Cardboard weaving

A kid wants to invent something unique and altogether his own. When you can take some cardboard, string, yarn, and other household scraps and create your own personal weave, you feel proud and confident. Cardboard weaving looms offer a wide range of possibilities. You can make weavings in different shapes and work them in different materials. Try making interesting patterns and projects like waistbands, purses, pot-holders, blankets, rugs, or wall hangings.

MATERIALS

- cardboard
- pocket comb
- yarn, string, or other material suitable for weaving

TOOLS

- scissors
- paper hole punch
- ruler
- pencil

CONSTRUCTION

Find a piece of stiff scrap cardboard—from a shirt, gift box or shoe box. Draw the shape of the piece you want to weave and cut it out on the cardboard. Although you can weave almost any shape cardboard loom, it is probably easiest to start with a simple square or rectangle. With a ruler and pencil, mark off 1/4-inch spaces along two opposite sides of the cardboard, Fig. 1. With
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a paper hole punch make a notch—about half a circle or a little more—at each pencil mark, Fig. 2. The notches can also be cut with a scissors. The loom is now ready to be strung with the “warp” threads. The warp can be made from a long piece of yarn, thread, fishing line, or any type of string. Start the warp at one edge of the cardboard, and wind it around and around in the notches, going completely across the cardboard, Fig. 3. To start and end the warp (so it doesn’t unwind), you can use two small pieces of tape, or cut a small slit in each side of the cardboard loom, and push the beginning and end of the warp thread into the slits. With another piece of scrap cardboard make a “shuttle” to hold the weaving yarn. The shuttle should be cut out with big notches in both ends, as in Fig. 4. Pick a piece of yarn or string to weave, and wind a length of it around the shuttle. Begin weaving by pushing the shuttle over and under the warp threads all the way across the loom, then go back in the other direction, this time going over and under the warp threads in the opposite order. Each time you bring the shuttle through, pull the yarn taut to take up slack—but not too tight—and unwind some yarn from the shuttle. After you weave a line, use a pocket comb with big teeth to push the woven lines snuggly together, Fig. 4. While weaving, you can change colors and textures by changing yarns on the shuttle. Just tie the new yarn onto the end of the previous piece. You don’t necessarily have to weave with yarn on a shuttle, or with yarn at all. Try weaving with tissue paper, scraps of cloth, paper strips, long grass, or whatever you think of trying, and on both sides of the loom.

When the weaving is finished, you can either leave it on the loom—to be used, perhaps, as a wall decoration—or you can take it off by cutting the warp threads on the back of the loom and tying them together in pairs at the ends of the woven piece. Weaving is a skill and an art, so it might take some practice and patience to get things to come out just right, but never be afraid to experiment with your own ideas.