

Let's Weave Around a Cardboard Box!

By Betty Hollman — Turpin, OK

I was told several years ago “there is not much you can do with llama fiber”. I thought this was either derogatory or a challenge and an opportunity. I took it as a challenge since I had already made wet felted llama hats and vests.

Then I saw an article about weaving around a cardboard box. I ordered the article and when I got it, it was incomplete. I ordered it again; it was well written with pictures to get started but it did not tell or show how to complete the project. So I took the information and after several tries, I made a winner. It was 100% llama and a Grand Champion at the ALSA Grand National Show 2017! Yea! That made it even more fun.



These boxes can be used for decorative boxes, storage boxes, pencil/pen desktop sets, etc. YOUR imagination and the size of the box is the limit to what you do with it.

Timeout: I always want to give credit where credit is due and acknowledge the author, article and magazine BUT I can no longer find the article, nor can I find it online. This I do know: the author was a talented and creative person who did a great job sharing the fun of weaving around a cardboard box. It may have been a magazine connected with Interweave Press but I cannot say for sure. I can tell you this, it was not my original idea.

I used “bulky” llama, 4 ply yarns for my projects. You will also need:

- Cardboard box, size of your choice
- Box cutter or good scissors. DO NOT let young

children prepare the box

- Ruler
- Pen or pencil - make sure you can see the mark on the box
- Yarn for warp – use a yarn that has very LITTLE stretch; llama or alpaca works fine but you can also use cotton.
- Yarn for weft – single color or multiple colors, without much stretch.
- Large plastic or metal darning needle, that your fiber will thread through. I prefer plastic because they didn't pierce the yarn as easily.
- Adhesive - I used “ShoeGoo” and/or opaque tape. I liked “Gorilla Tape” (Note: for “glue” I used an adhesive like clear ShoeGoo. I will use the term glue but it always refers to an adhesive)

For you non-weaving folks, the term warp refers to the yarns on a loom that run vertically, or up and down the length of the fabric. The warp yarns act like a net, catching the weft threads and holding them firmly in place. So the weft yarn is woven around the vertical warp.

Let's Begin:

1. Choose your box, cut off the top four folding flaps as evenly as possible.
2. Measure and mark approximately ½” increments all around the top of the box. Include corners, you can adjust a little smaller to get equal marks all the way around the box.
3. Cut slits down about ½” on each corner and at every mark on the box. The slits will serve to hold the weft yarn that is

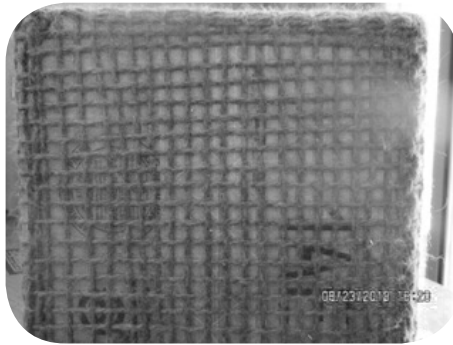


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wrapped around the 'loom', which in this case is a cardboard box.

4. Start in the first slit after a corner. Place the yarn in the slit leaving a six-inch tail inside the box. Bring the yarn down the side and under the box and up to the same slit position on the opposite side. Wrap the yarn into the slit from outside to inside, then around to the next slit and pull the yarn through that slit from inside to outside. Bring the yarn down and back under the box and up to your first side, wrap around the next slit. Continue in this manner until you have the warp in position on both sides.

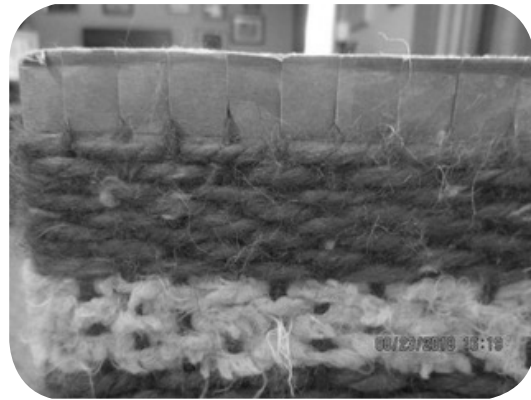
5. When both sides are complete, do the same thing on the ends of the boxes including the corners BUT when you go under the box actually weave the



bottom going over and under the warp yarn (there's a picture of a bottom) before you come back up on the other side and make the next inside loop. I used a large loop plastic darning needle to do the weaving on the bottom of the box. (Hint: I tried just laying the yarn on top of the yarn already crossing the bottom from the sides and ended up gluing fabric over it because it easily snagged when finished and that moved the weft threads.)

6. You are now ready to weave the weft. Start at a corner, leave an approximately 6" tail inside the box. Bring your weft through the corner and go under the warp. I use a darning needle to easily move the yarn over and under each of the warp threads. Yes, you are weaving from the top down.
7. As you weave keep pushing fiber up so you have a nice even line with the slits in the top of the cardboard.

8. Change colors in a corner; use the same corner each time. To change color, bring the first color to the inside of the box by pushing your darning needle up under the weave you have



completed. When this yarn is at the top of the box, leave about a 6" tail and cut. Place the new color in the same

slit, leaving a 6" tail on the inside and with yarn threaded on darning needle, go under the weave you have already completed until you get to the bottom of the weaving and then continue weaving.

By using the same corner all the time for color changes, won't there be a big lump of fiber going up and down? No, it is not noticeable when you finish but until then you will see it. Remember, you are pushing your weft up to make a nice tight weave. When you are very close to the bottom and the weft fiber keeps sliding under the edge of the box at the corners, push it back up tight; you don't want the box showing on the edge.

The weaving is complete, but you have fiber inside the box and the inside of the box does not look good. Options: duct tape, cloth, faux leather, leather, or other ideas you may have.

First, decide if you want to leave the tails inside the box or bring them to the outside. You can trim off your "tails" inside the box since the weaving is complete, nothing will come undone. Or don't trim the tails and bring them back to the outside of the box as a tassel.

Second, decide what you want to do on the inside of the box: material or opaque tape?

Using material or leather: It can be tricky to glue cloth and get a nice line on the outside and inside of the box, but that is what you strive for.

1. Make a "hem" around the edge of the material so it is nice and tidy when you glue it around the outside of the box at the weaving edge.

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2. Lay the hemmed edge of the material against the edge of your weaving with glue already in place. Use clothes pins to hold until dry, carefully removing when dry; just a little wiggle and they will come undone. Start with a side of the box; glue and let dry; then, fit your material in the box and up the other side and over the top to make it set very nicely against the edge of the weaving with the hem.


3. Now with material sized, trimmed and hemmed again; glue on the inside 'side' of the box in the same manner. Glue in sections as it is so much easier to handle the material and get it laid out smoothly. Repeat this process to glue the bottom and ends of the box.

Using duct tape or opaque tape:

1. Begin by cutting a strip of tape two inches longer than the side of the box. Place the long edge of the tape against the weaving, not over, and bring to each end, covering the slits.
2. Before folding the tape down cut a slit in the corner of the duct tape just to the box edge, so it will lay flat when folded over the inside of the box. Fold the duct tape down on the inside of the box on the side and the inch on the ends. Repeat on the other side of the box.
3. Tear or cut tape the length of the end of the box. Place the long edge of the tape against the weaving and press it on the box, now fold over the top of the box and press it down. Repeat on the other on end.
4. I prefer to cover the entire inside of the box with the opaque tape. So I put tape strips on each side (vertical or horizontal does not matter) until covered. Then I cover the ends of the box. Then use strips of tape to cover the bottom. I thought it looked best to put a strip of tape vertically in each corner, so I measured strips of tape the width of the box and folded the non-sticky side to the inside and pushed the tape and rubbed it into the corner of the box, for all four corners. I rubbed over all the tape seams to make sure they stuck well.

Congratulations: Your weaving a decorative box is complete.

A few comments; I have put the duct tape on the outside edge of the box meeting up with the weaving and then covered the inside of the cardboard box completely. I liked this best. I have also left the outside top of the box showing the slits and start of the weaving. It is interesting but does not quite have that finished look. I have used faux leather material and glue and had a very difficult time getting a clean edge on the outside of the box. In the end it looked okay, I just wanted a more "polished" look. Have fun as you weave and finish your box. It is your individual work of art!

So who was it that told me 'you couldn't do anything with llama fiber'? Fiber is Fun! If you have questions, please e-mail me at hollmanbetty@gmail.com or call 580-528-1232. 

Wonderful Changes on the Website: New Information and New Ways to Use It

By Ron Hinds, Webmaster

RMLA's YouTube and Facebook Accounts

The link to RMLA's YouTube account has been added on the upper right corner of the home page. It is just above the Facebook link.

Please, as 'old timers' we are really having trouble using YouTube and Facebook to the best advantage for RMLA. We desperately need help on how to use these platforms to increase RMLA's presence on the web. Please contact Ron Hinds, Web Master at ron@rmla.com.

Membership Directory

The complete printed membership directory is now on the website. It contains Members listed by last name, by interests (according to the last membership form), by business name and by State and City. New members are automatically added when they are added to the roster.

If your listing needs to be updated, send the new information to membership@rmla.com.

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