

# Rigid Heddle Loom Setup Checklist

## *A Step-by-Step Guide to Setting Up Your Loom for Success*

Setting up your rigid heddle loom is the foundation for a smooth and enjoyable weaving experience. This checklist will guide you through the essential steps to ensure proper preparation for your project. Print this out, tick off the boxes as you go and keep it handy for every new project!

These steps are based on the Beginner's Rigid Heddle Weaving Class at the Online Weaving School. For in depth, video and PDF instruction, you can [purchase the class here](#).

Please note that this checklist is for a plain weave project.

### **Step 1: Planning Your Project**

Calculating for your project is essential, especially for newer weavers. Take the time to do your calculations, write your notes and do your research to help ensure your success.

- Calculate for your project. I recommend that you use my free printable [Calculations Sheet](#), which includes a video tutorial walkthrough.
- Select appropriate yarns for warp and weft (consider material, weight, and durability). [Check out this guide](#) if you feel unfamiliar with yarn choices.
- Test your yarn sett to decide on how many ends per inch you should be weaving at. This figure will be incorporated into your calculations. [This resource](#) will show you how to determine sett.
- Choose your heddle—ensure it matches the desired sett (this will not always match exactly and that's ok).

### **Step 2: Direct Warping Your Loom**

- Clamp the loom to a sturdy surface (unless using a loom stand) to prevent shifting.
- Attach the direct warping peg securely at the distance required for the length of your warp.
- I find it helpful to mark out the width of the project on the heddle with waste yarn. This avoids the need to count more than once.

- ❑ Tie your warp yarn to the back apron rod and commence warping. Depending on your project, you may be taking a yarn loop through each slot or through each slot and hole to the peg.
- ❑ Continue until desired number of ends is achieved.
- ❑ Tie a choke tie with waste yarn near the warping peg to secure the warp and gently lift off.
- ❑ Wind on the warp gradually and carefully, using warp separation. I like to use [brown craft paper on a roll](#).
- ❑ When the warp is wound on, cut the warp loops.

### ❑ **Step 3: Threading the Heddle**

- ❑ If you warped a loop for every slot, you will now thread the holes.
- ❑ Take one thread from each slot and thread in a hole. I usually thread to the left of the slot. Continue for the rest of warp.
- ❑ Double-check for crossed threads or skipped slots.
- ❑ If you warped every hole and slot, skip to the next step.

### ❑ **Step 4: Tying On and Tensioning**

- ❑ Tie warp threads to the front apron rod in small, even groups of around 1” width. Use a surgeon’s knot.
- ❑ Go back and adjust each thread bunch again so that they are as even as possible. You can choose to secure the surgeon’s knot with an additional overhand knot, if you wish.
- ❑ Test tension by bouncing threads with your hands—they should feel evenly tensioned but not super tight.
- ❑ Now tighten up your tension using the front brake, one or two clicks at a time. The tension should not be so tight that you struggle to move your heddle to the up position.

### ❑ **Step 5: Final Check & Prep Before Weaving**

- ❑ Separate your warp. You can do this with [cardboard warping sticks](#) or waste yarn.
- ❑ Ensure heddle is securely in place and moves freely between up and down positions. If it drops out of the up position or won’t click into down position, tighten your tension. Test that your sheds are clear in up and down positions.

- Double-check that all threads are threaded correctly and evenly spaced.
- Wind your stick shuttle/s with weft yarn.

### **Pro Tips for Success**

- Take breaks during setup if needed to avoid mistakes caused by fatigue.
- Keep tools like threading hooks, scissors, and measuring tape within reach.
- If something feels “off,” pause and troubleshoot—don’t rush!
- Seek help if you need it.

Congratulations! Your loom is now ready for weaving. Setting up a rigid heddle loom may take time, but the effort you invest at this stage ensures a smoother and more enjoyable weaving experience.

**Do you feel ready to take your weaving to the next level?** I have many resources that can help you do that:

[The Online Weaving School](#)

[Kelly Casanova Designs](#)

[Kelly’s Youtube channel](#)

[Kelly’s Free Facebook group](#)

[Kelly Casanova Weaving Lessons Website](#)

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