

How to Pick a Weaving Loom Part 1

There is quite a bit in this decision. For this reason, I have divided this article into two parts. This is part 1.

First let's look at the different classifications of looms for consideration:

Small Loom

This type of loom is also referred to as a lap loom. It is small, can be carried to different places for use. There is very few, if any, moving parts. It is relatively simple to learn, use and can produce something fairly quickly. The features of these types of looms are limited compared to other types of looms. Small looms are fairly cheap. They usually come in either plastic, wood or, metal. Logically, the cheapest are usually plastic. There are a wide variety of small looms available.

Rigid Heddle Loom

The Rigid Heddle Loom basically needs a surface to work on (much like a table loom) such as a table top, bench etc. In most instances, it comes with a single heddle (the device used to raise and lower the warp thread) which provides the standard weaving style. In many, you can add a second heddle to allow double the shafts in your weaving [1]. This type of loom is easy to learn and use. It has few moving parts and is simple to operate.

Table Loom

The Table Loom is considered a small version of a floor loom [2]. In fact, for some, you can add legs and treadle (foot operation) and turn it into a small floor loom [3]. In their basic state, they require a surface to work on. This refers to some kind of flat surface. The Table Loom is operated by hand. There are a wide variety of different Table Looms that can provide a variety of different results. Overall, they are very versatile. Different Table Looms come with different features.

Tapestry Loom

The Tapestry Loom is basically a big size Frame Loom [1]. Predominantly, the Frame Loom comes from the small loom family. The Tapestry Loom often stands on the floor but there are smaller versions that can be operated on table top and other surfaces. This type of weaving can be simple or complicated. It all depends on the user and how intricate the project is. This type of loom generally works towards some form of pictorial result [4]. This means it can create pictures [4] usually for wall hanging. As said previously, the intricacy of

the picture depends on the intentions of the creator.

Floor Loom

As could be easily guessed, the floor loom sits (or stands) on the floor. In many instances, the weaver sits to use a floor loom. The foot operates pedals (treadle) which control the shafts of the loom [2]. These looms can create a wide variety of products from something simple like scarves to something more complex such as blankets, rugs and a lot more[5]. They can also use a far wider variety of material than smaller looms. It could be argued that the floor loom could give you the widest possibility of projects in weaving.

General Loom Information

Before we start looking at specific considerations that need to be made to determine the right loom, let's look at some overall facts related to looms.

1. Smaller looms are predominantly cheaper.
2. Smaller looms are usually made from plastic, timber or metal.
3. Larger looms are usually made from timber or metal.
4. The width of the loom that you are using depicts the maximum width of the project you are creating.
5. Smaller looms require less maintenance than bigger looms.
6. The bigger the loom, the more time you would have to invest to keep it in working order eg. cleaning, making sure the moving parts are working etc.
7. With bigger looms, your projects can be considerably bigger. You need to make sure that you have sufficient supplies ie wool or other material you are weaving.
8. Bigger looms are more complicated to use.
9. There is a far wider variety of projects that can be done on a bigger loom.
10. Bigger looms can use a wide range of material for the warp and weft whereas the smaller looms are more limited.
11. Bigger looms are more costly in every regard including the actual loom, the amount of material and, maintenance and repairs.

EXTRA NOTE ON POINT 4 ABOVE – This point is not 100% accurate as you can create multiple items on a small loom, and join them together to create the final product eg. using a potholder loom (a small loom) to create multiple squares and then joining them together to create a blanket or something else. A lot of the smaller looms can be used in this manner including the flower loom, scarf loom, square loom, frame loom etc.

There are other types of looms that haven't been mentioned here. This is because they are considered more specific to the weaving tasks. These include (but not limited to) the Peg Loom and, the Inkle Looms.

References

- [1] Selecting a Weaving Loom? <http://www.woolery.com/Store/pc/Help-Selecting-A-Loom-c41.htm>

[2] How to choose the best loom for your needs

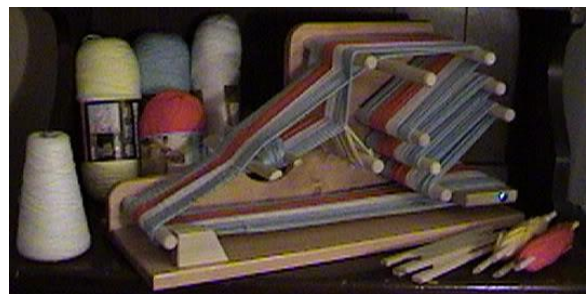
<http://www.theloomroom.co.uk/userfiles/file/How%20to%20choose%20the%20best%20loom%20for%20your%20needs.pdf>

[3] Small Weaving Looms: 4, 8 & 16 Shaft Table Looms

<http://www.applehollow.com/tablelooms.html>

[4] Tapestry Basics <http://www.mirrixlooms.com/tapestry-basics/>

[5] Floor Looms <http://www.paradisefibers.com/weaving-loom-for-sale/weaving-loom/floor-looms-2345.html>



<http://theweavingloom.weebly.com/>