

San Diego Creative Weavers' Guild  
**Master Weaver Certification Program Supplemental Information**

*Please read before beginning to weave for submission*

The mission of the Master Weaver Certification Program of the San Diego Creative Weavers' Guild is to guide independent self-study and recognize achievement. The aim is educational rather than competitive. It has been designed to aid development of weaving knowledge, skill, record keeping, and encourage experience with a variety of fibers and end products. It is not a beginner's "learn how to weave" guide. It is assumed that the registrant is already familiar with warping a loom, reading recipes, basic weaving processes, control of tension and selvages, yarn joins, the need for even beat and the proper finishing of cloth. You should already be able to figure yarn requirements and setts, and able to produce accurate records. The nature of the program expects that you will go beyond copying recipes and do readings from a variety of sources to learn about structures and their possibilities. Work completed with direct supervision as in a structured class or workshop does not fulfill the purpose of this program, which is aimed toward fostering and critiquing your independent efforts.

Three levels are recognized with certification; each assumes increasing accomplishment:

**Level I Apprentice** critiques your basic skills as shown in four woven articles and records.

**Level II Journeyman** encourages research of specific weave structures; 10 articles minimum.

**Level III Master** stresses greater in-depth study of certain structures, more variety of fibers, work beyond 4 shafts, and 2 samplers each showing 12 different treadlings on a structure.

All levels require worksheet records; Levels II & III include writing explanations, definitions, and filling in a drawdown by hand. The weaver must achieve certification for each level in sequence. Articles must be woven expressly for this program, not simply collected from previous weaving efforts.

### **Preparation**

Become familiar with good general weaving references, both overall compendiums such as Mary Black's New Key to Weaving, and publications that are devoted to specific topics such as the Tidball Monographs and Zielinski's Master Weaver Series. Review past issues of Weaver's Magazine and Handwoven; see their cumulative topic indexes. These and a multitude of other resources are available from the SDCWG library. Take advantage of Guild educational mini sessions, workshops, and other formal classes. The projects from those directed studies although not submissible, will lead toward developing a more advanced version independently.

Sampling is time learning. It allows you to view color combinations as they blend in actual structures and to feel the actual cloth to see if it has the right "hand" for your purpose. You can wash and dry the sample to check for sett and shrinkage after the yarn fulls. Even the best sett guides can't cover every possible structure grouping, float length or mix of fibers.

Strive for more than the bare minimum. The more effort expended, the great knowledge and skill gained. Check twice to see that requirements are met. Judge mentors cannot pass articles or records with omissions. As one gains experience skills naturally improve. Because of this, each level is judged more critically.

Check each step of the process to avoid surprises later. Examine the first inch of the woven cloth at the loom; use a mirror to view the back surface. Look for correct tension, pattern, and sett. Uneven tension will increasingly cause selvage problems. It is helpful to include an extra ½ yard to your warp length. Sampling across the full width, which will give a truer beat than a narrow test warp. That extra 18 inches should allow cutting off an 8-inch woven test with hemstitching for a washing and processing; with 8 inches remaining for retying (and resleying if indicated).

## **Definitions of particular terms**

**Original:** It is not enough just to change the colors or size of a recipe you find. Take the structure and design your own interpretation by making changes to the fiber type or size, purpose or article.

**Article:** Finished usable articles should conform to standard or practical sizes. Just labeling a section of cloth as a placemat is not acceptable. While a minimal size has been listed, a variety of sizes and purposes is encouraged. Articles rather than just samples are required in order to exemplify your understanding of sett, hand, appropriate fiber type and finishing for a stated purpose. The range of articles includes but is not limited to: placemats, runners, household linens, towels, afghans, blankets, bibs, bags, purses, garments, stoles, scarves, and wall hangings (ready to hang). Note that selvages must be accessible for viewing on all Level I items, and the majority of items for Levels II & III. Pillows should be left unstuffed. Upholstery yardage maybe submitted before upholstering the object, but must be accompanied by proper documentation such as a photo of the chair to be covered and how the amount needed was determined.

Any sewing for Level I should be done by the weaver. If one wishes to use the services of a professional tailor for one garment at later levels, it should be so noted and excess yardage submitted with that garment to exemplify the fabric without additions of interfacing and linings that can stabilize and masque problems. Oversized projects that are difficult to transport are not encouraged; consider submitting a reasonably sized mock up. If weaving a set (i.e. guest towels), only one is required for submission but the records should reflect materials for more. One format (i.e. placemats.) may be used for more than one article at levels II & III as one may desire a mix and match set, but the majority of articles at any level must show variety of purpose.

**Percentage requirements:** The amount of blocks or lace structure included must be enough to demonstrate that the weaver understands how to plan, combine, and manipulate these techniques within both the warp and weft directions. An all around border means that it appears on both sides and the top and bottom. It must be of a different weave structure from that of the body, accomplished through both threading and treadling, not just a color change.

**Fibers:** Check references for handling and finishing specific fibers such as linen, wool, chenille, etc. Wool is considered any fiber from an animal (mohair, dog fur, angora, etc.) The wool yardage requirement means 100% wool, as the purpose is to show your knowledge of how to plan for the changes resulting from wool finishing processes. Rayon and Tencel are produced mechanically from wood cellulose and are therefore natural fibers. Learn how to identify mystery fibers by doing burn tests.

**Twills:** When woven “as drawn in” a direct twill should evidence a 45 degree angle, the product of a correct balance of 50% warp and 50% weft interlacement. A point twill requirement is to be taken literally. Broken twill is not a true point; rosepath is one of the point twills.

**For other terminology questions:** check the glossary of Black or van der Hoogt’s Complete Book of Drafting for Handweavers or the Encyclopedia of Weaving by S. Zielinski, etc.

## **Finishing**

Check sources such as Finishing Touches for the Handweaver, by Virginia West. Articles may be finished with hemstitching, fringe, or handsewn folded hems. When hand sewing or hemstitching, the stitching yarn should be appropriate in color and size. Often a finer yarn than used within the weaving is preferable.

Consider embroidery floss comes in a wide color spectrum and can be split into plies. Hem size, fringe length, or groupings should flatter, not overpower the article. (Preplan to reduce bulk by weaving the inner hem fold areas with finer weft as that area won't be visible). For MW entries, do not use serged or zigzag stitching as the *final visible* treatment on article ends. Such stitching or commercial binding is admissible for garment inner areas that are usually hidden. All articles should be properly washed to full yarns and steamed or ironed. Rug samples and tapestry should be blocked and ends secured appropriately. (See rug and tapestry resources).

### **Records**

Use official SDCWG format on cardstock, whether copied, download, or purchased worksheets. Fill in complete information that would allow another to copy your article from your recipe. See recipes in Handwoven for examples of standard symbols, how to mark repeats, blocks, colors, threading keys, treadling orders, tie-ups, etc. Profile drafts should be identified as such. Use a black fine marker not ball point or pencil to fill in appropriate graph squares completely. Written Information may be neatly hand written or typed. All records are to be filled in by the weaver and be correct for the listed article. Attach yarn samples. Minimal corrections may be done with whiteout. The corrected record sheet may then be Xerox copied if preferred to present the neatest appearance. The drawdown requirements must be done by hand in ink, not computer generated. Any use of auxiliary equipment (dobby, fly shuttle, computer assisted loom, etc.) must be noted. Records for use with a standard loom are required for all articles and samples. Include computer records as well whenever a computer-assisted loom was used. All record sheets should be presented in a notebook or folder that opens to lie flat. Plastic sleeves and support material or photos are permissible but not mandatory. (For example, one may wish to show the china plate that influenced the design and color of a placemat, etc.) Include a first page inventory of submitted articles, samplers, worksheets, and writings.

### **Presentation**

Each woven item must have a tag marked with your registration number and a number matching the corresponding record sheet. All other submitted written material must also have your identifying number. Gather all woven items in a clean, crisp, suitable box large enough to preclude too much folding. Roll long articles on cardboard tubes cut to fit. Do not place articles in plastic bags. The notebook may be placed in the bottom of the box unless it is too heavy.

### **Time Line**

You must be registered by any June prior to submitting at any September guild meeting. Mail or delivery to the chair may be arranged beforehand. About 2 months are required for the evaluation process. Articles which have on exhibit (San Diego County Fair, etc.) are permissible if they fulfill all the necessary requirements, but all articles for any one level must be submitted on the same due date. Once registered, there is no ending time limit.

### **Resubmissions**

There may be articles that did not pass judging. You are encouraged to resubmit either a newly woven correct copy of that article or a new interpretation or format. However, be sure that any new submission fulfills the same requirements as those for the article that did not pass. New record sheets must be done to reflect any changes. Resubmissions may be turned in only for the September due date, and should be accompanied by appropriate records. Level I must have 4 articles in the resubmission, but may include those previously passed as part of the four. Resubmissions for Levels II & III may be just the re woven article(s) and/or record sheet(s), not the full number of articles and samples required for that level. All the necessary resubmissions for any one level must come in as a body to be considered at the same time, not piecemeal over many Septembers.