SCARF MAKING FOR LEARNERS WITH DEAFBLINDNESS

# Introduction

Scarf making is a valuable and practical activity that offers a great opportunity for income generation. It requires minimal starting capital and uses simple, easy-to-find materials. With basic skills and creativity, individuals can make beautiful scarves that can be sold for profit. The activity promotes independence and creativity and can help individuals earn an income or make scarves for home use, reducing household expenses.

# Materials needed:

* Wooden loom (peg loom or frame with pegs/nails) – Frame for weaving
* Yarn or thick thread – main material for the scarf
* Shuttle or yarn needle (optional) – helps guide the yarn through the warp
* Scissors – used for cutting yarn safely
* Comb or fork – for pushing down yarn
* Ruler or tape – measures scarf length

You can prepare all materials ahead of time. Allow the learner to touch and explore each one before starting.

Note: You can make a loom at home using a smooth wooden plank and small nails spaced about 1–2 cm apart.

# Preparing for scarf making

## 1. Choose a safe and quiet environment

* Find a space that is quiet, free from distractions, and has enough light.
* Make sure the area is clean, spacious, and has a flat surface like a table or desk.
* Minimize noise and distractions.

## 2. Introducing materials

* Show each tool and material one by one (e.g., yarn, loom, needles, scissors).
* Explain what each item is for, using simple language.
  + *“This is yarn. It’s the soft thread we’ll use to make the scarf.”*
  + *“These are scissors. We use them to cut the yarn.”*
* Demonstrate how to handle each item safely:
  + Show how to pass scissors safely.
  + Show how to hold the loom or needles without poking.

## 3. Explore the workspace together

* Invite the learner to **touch and feel** the table or working surface.
* Invite the learner to touch and feel the loom.
* Let them trace the pegs from top to bottom to understand the layout.
* Encourage the learner to ask questions or share how the materials feel.

# Step-by-step process

## Step 1: Setting up the loom

* Assist the learner in identifying the top and bottom rows of pegs or nails on the loom.
* Help them tie one end of the yarn to the first peg on the bottom row.
* Support them in wrapping the yarn up and down between opposite pegs to create vertical lines (called the *warp*).
* Ensure the yarn is firm but not too tight and encourage them to feel the layout as it forms.

## Step 2: Preparing the weft yarn

* Help cut a manageable length of yarn (about two arm lengths).
* Show the learner how to wrap it around a shuttle or thread it through a blunt needle, whichever they find easier to use.
* Allow them to explore how the yarn feels and moves through the tool.

## Step 3: Starting the weaving

* Demonstrate how to pass the yarn over one warp thread and under the next.
* Encourage the learner to follow this pattern across the loom, offering support as needed.
* For the next row, alternate the pattern (if they ended with under, begin with over).
* Use a comb or fork to gently press down the yarn after each row to keep the scarf firm and neat.

## Step 4: Continuing the weaving

* Let the learner repeat the weaving process at their pace.
* Offer encouragement and gentle guidance with each row.
* Allow them to switch colours or textures of yarn for variety.
* Pause occasionally so they can feel the scarf growing and celebrate their progress.

## Step 5: Finishing the scarf

* Once the scarf is long enough (typically 150–180 cm), support them in stopping the weaving process.
* Help cut the vertical threads two at a time and tie simple knots to secure the edges and prevent unravelling.
* Repeat this step on both the top and bottom of the loom.

## Step 6: Tidying and decoration

* Assist the learner in trimming any loose yarn ends for a clean look.
* Offer options for adding fringe, decorative knots, or beads if they wish.
* Celebrate the final product together and talk about how the scarf could be used, gifted, or sold.

# Enhancements and additional tips

## Creative additions:

* Use multi-colouredyarn to create fun patterns or stripes.
* Add decorative knots, beads, or fringe at the ends of the scarf.
* Weave in textured materials like ribbons or fabric strips for a sensory-rich experience.
* Let the learner choose colours and designs to express creativity and build confidence.

## Practical tips:

* Maintain consistent hand-under-hand support, especially during new or fine motor tasks.
* Give short, clear instructions and allow time for the learner to respond.
* Encourage breaks to avoid fatigue and praise progress to build motivation.
* Allow the learner to regularly touch and explore their scarf to strengthen sensory memory and build independence.

## Resources and accessibility:

* Wooden looms can be homemade using smooth wooden planks and evenly spaced nails or pegs (1–2 cm apart).
* For visual learning, visit the [Sense International Kenya YouTube page](https://www.youtube.com/@senseinternationalkenya398/videos) and find the [*Scarf Making*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiGDrJpnC8c) video under the Livelihood and Vocational Training section.