

# Braces from Tovdal in Åmli

This pattern based on a pair of braces from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were most likely woven on a *bandvevrei*, but can just as easily be woven on a modern rigid heddle.

**Difficulty level: Medium+**

Pattern: Magnhild Peggy Jones Gilje with adaptations by Kari Westergaard,  
for Norges Husflidslag and Nordic Craft Week 2024

Photo: Eva Brænd and Gro Njølstad Slotsvik Illustration: Magnhild Peggy Jones Gilje



The traditional costume, *bunad*, worn in the Åmli area in southern Norway during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century would have included a skirt with an attached bodice, *stakk og opplut*, and one or more underskirts. The underskirt did not have an attached bodice and would have been held up by braces. The underskirt with braces would have commonly been worn at home and around the farm, whilst the overskirt and attached bodice would have been worn over the underskirt for more formal wear.

There are several extant examples of these braces in Åmli: this particular set is one of the more elaborately decorated examples. Through ownership we are able to determine that these braces were woven in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This pair was most likely woven on a standing rectangular frame loom with thread heddles, *bandvevrei*, but can just as easily be woven on a modern rigid heddle. It is however hard to get the same count of weft threads per cm as the original.

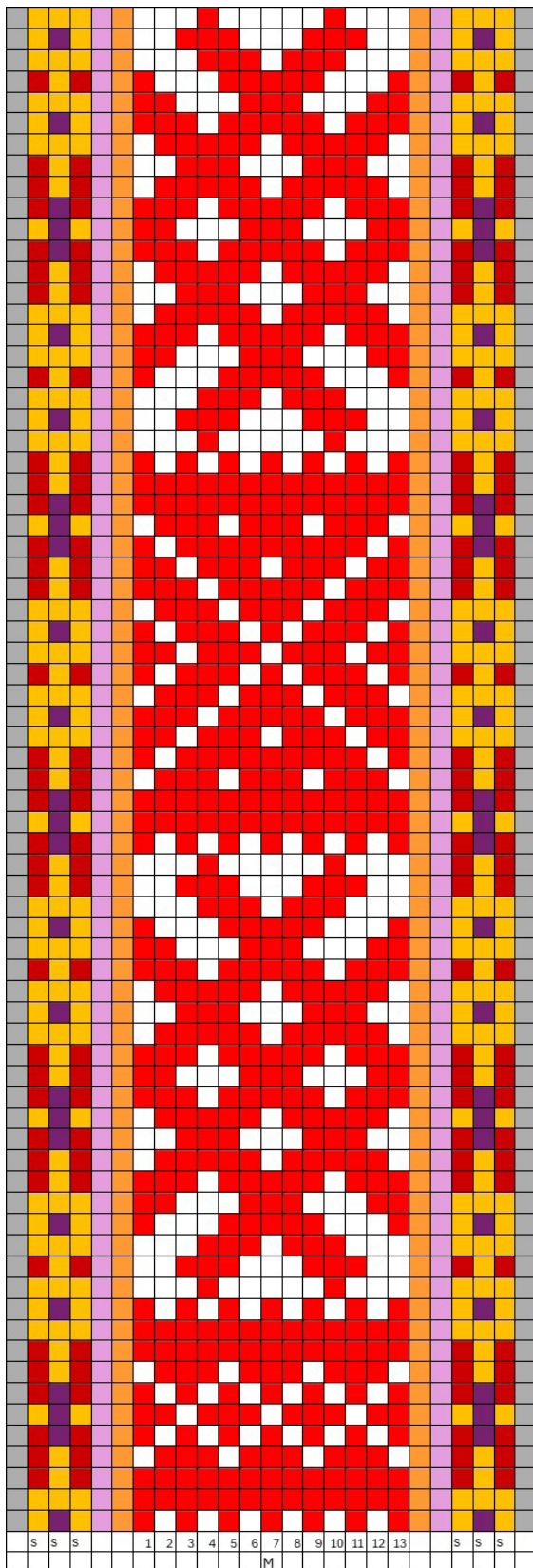


## What you need to get started

Heddle with no fewer than 81 holes and slots and your usual weaving tools, e.g. a Glimåkra 50/10.

Wool: Try different types of wool and cotton (or linen) to see what outcome pleases you most, the original wool is hard to match precisely but suggestions include; single threads of Huldra kamgarn from Hillesvåg or a double thread of Perle 70 (also Hillesvåg).

Cotton: 12/2



### Pattern

Length of warp:  
At least 30% longer than the desired length of your band. Generally, it is easier to make a generous length of warp, it allows for the natural shrinkage as well as ease of starting up a weave and finishing off a weave without getting too close to the heddle.

Cutoffs can be used to make decorative tassels.

Number of warp threads:

- 12 Yellow
- 4 Purple
- 8 Dark red
- 13 Bright red
- 8 Lilac
- 8 Orange
- 28 White (cotton)

Weft:

Double thread of cotton

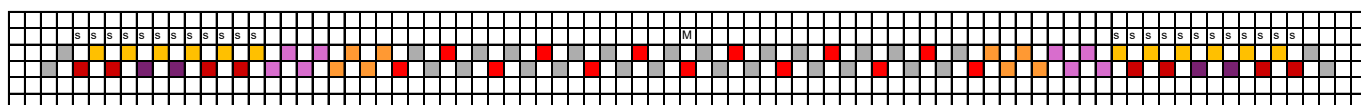
The pattern in the centre (marked 1-13) is created by picking pattern threads both up and down. The pattern on each side (marked s) is formed by only picking threads up. The embroidered ends can be made using a light plain weave wool and embroidery wool.

Tips on how to thread a rigid heddle loom by Durham Weaver



### Threading diagram

The pale grey illustrates the cotton threads.







#### Details of the original braces

Width:	3 cm
Length:	70 cm (including embroidered ends)
Number of warp threads:	81
Warp and weft materials:	Wool and cotton, with a double thread of cotton for weft
Number of weft threads per cm:	7 double

The centre pattern goes over 13 pattern threads and the side patterns are over 12.

Thank you to the owner of the band for kindly sharing this woven piece of Åmli history with us.



#### Magnhild Peggy Jones Gilje @magnhild.peggy

Magnhild has completed an apprenticeship in the craft of *bunadtilvirking*, which is the sewing of Norwegian traditional costumes. She is particularly interested in those that are closely tied to historic regional folk costumes and that are made using traditional techniques. In Norway an apprenticeship usually consists of two years of further education in textiles (or equivalent qualifications) as well as a two year apprentice period, working full-time with one or more craftspeople. *Bunadtilvirking* comprises of sewing as well as relevant techniques such as embroidery, tating, lacemaking and the weaving of bands. Magnhild has specialised in the latter.

Since 2015 she has, together with Eldbjørg Breivik Smeland and Olga Maria Breivik, worked on cataloguing woven bands in the Åmli area. Magnhild has been awarded a Norwegian Crafts Institute three-year scholarship, commencing in September 2024. She will be using this opportunity to further study woven bands and develop her skills as a craftsperson.