
Woven Finger-Knit Rug with Anne Weil

Chapter 1 - Woven Finger-Knit Rug

Overview

(pop music) - I'm Anne Weil, I'm a maker and designer. I blog at FlaxandTwine.com where you'll find all kinds of crafty DIYs. And I also offer the book *Knitting Without Needles*. (pop music) We're gonna be doing one of my favorite projects which is the woven finger knit rug. Now I love finger knitting. I loved it enough to write a whole book about it including *Arm Knitting*. But it's really a great craft. It's completely self-sufficient, all you need are your fingers, and a ball of yarn, and I love that. First, I'll show you all the basics of finger knitting. Next, I'm gonna show you how to build a simple loom. Then, I'll show you how to weave the finger knitting into the loom. And finally, we're gonna finish off our rug with some adorable tassels. (pop music)

Materials

- To make this finger knit rug, you're gonna need 650 yards of worsted weight yarn. This is Blue Sky worsted cotton, but any worsted weight yarn will do. 650 yards breaks up this way. You need 300 yards of one color, 300 yards of a second color, and then 50 yards in the color that you want your tassels to be in. We also need some scissors, a hole punch, a yardstick. We need a mat board that is 32 by 20 inches, and you can find that at an art store. What you want is some additional rigidity, so that your loom holds the tension of your warp threads and doesn't bend. And then you also need some scrap cardboard for shuttles to help carry your finger knitting through your loom. You need a pencil, and then you need some twine, this is a hemp twine, to build the warp threads on your loom. You need something that's really strong and that's not gonna stretch too much.

How to finger knit

- Let's learn how to finger knit. All you need is that ball of yarn. We're gonna start by taking the end. You wanna put that yarn across your palm, and you want about eight inches of tail behind. So pinch your thumb to your hand, just hold that tail for now, you won't have to do that for long, but just for now, and what you want to do, is you want to go over your forefinger, under your middle finger, over your ring finger, behind, under and around your pinky. Then you're gonna bring that around and you go under this time your ring, over your middle, and behind your pointer finger, and you'll bring it around, again, we're gonna go back the other direction, we're gonna go under your middle, over your ring finger, around your pinky, we're gonna go back under your ring finger, and over your middle finger. And you'll see here, this is basically your cast on of your finger knitting, and you have two strands across each finger, and that's what you want. Then you're going to take this bottom strand, starting with your pinky, and you're gonna take the bottom strand and pull it over that top strand. Take the bottom strand, pull it over the top strand. Bottom strand over the top, and then this tail, it's a little loose, right, 'cause that was our beginning, we just bring that over the top and we let it hang in the back. Then we start with our next row, and it's gonna be the same way. We should now have one stitch on each finger. And we're gonna take that yarn and we're gonna rewrap that yarn. We're gonna go around our pointer finger, behind our middle, over our ring finger, around our pinky, behind our ring finger, and over our middle finger, and you see, we have those two strands on each finger again. Now we're gonna start with our pinky, we're gonna bring that lower strand over. And on our ring finger, we're gonna bring that lower strand over the top. Middle finger, lower strand

goes over the top strand, and the same with your pointer finger. And this'll start to move up a little bit, and you can push this down as you go, as you do each row. I like to finger knit above my middle knuckle, 'cause it gives you more consistent tension, 'cause you don't have to pull as far. A lot of times when people start out, or kids, they'll do it way down there, and then you have to really pull to pull them over your finger, so I find that gives you less consistent tension and bigger stitches. So I like to keep 'em above this knuckle here. So you'll start to develop a nice way to swing your fingers and pick up the stitches and move, as you get more comfortable with the process. And it just goes really fast. You just whip it up like this. Keep going, and you can see as you pull it taut, it just makes this nice chain, it kind of roll, the sides of the fabric roll into a tube, so it's almost like it's a big fat yarn, and that's what we're gonna use for the weft on our rug. And that's all there is to it. And now you just keep finger knitting all 600 yards that you have, 300 in one color, 300 in another, don't forget to reserve 50 yards for the tassels, but I'm gonna show you, when you get to the end of the ball, how to finish off your strand. So I'm gonna pretend here that I've come to the end of my ball. Done a lot of finger knitting, and here is the end, and you can knit almost to the very, very end of your ball of yarn. This is how we're gonna bind off finger knitting. You take this end, and you can see it comes from your middle finger, that was the last place it came through, right there, from the back. From your middle finger. We're gonna take this end and we're gonna feed it up through the pinky stitch, we're gonna feed it up through your ring finger stitch, and now because this stitch on your middle finger is the last stitch, we're gonna skip over that one and go up through our middle, er, our pointer finger here, and then we're gonna bring that end and lastly go through that middle finger stitch. So you go through your pinky, your ring finger, your pointer finger, and then your middle finger. And then we just take this off our fingers, hold onto that tail, and then you just pull that taut. And there you go. You've got your chain. So you'll have piles and piles, and here's what it looks like. This is about 150 yards of finger knitting. Yay.

Make loom and shuttle

- Now we're going to build our loom. To make it, you need your mat board, your ruler, pencil, the scissors, and the twine we talked about. The first step is to come and measure from one end. You're going to have the short end here to your left, and this is the long end off to my right. We're going to make a line across the short end of the board that's three quarters of an inch in from the end, so I'm going to just put a mark here at the three quarter inch mark, and then over here, same thing, I'm going to put a mark at the three quarters of an inch mark. I'm going to take my yardstick and I'm going to match up those lines, and I'm just going to draw that line all the way across, just like that. Next we're going to place marks at one inch intervals across the board. We're going to line up our yardstick across the board and we're just going to put a little mark here at one inch. Now when you do the loom, you want an even number of slits because in the end you end up tying pairs of your threads together. So you're going to have a little extra board at the very end. You want an even number of marks across the end of your board, and in this case I have 18 marks. Next we're going to just extend these lines out to our three quarter inch line in. Basically what we're making here are our cut lines for our warp threads. So you just do this all the way across, and then we're going to cut those slits. You just want to go cut up to that line, then three quarters of an inch in from the edge. It's all marked out. I like to get it all marked out in advance so I feel comfortable with where my cuts are. You're going to do this all the way across the edge, and then you're going to repeat the same process on the other side. You do the same measurements and the same cuts, making sure that you have the same extra space on the other side that you have on this side. Once you have all your cuts

in your loom and you're ready to thread the warp onto it, you want to take your twine, and again, you want something that's really strong, that's not going to pull apart or stretch when you have it on your loom because it's going to be under a lot of tension, so I like this hemp twine. You want to bring it through that first slit and leave about eight inches, and bring it underneath the board. And when we do this, I'm going to do the first wrap all the way around the one side, and then we're going to progressively move across, but for this first one we're just going to go back through this initial slit. I like to bring it all the way to the other side instead of going just around the tabs because I think you're just asking for the, your warp thread to come up. This way we have a nice anchor that extends across the whole loom, so you're going to have a really stable surface to weave on. So what we're going to do is come over one slot when we come down to this side, and then we bring it up into the same slot on this side, and you want your tension to be flat, you want your warp threads to be laying flat on the loom. You do not want to do it so tight that your loom is bending. It should just stay flat on your surface. And so when we bring the thread across to this side again, we're going to go in the next notch over here, and you want to pull it taut underneath so that it's not loosey goosey on the other side. Just pull that taut there, and then keep going and just do your whole loom that way, all your slots. When we get to this final one, we're going to make a full circle again to end this up so that we make that nice firm warped thread for our last loop here because there's a lot of tension on this outside strand, so we're going to come all the way around again, make sure that's nice and taut, and back through that first slit again, or the last slit again, and then we're going to cut it about eight inches here of tail and cut that in the front. And that's it. Your loom is finished and we're going to get ready to weave. Now to do that we're going to make shuttles to help carry our yarn across our loom. So to do that I use just scrap cardboard. If you have extra of the mat board, that's great. I decided to use this cardboard. It's reinforced with a piece of tape, which makes it a little stiffer, and that's nice too. This is an inch and a half by about 12 inches. So we just want to poke a hole in the end of our shuttle and we're going to end up tying the finger knitting to the shuttle, and that will help us weave more easily through the loom. This pattern calls for two colors at the same time, so we're going to have two shuttles to bring that finger knitting across. And that's it, we're ready to get weaving.

How to weave and change colors

- We're going to start by attaching our weft to two are shuttles so the material that goes in and out, over and under the warp of your loom, that's called your weft and that's our finger knitting. So we're going to attach one of each color to the shuttle and you just want to go through the hole that you've made and you're gonna just knot this on there. Nothing fancy. We're just gonna do the same for our white here. We're gonna thread it through that hole in our shuttle. Gonna tie a knot. So like that. Start with the blue. We're gonna start by going under the first strand. We're gonna go over and under. Over under. You just want to make sure that it's every other one. The shuttle makes it easier to bring through the loom and if you lift up the end of the loom a little bit you get some slack in these lines and you have room to bring your shuttle through. So we're gonna pull this whole length through. I'd like as few attachment points across my whole rug as possible. So when you get to the end of a finger knit strand, you obviously have to attach to the next one to keep going which we can do and hide in that in the body of the rug so it's not a big deal, but I just would rather have as many continuous strands as possible so I deal with pulling all this length through. One thing that's super fun if you're doing this with kids or somebody else, you can have them run across the living room with your finger knit strand and it can be a really super fun adventure of making. So that's

another thought. You're gonna come to the end of your strand and you want to leave a little bit of room here at the end. I'm leaving about an inch and a half. And you want to make sure it's relatively untwisted. You'll see here that I have it at an angle. And you want it at this angle so that when you push it down, you're releasing some of the tension across that strand. If you have pulled it just taut across here, I'm gonna just show you this taut. It would be pulling really tightly across and that's how you end up with your rug curving in like this. So if you gonna bring it back here for a second. If you start with it up here, then when you push it down, it kind of keeps some of that looseness in the strand in your weft. And it keeps that kind of loose which will keep a nice flat full rug for you. After you've done your row of the blue, you're gonna start in with the white. It follows right behind the blue. You can see where we went under this first strand with the blue, we're now gonna go over that strand with the white. So we're basically gonna do the opposite. Anywhere we went over, we're now gonna go under. And you're gonna do that all the way across your loom. And it's just good to check as you go before you pull the whole strand out, you wanna make sure that it's over that it lines up. You gone under where it was over before and over where it was under. And it's every other. And then you can go ahead and pull that strand all the way across at that angle. Like we talked about so that you have that loose tension in your strand when you finally push it down to the weaving. You see, we've left it here at the angle and then that's when you go ahead and you push it down to the beginning of your weaving. Right down there, you kind of nest them up against each other. So with your two ends, we're just going to make a simple knot. Bring them together like that where they're kissing just like that and you can see you can barely see a thing. They look almost like they were meant to be together. You don't want to pull it so tight that the ends overlap but you just want it to so that the ends are abutting right up against each other just like that. You tie a knot. And we're gonna weave these ends in at the very end. I'll show you how to do that. Now, we're gonna go back to our other side and I'm gonna show you how to then switch to the blue. But you can see that if I just did the blue right on top we would miss this last warp thread. We want to go underneath the white. So you want to make sure your blue strand is going underneath the white. But we do go over this first strand. It's got to be underneath the white. And then we're just gonna start over and anytime we gone over before, we're gonna go over again. The blue always stays in the same pattern. So it is always going over on the same strand. And under on the same strand. Just like that. Now we pull this one all the way through at that angle. So a couple of things here, you can see how our blue went underneath that white strand here. That's gonna hook on that. And then I want to show you here how this strand is kind of twisted as we pulled it across. And you can weave like that and it will be fine but I like to just untwist that strand a little bit so that the finger knit finger knitting is nice and flat. You can see how I started to flatten it out here so that it's not doesn't have that twisted look to it. Just the twist would make it kind of a tighter strand they would be less consistent with the other strands and and the overall weaving would look less consistent. So you can see now how I made that nice and flat all the way across and it's at our angle. And we can just pull this down and push down to the rest of our weaving. and a nice even tension. Nice and loose just like that. Next, we start with our white again. And this time, you can see where the white was under we're also gonna go under and come back across just like we did the first time anywhere. It was under before, it's gonna be under again. We're gonna pull that one all the way across. So here we have at our angle and I like to bring this end at the edge of the warp. Down to the beginning or to the end of the row on this side and you get this nice arch and then you push that down so the tension's nice and loose. If it's driving you nuts pulling through that whole length, I'm gonna show you how to shorten your cords. You can just cut those lengths into halves or thirds. And the weaving part, the

pulling part will be shorter. So let's go ahead and do that. Let's say I've decided, "ugh, I cannot pull all this length through." "I wanna shorten my strand." I'm just gonna give myself a little bit to work with save that part to do another strand. And I'm gonna cut this into two strands. And to do that, you literally just cut through the middle and then I'm gonna show you how to bind this off. There's gonna be one end. You take the cut pieces out. And on this side, you can see one end basically will just close off. This one, that's what happens to this end. It just you pull it tight and it doesn't come any looser. And that's it. That's easy. This side is the side that if you pull on it, the whole chain will come undone. And you can see here, if I kept pulling it, it would just come pull the whole chain and that's not what we want. So what you want to do is take this strand. And if you remember what we did when it was on our fingers, we just ran the end through these loops to close them off. And you can see it's coming from this stitch here. And you wanna just run this yarn through the loops. Want to go through that one last because that's where the yarn is coming from. Come through here, so just secure all those loops that would've been on your finger and pull it taut. And that's binding off that end again. And there you go, we now have two strands to work with again. This is my end I'm gonna weave with now. And now this is a little more manageable and then remember on this side, the blue needs to go over the white so that when we go under, over, it's not going to pull out. Pull away from the side. That white going over the white here anchors down that blue just be all the way to the edge. I've worked up to the point where I've run out of finger knit strand here. And so I need to change to a new strand. You can do it at the edges, but I find you can hide it fairly well right in the middle of the rug. So what we're gonna do is we're gonna take my strand off this shuttle. Gonna unknot this. You kind of need that length to tie it to the other one so you don't want to just cut it off there. And we're gonna take this other strand, our new strand and we're gonna do the same thing we did at the beginning of the rug of our weaving. We're just gonna try and butt those up against each other so that they're close and look kind of of a similar thickness there. We're gonna knot these ends together. Kind of right in the middle there just like that. We're gonna do one more. You have to square a knot. Just like that. Then we're gonna attach the other end to our shuttle. Just like this. So you can see here, we are over, under this one's got to be over, and under over, under, over, under, over just like this now pull this whole strand through. This is our new strand so we got that same length on it again. When you have this attachment point, we're gonna weave these ends in later. When you have this attachment point, you don't want it to be on top of a warp thread. You're gonna want it to be underneath one of these warp threads. And I like to pull it so that the tension's just a little bit looser. Like that. Gonna bring this down. And make sure that that attachment point ends up underneath our warp thread. And we do that because when we bring the blue across, it gets hidden underneath that. And I'm gonna show you how it basically disappears by bringing the blue across. And you can see our blue is almost to the end as well. Let's straighten that out. Bring it down. And you can see that once we've weaved this end in, it's a little twisted. Now you want to weave it underneath the white strands. Make sure it sticks out a little bit. So bring it kind of over underneath this warp thread. Because these whites almost end up touching when it's all packed down densely so you wanna go underneath the white strand here. And we're gonna kind of bury it in that way. Right underneath. We're gonna trim this off. And you can see, you can't see our attachment point there. It's kind of hidden. And the same with our ends we can just tuck that in. And this is where I want to talk to you about density. I like to have this packed down so you can't see the warp threads through there. So that's just really bringing our threads our weft threads densely together in that rug. That's gonna make a really firm rug. And you can see those ends just blend right in there. Go ahead and keep weaving and when you run out of strand, switch the strand just

like we just talked about and get to the end of your 600 yards of finger knitting and I'll show you how to finish off your rug.

How to finish and add tassels

- I've gotten to the end of my last strands here. You can see there's still more room on the loom, so if you had more yarn, you could go ahead and make it bigger, but I thought it was an even two skeins of each color, and I like the dimensions of the rug, so I'm just gonna stop here. We're gonna close off this end by cutting this white strand a little bit out from the side of the loom 'cause we're gonna have to pull some of the yarn out. And remember, if you remember from changing, cutting the strands, you wanna pull those ends out and bring these strands through the loops. You just close that off like that. And we're gonna butt those ends up against one another by knotting these together with a square knot. And then, see how this is kinda loose at the end, here? We wanna just bring this, bring the tension of that strand back through the loom. And then we're gonna weave these ends by going up the side. And now, if you look at your loom and see places where it's not as dense, there's some freedom in pushing and pulling the tension to the sides and throughout the middle to make a more even texture for the overall look. So let's go ahead and flip this over and finish it. So we're gonna take our whole loom and flip it over so that it's face down. This is the slightly scary part, 'cause you're gonna be releasing the strands of your warp. We're gonna go ahead and just cut through our warp strands as we come across here. And you can see they're really long. We're gonna trim them after this, but I like to keep them long, keeps that nervous feeling of your warp gonna fall off your strands (laughs) at bay. So we're gonna push it all to the side here and leave them through the notches and flip it back over. And we're gonna turn it, we're gonna rotate it, so that one end is facing you and you've got all these strands here. And what we're gonna do is, to finish this off, we're gonna pair each of these warp threads as we go, we're gonna knot them together, and that secures the end of the rug, just like that. So let's start here, we're gonna un-notch one, un-notch another. We're gonna just knot this just like that. And you can let it squeeze up a little bit, 'cause you wanna make the tension of this beginning part of the rug fit with the middle of it, so try and keep these knots fairly consistent in terms of distance. And you just do this along both ends. This is why we made sure that we did an even number of notches across each end, so that each strand of warp had a pair. I like to use a square knot, which means you tie the first one over one way and then, when you go to do it again, you bring the strand over the opposite way, so you get a knot that doesn't slip. I've knotted off the other end the exact same way, and now we're gonna make some tassels. To do that, we're going to wrap our yarn around our hand 10 times. And I find this, like, beginning part of my palm is a good length. And after we've wrapped 10 times, we're gonna cut it right at the end. We want the ends to be at the bottom of our set of loops. We're gonna take this off, and we're going to attach it here, to this first pair of strands. So we bring it through the loop, and we're gonna tie a knot just like that. Tie a square knot to tie that set of loops to the end of the rug. Now, at this point, you could weave these warp threads into your rug, but I kind of like them in the tassel. I feel it's just reminiscent of what we've done here, and having those warp threads still in the tassel looks cool and textural, so I'm gonna leave them there. We want to cut a seven inch strand of yarn, and we're gonna go bring that underneath our loops here. We're gonna tie about 3/4ths of an inch down from the rug. We're gonna tie a knot here, same thing, square knot. And you can see, with that seven inches, your ends should come to about the bottom of the tassel. And you can puff this thing up, the little top cap part, a little bit. And then what we're gonna do, we're gonna cut our warp ties, we're gonna cut the ties from the tassel and we're gonna come through the loops

that we've made here at the bottom, we're gonna cut those. And you've got your first tassel. So you can see here, I have my whole pile of loops already made. I'm gonna go ahead and attach the rest of those loops to each set of warp threads to make my tassels, and then we'll be done. That's it, you guys. I hope you love your cushy new woven rug as much as I do. I wanted to show you a couple of other things that you can do. We made a size that was about 18 inches by 24 inches here, but you can make it as big as you want. This is actually double the loom size, and it required, obviously, double the yarn length and work, but you can do bigger loom sizes, make a bigger rug. The other thing that you can do is you can play with the strands and the pattern. So you could do all one color for 10 rows and then switch to all the other color and make big wide stripes, or do whatever you want to customize this rug just for you. I hope you enjoy it and have lots of barefoot goodness on these cushy rugs.