

Tricks of the Trade

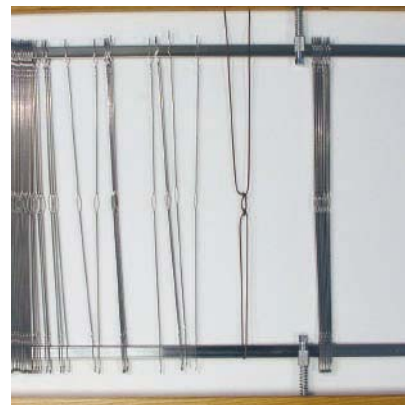
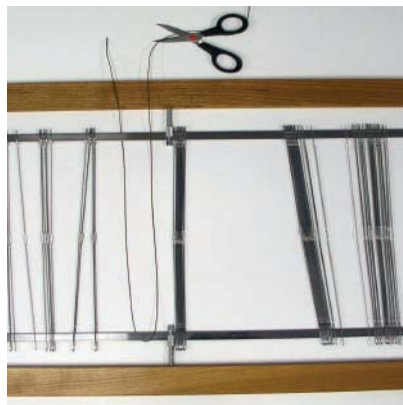
A No-Tears Repair Heddle

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So you've warped the loom and you've started to weave. Uh-oh, something is not right. You check, and sure enough, one thread is on the wrong shaft.

The only solution (other than rethreading every warp thread between the selvedge and the error—totally unthinkable!) is to create a new heddle for the correct shaft and rethread the errant warp end. Some manufacturers offer steel “repair” heddles that can be clipped to shaft bars, but it’s easy to make your own. And, if you have wooden shaft bars with string heddles, you can’t use the steel ones anyway.

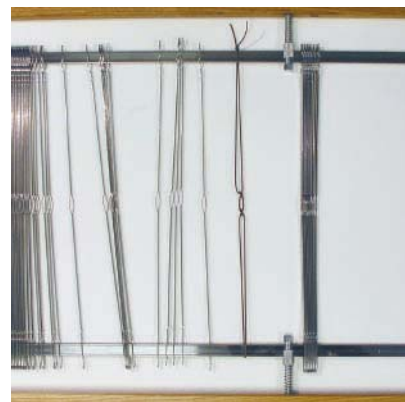
“You can tie the heddle directly around a warp thread.”



Step 1 Loop a strong, smooth cord (carpet warp will work) around the bottom shaft bar and cut the two ends about 4" above the top shaft bar. (For greater clarity, the shaft has been removed from the loom in this photo. To tie the heddle on the loom, release tension if you have already tied on the warp and slide the heddles to the sides.)

Step 3 Again keeping tension on the two ends of the cord, tie a square knot at the same level as the top of the eye in adjacent heddles. (You can tie the heddle directly around the errant warp thread—*only if it's no longer threaded in the wrong heddle*. I've been known to cut out the “wrong” heddle with wire cutters—shame on me!)

TIP. To tie the square knots: Wrap the right end around the left end; then wrap the same end (now the left end) around the right end. Keep constant tension on both ends so that the second wrap snugs directly on top of the first wrap.



Step 2 Keeping tension on the two ends, tie a square knot (not a granny knot; see Tip) at the same level as the bottom of the eye in adjacent heddles. If your first try places the knot too high or too low, take it out and tie it again. If the knot is in the wrong place, the warp thread will not be on the same level in the shed with the others.

Step 4 Still keeping tension on the two ends, tie them in a third square knot at the top of the upper shaft bar. Tie this knot so that the heddle fits snugly on the shaft bars but not so tight that it is difficult to slide. (You might want to use it in the future as a regular heddle.) Your new heddle is ready to thread! 