

Saori-Inspired Belts

DESIGN NOTES

The designs and colors in these belts all happened spontaneously. I had leftover space-dyed ribbon from the Ribbon Collar that I used as a starting point for selecting weft yarns from my stash. I was especially attracted to bumpy rayons, velvety chenille, and fuzzy mohairs for their contrasting textures. Woven in a sturdy, weft-faced plain weave, these yarns will all wear well in a belt. If you don't have a focal yarn to inspire your color choices, pull yarns based on color families and go from there. The lengths of yarns you'll use are so short that if a yarn doesn't work well, you can easily pull it out and try something else.

I must caution you—making these belts is addictive! I call them Saori-inspired for the free-style way they are woven; Saori is a method of weaving established in the 1960s by Misao Jo that celebrates the spontaneous use of weft yarns and colors. Working intimately with so many ever-changing yarns and colors is so appealing that you can't stop with just one belt. So I suggest you warp the loom for several, gather yarns from your stash, and get started on a colorful, rewarding journey (amounts given here are for one belt; allow a little more than a yard of warp length for each additional belt).

EQUIPMENT

2-shaft loom, 4-shaft loom, or rigid-heddle loom, 4" weaving width;
6-dent reed or rigid heddle; several bobbins (optional); tapestry needle.

MATERIALS

Warp 8/4 unmercerized cotton (1,600 yd/lb, 3,230 m/kg, Cotton Carpet Warp, Maysville), Black #2, 52 yd.

Weft 8/4 unmercerized cotton, Black #2. A selection of yarns based on color families, textures, and weight, about 125 yd total per belt.

Other Three large hook-and-eye closures; black sewing thread; optional beads.