

# A Modern Arrangement Towels

LINDA GETTMANN

Ever since Susan Wilson presented a three-day workshop on crackle weave to the Central Oregon Spinners and Weavers Guild last year, I've been hooked on crackle. Our guild library has lots of great resources, including Mary Meigs Atwater's *Recipe Book* and *The Shuttle-Craft Book of American Hand-Weaving*. These two publications plus the many Atwater publications I discovered on [www.handweaving.net](http://www.handweaving.net) have taken me on a great journey through twentieth-century weaving drafts.

The draft called A Modern Arrangement caught my eye with its geometric design that reminded me of row houses or storefronts from mid-twentieth-century small-town America. This is a very different crackle than I've woven before, and I liked the vertical lines created by the 2-3-2 and 3-4-3 repeats in the crackle block threadings—textures similar to some of the Bateman weaves such as Park and Boulevard, but on four shafts rather than the traditional eight. The warp-dominant areas of the pattern are also like bumberet, with a ribbed chain pattern as described in Madelyn van der Hoogt's article in the January/February 2017 issue of *Handwoven* ("The Draft," page 14). The two-thread weft floats in this weave plus the warp float lines make a texture that looks like

bricks. It was fascinating to weave and watch the "storefront" patterns appear. The pattern is reversed on the other side.

Mary Atwater says about crackle: "The weave is a four-harness weave, with some of the desirable qualities of the more elaborate 'Summer and Winter Weave,' and has proved very useful for such fabrics as rugs, upholstery, drapery, bags, and so on. It produces a closely combined fabric with no long skips, and hence a fabric with excellent wearing qualities. . . . [T]here is more freedom of design and the weave lends itself well to the modern type of pattern, which is more and more in demand." I think she was forging new territory in adapting the crackle block threadings to produce a more "modern" fabric than the traditional American Colonial and Scandinavian weaves.

I adapted her draft for towels using 8/2 cotton. I used two different neutrals for the warp so I could weave each towel with different weft colors highlighting the "storefront" design. I hope you take the opportunity to weave A Modern Arrangement in the twenty-first century. I think Mary Atwater would be pleased.

## RESOURCES

Atwater, Mary Meigs. "Notes on the 'Crackle Weave.'" *Practical Weaving Suggestions* V, 2 (1944).

## STRUCTURE

Crackle.

## EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 24" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 3 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 8/2 cotton (3,360 yd/lb; WEBS), #8176 Natural, 1,215 yd; #1089 Alabaster, 1,966 yd.

**Pattern weft 1:** 8/2 cotton (3,360 yd/lb), UKI: #40 Purple, #6 Mill Green, #66 Champagne, #57 Turk, 166 yd each; WEBS: #5680 Sagebrush, #3611 Red, 166 yd each; Yarn Barn of Kansas: #1315 Lt Orange, 166 yd.

**Pattern weft 2:** 8/2 cotton (3,360 yd/lb), UKI: #39 Special Purple, #41 Peach, 113 yd each. WEBS: #5604 Willow Green, #7198 Burnt Sienna, #3794 Burgundy, 125 yd each.

**Tabby weft:** 20/2 cotton (8,400 yd/lb) or cotton sewing thread in coordinating colors for each towel, 340 yd each. (Linda used purple [towel 1] light green [towel 2], clay/peach [towel 3], turquoise [towel 4], red [towel 5], and rose beige [towel 6].)

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Fusible thread (optional).

## WARP LENGTH

471 ends 6¾ yd long (includes floating selvages; allows 19" for take-up, 35" for sampling and loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 20 epi (2/dent in a 10-dent reed).

**Weft:** About 28 ppi (14 pattern, 14 tabby).

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 23⅞".

**Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 189" (31½" per towel).

**Finished size after washing and hemming:** 6 towels, 20" x 26¼" each.

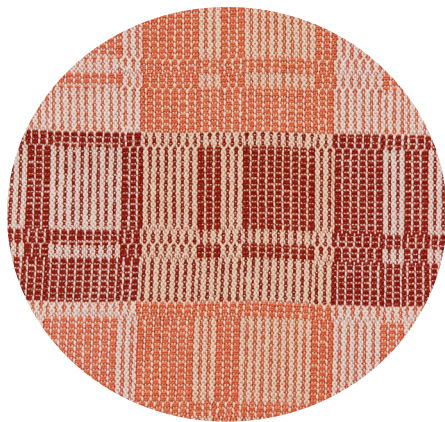
**1** Wind 469 warp threads 6¾ yd long in 8/2 cotton using the color sequence indicated in the warp color order, Figure 1. Use your preferred method to warp the loom and thread following the draft in Figure 2. Sley 2 ends per dent in a 10-dent reed, centering for a weaving width of 23⅞". Measure 2 threads of Alabaster to use as floating selvages, sley each through a dent on either side of the warp, and weight them over the back beam.

**2** Wind one bobbin of each of the 8/2 weft colors for the first towel you wish to weave, and wind a bobbin of a coordinating color of 20/2 cotton or sewing thread for the tabby. (See pattern weft color chart, Figure 3.) If you have a small boat shuttle, you can put the sewing thread spool in the shuttle rather than winding a bobbin.










**3** Begin by weaving 1½" of plain weave with your chosen hem/tabby thread. Then follow the treadling order of the crackle blocks, weaving 1 pattern pick with 8/2 cotton followed by a tabby pick and using one of the color combinations listed in Figure 3. Weave the treadling sequence and finish with another 1½" plain-weave hem at the end of each towel. Weave 4 picks with a contrasting thread before starting the next towel. (Linda uses fusible thread, available at fabric stores, to separate sections of weaving. It's a neat trick because it stops fraying if you iron before cutting the pieces apart.) Continue until you've woven all the towels, following the color chart in Figure 3.

**4** Remove fabric from the loom. Using a pressing cloth on both sides of your weaving and a hot iron, press the fusible thread areas until they are sticky on the pressing cloths. If you didn't use fusible thread, zigzag on both sides of the contrasting thread and along the raw edges.

**5** Machine wash and dry. Press fabric and cut apart in the middle of the fusible thread strip or contrasting thread. Turn hems under twice to make a ½" hem and sew by hand. 

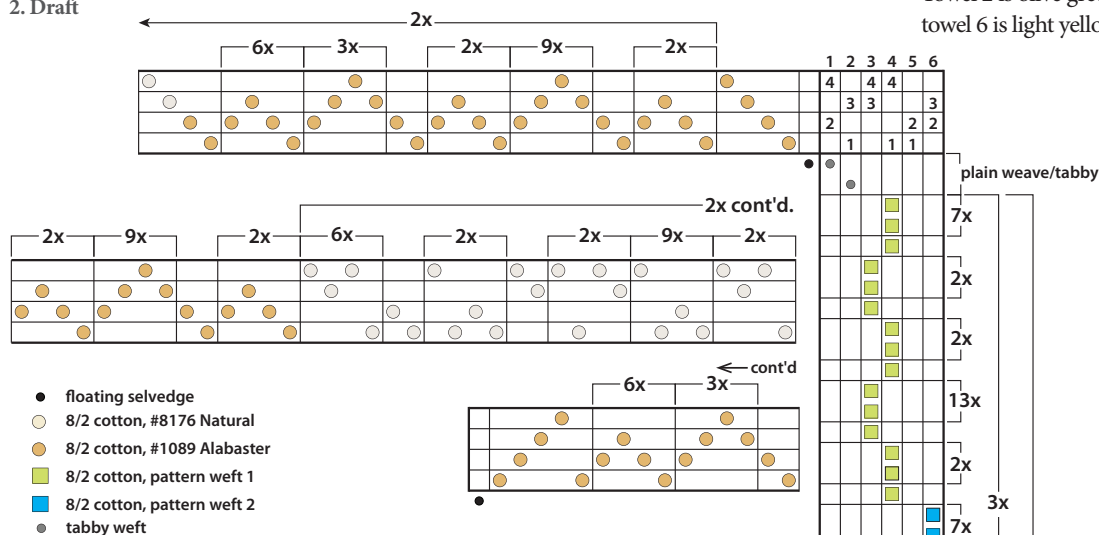
**LINDA GETTMANN** can be found weaving and knitting in her Bend, Oregon, home surrounded by the majestic Cascade mountains and an unlimited supply of yarn and project ideas.

*Editors note:* The photograph on page 33 shows towels 1, 4, and 5. Towel 3 is in the detail circle. Towels 2 and 3 are not shown. Towel 2 is olive green and light green, and towel 6 is light yellow and peach.

## 1. Warp Color Order

[illegible]

## 2. Draft



**Weave 1½" plain weave for hem at beginning and end of each towel. Repeat full treading pattern for each towel, using colors listed in Figure 3.**

### 3. Weft color order

Towel 1
Towel 2
Towel 3
Towel 4
Towel 5
Towel 6

1						8/2 cotton, UKI #40 Purple
2						8/2 cotton, UKI #39 Special Purple
	1					8/2 cotton, UKI #6 Mill Green
	2					8/2 cotton, WEBS #5604 Willow Green
		1				8/2 cotton, Yarn Barn of Kansas #1315 Lt Orange
		2				8/2 cotton, WEBS #7198 Burnt Sienna
			1			8/2 cotton, UKI #57 Turk
			2			8/2 cotton, WEBS #5680 Sagebrush
				1		8/2 cotton, WEBS #3611 Red
				2		8/2 cotton, WEBS #3794 Burgundy
					1	8/2 cotton, UKI #66 Champagne
					2	8/2 cotton, UKI #41 Peach

Numbers indicate pattern weft 1 or 2 as specified in Draft, Figure 2.

### Heddle Count

Shaft 4	104
Shaft 3	128
Shaft 2	130
Shaft 1	107
<b>Total</b>	<b>469</b>