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3-5 Day Retreat (or longer)

Garment Construction Intensive: Wrap your body in clothing from your own hands.

Offered as a multi-day private or semi-private retreat in my own studio in NJ, this is a terrific opportunity for those wanting to learn to fit and sew clothing from their handwoven, hand printed, dyed, quilted, felted or just commercial fabric, as well as for those more experienced students wanting polished and professional results. Participants get to set their own agenda. Use patterns from the Daryl Lancaster Pattern Collection or bring your own pattern. <https://www.weaversew.com/shop/sewing-patterns.html>

Expect to create one garment per three days of class, depending on the complexity of garment design and fabric choice. Linings, complex collars, welt pockets, bound buttonholes, hand dyed warps, and complex weft patterning will all take additional time.

Participants only need to bring their fabric, any linings or trim, matching thread and their favorite sewing tools. All other tools and equipment will be provided, including interfacing and pattern tracing medium. Janome sewing machines available.

ALL LEVELS ARE WELCOME

Recommendations For Handwoven Fabric

My recommendations are to sett your fabric much denser than you would think. Try 8/2 Tencel at 36epi, 10/2 perle cotton at 30, 5/2 at 20, etc. It will ultimately depend on the structure, and your beat and the loom. I have seen fabrics in just about every fiber and combination of fibers you can imagine. Note: The fabric cannot be too thick, because it gets tough fitting multiple layers through the sewing machine. Any fiber works, if you can weave it, but I find woven cloth for garments will have the best results if at least part of the fabric is a protein content, like wool, which can be fullled up to create a denser, more stable fabric.

Sampling can be advantageous here. I have had students produce wonderful fabrics with a cotton or Tencel warp and [Jaggerspun's Zephyr \(wool/silk\)](#) weft, [Webs' Colrain Lace \(Merino/silk\)](#), or [Silk City Fibers' Wool Crepe Deluxe \(Merino/rayon\)](#) which can be fullled up for a stable, dense but pliable fabric, great for a jacket or vest.

Start with commercial fabric if you are intimidated. Commercial fabric can give you an idea of what weights work for what silhouette.

Here are some of my basic suggestions:

- Sett it denser than you think.
- Avoid long floats, which make a fabric less stable.
- If you want a lighter fabric, choose a thinner yarn, not a looser sett.
- Avoid weft patterning, repeats and blocks. They are hard to match for side seams and such.
- **If you use a hand-painted warp, make sure there is a repeat!**
- Wash your fabric well.



Wash Your Fabric!

<https://youtu.be/ivqviCQgL88>

Finishing is important. **ALL FABRICS SHOULD BE WASHED PRIOR TO SEWING!** The exception here would be fabrics that were processed, dyed, felted, steamed, etc. They would already be preshrunk. If using handwoven fabric, or something commercial that has not been in contact with moisture, steam, water, or whatever, please machine wash your completed fabric **AT A MINIMUM** on **GENTLE CYCLE** for 3 minutes in **COLD OR WARM WATER** using a laundry detergent. This is even suitable for wool and mohair. Fabric may be hung to dry or machine dried if the fabric warrants this type of processing. Test, Test, Test! When fabric is completely dry, it should be steam pressed. You could even have the dry cleaner press it if your iron is inadequate.

Participants should bring:

- If you are driving and would like to bring your own **PORTABLE SEWING MACHINE PREFERABLY WITH INSTRUCTION MANUAL**, EXTRA NEEDLES (size 14), AND BOBBINS AND ALL FEET. TRY TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH ITS OPERATION (especially if you are borrowing one) AND OIL IT OR HAVE IT SERVICED IF YOU HAVEN'T IN A LONG TIME! Optional: If you have a walking/dual feed foot, please include it. If you don't know what that is, don't worry about it.)
- **NOTEBOOK AND PEN (a highlighter is helpful too)**
- If you are not using one of my **PATTERNS**, which I will have available, please bring the **PATTERN** you wish to use, making sure that your size is in the envelope.
- **HANDWOVEN FABRIC OR COMMERCIAL EQUIVALENT** Please refer to the yardage charts shown with each pattern in the Daryl Lancaster Pattern Collection,

<https://www.weaversew.com/shop/sewing-patterns.html> or the back of the pattern envelope for any commercial pattern you want to make, for the correct amount of yardage required for your specific pattern and size. More is always preferable.

- **LINING FABRIC:** As needed, see recommended notions list for each pattern
- **ADDITIONAL LINING** to be used as bias trim as needed. For example, if you wish to finish seams with a Hong Kong seam finish, you will need a yard of fabric, lightweight but with body, that will take a press. i.e. silk with body, linen, lightweight cottons with body, etc.
- **THREAD** (USE LONG STAPLE POLYESTER LIKE GÜTERMANN)
- **BUTTONS IF YOUR DESIGN CALLS FOR THEM.**
- **ANY FAVORITE SEWING TOOLS YOU MIGHT WANT TO USE.** Make sure they are labeled with your name so they don't get mixed up with mine.
- **A couple of old sheets or muslin fabric for creating a test garment if you are bringing your own pattern.**

Bio: Daryl Lancaster, a hand-weaver and fiber artist known for her award-winning hand-woven fabric and garments, has been constructing garments for more than half a century. She has given lectures and workshops to guilds, conferences, and craft centers all over the United States. The former Features Editor for Handwoven Magazine, she has written more than 100 articles and digital content and frequently contributes to various weaving and sewing publications. She now has a YouTube channel, [The Weaver Sews](#) where she shares her extensive experience sewing handwoven garments. Daryl now offers a complete line of digital sewing patterns for handweavers. <https://www.weaversew.com/shop/sewing-patterns.html> She maintains a blog at www.weaversew.com/wordblog Find her at www.Daryllancaster.com