

## Canvas Weave

### Emery Classification

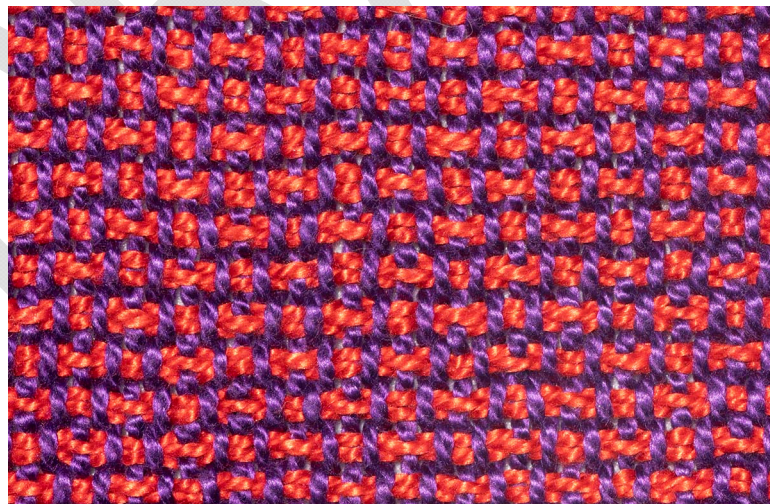
**Simple Weave:** two elements (one warp, one weft). **Rectangular Float Weave Derived from Plain Weave.**

### Weaving Category

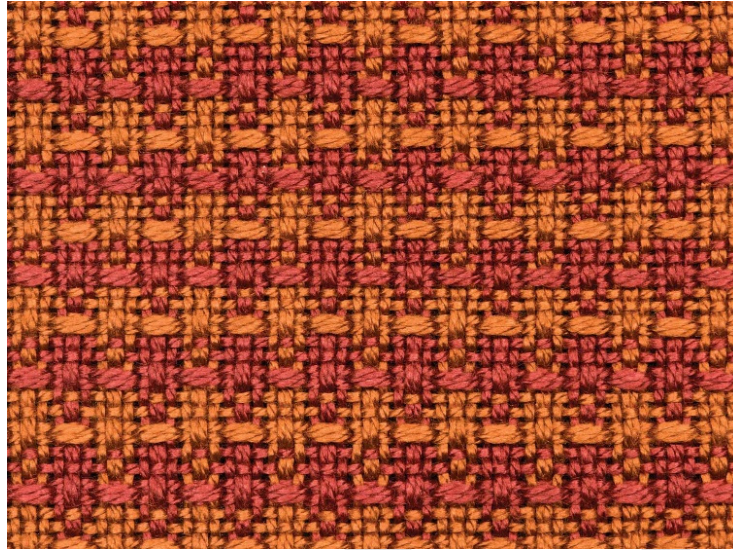
Canvas is a family of weaves, all **grouped warp and weft threads**, but with some different characteristics. The threading can appear to be a twill but, as always, the fabric determines the structure.

### Fabric Characteristics

In *A Handweaver's Pattern Book*, Marguerite Davison devotes an entire chapter to canvas weaves. I like to roughly divide them into those that have small blocks, as in the fabric sample below; they are derived directly from plain weave, allowing it to be woven across and down the side of the fabric.



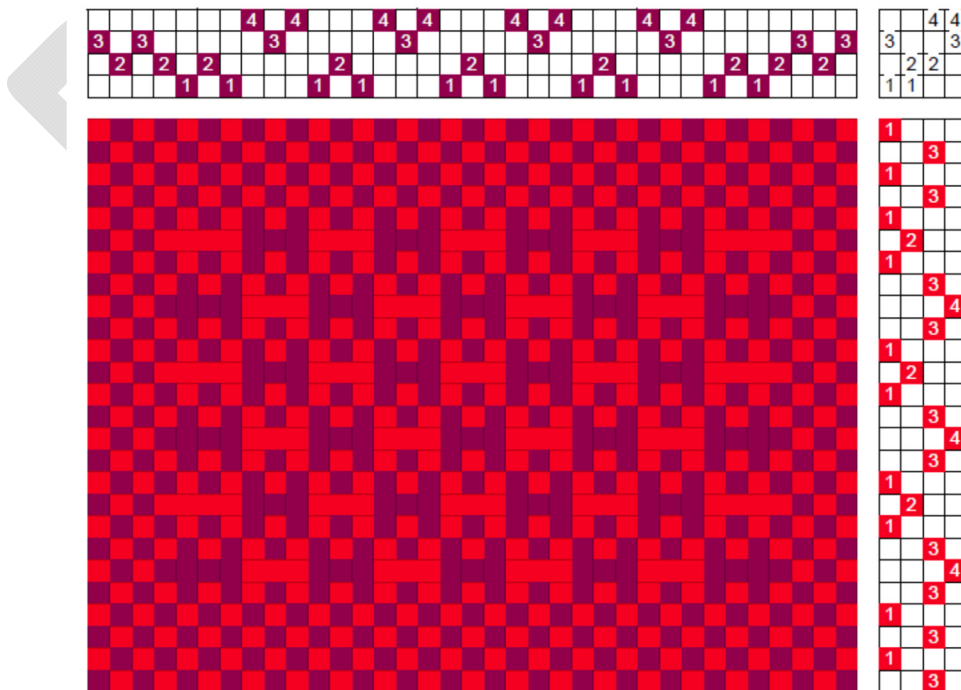
Other canvas weaves extend the blocks by repeating threads on shafts and treadling steps, as in the next sample.



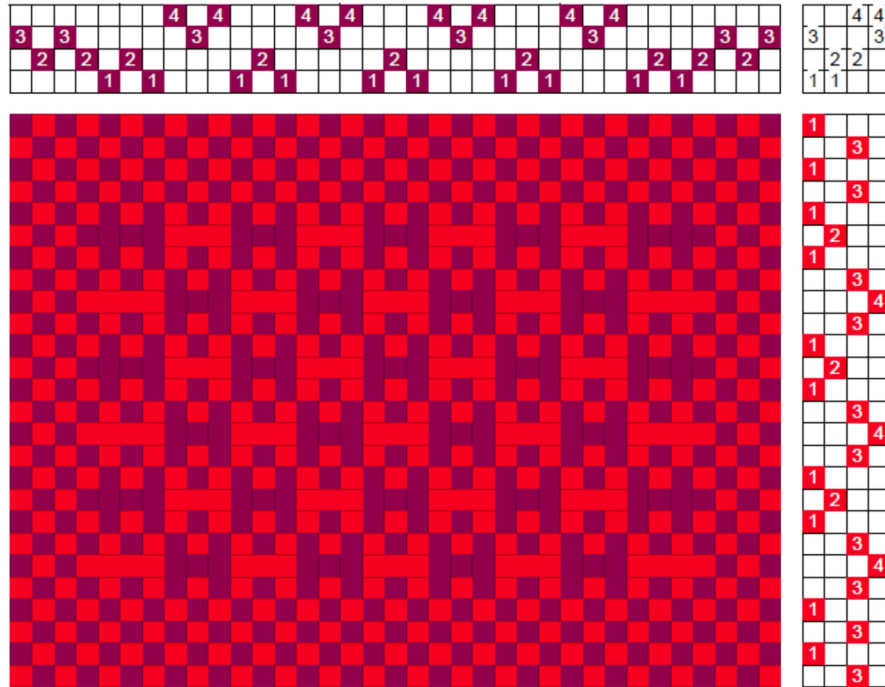
Ena Marston in an old issue of *Shuttle Spindle & Dyepot* (#8, Fall 1971, page 14) confirms what we may suspect: canvas weave fabrics are indeed used as canvas for embroidery.

## Drawdown

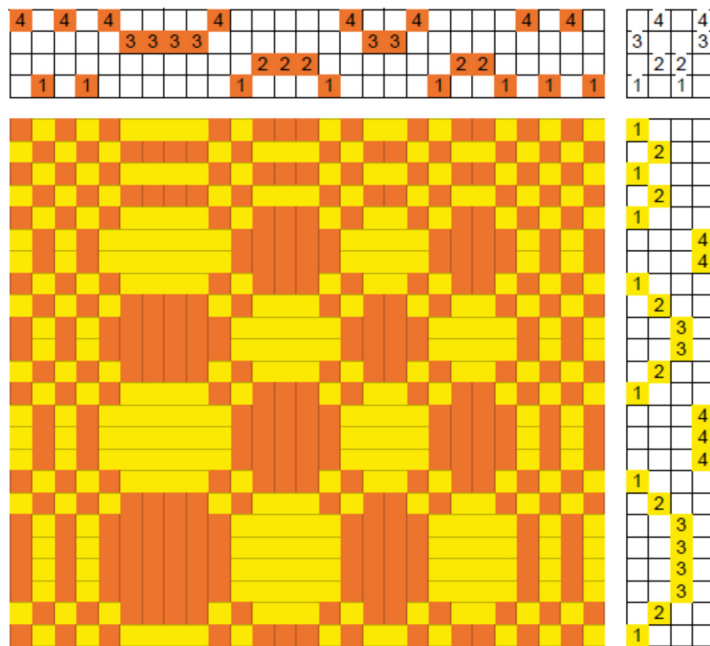
The drawdown below (*sinking shed*) was used to weave the first sample on page 1.







In contrast, the *sinking shed* drawdown below shows larger blocks, resulting from repeating the threading on shafts and the treadling steps. This example has blocks with different numbers of repeats. As in the previous example, the blocks alternate between warp floats and weft floats.



Because of the repeats, plain weave cannot be woven in either direction. A pseudo basket weave results instead.

## **Function**

Although the structure has been traditionally used as a canvas for embroidery, I have woven canvas weave mats successfully.

## **Sett**

The sett depends on the length of the floats. The first fabric sample used a sett appropriate for plain weave and made a study fabric. The second one was sett as for a twill and draped nicely.

## **Width of the block**

As discussed above, some canvas weave have fixed blocks based on a pointed twill. Some have variable blocks that can be increased or decreased by repeating the threading on some shafts.

## **Number of blocks available**

On four shafts there are two blocks available, which is how traditionally it has been used. There doesn't seem to be any reason to expand the structure to more shafts for its intended purpose.

## **References**

Emery, Irene. *The Primary Structure of Fabrics*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1980.

Davison, Marguerite Porter, *A Handweaver's Pattern Book*. Marguerite P. Davison, Publisher, Swarthmore, PA, 1994.

Marston, Edna. *Canvas Weave Shuttle Spindle & Dyepot* #8, Fall 1971, page 14.