-rich destination. Each post is created by one of our passionate office staff and is heartfelt and a pleasure to share with you. Whether it is one of our "Challenge" series, or a post on the trials and tribulations of a project, or just a great tutorial, every topic is chosen to engage, inspire, and encourage.

We invite you to check out our blog. We doubled our number of posts this year – some highlights have been the [Holiday Wreath](#), a stunning and stimulating Zoom Loom project; [Spinning an Ombre Yarn](#), an in-depth tutorial on creating a luscious 3-ply gradient yarn; and a helpful, in-depth [guide on working with your rigid heddle loom](#). We have even



greater plans for 2015. Join us for our "vacation" series that will be premiering early in the year!

If you have topics that you'd like us to cover, please send us an [e-mail](#). We look forward to hearing from you.

–Benjamin Krudwig