Shopping Workbook

19th-century photo of a man selling spices in Iran, by the Armenian-Iranian photographer Antoin Sevruguin.
Weave Your Own Ancient Egyptian Money

Before coins were used widely in ancient Egypt, people would use things like textiles (cloth), grain, and metals to pay for things they needed to buy. Many people wove their own textiles at home, although some would have been made by specially trained artisans. Take a look at these weaving-related artifacts at the OI, then create your own weaving!

Textiles in Egypt ranged from simple, plain pieces of cloth to highly decorated fabrics like this ancient painted example (right) and this medieval dyed wool example (below).

Loom weights like this one were used to hold threads straight down while a weaver wove threads across the strands.

This plant fiber thread could have been used to weave a textile.

Spindles with whorls were used to help spin fibers into a string by twisting materials like plant fibers or wool into a thread.

Shuttles, like the ancient Egyptian example below, helped a weaver more easily weave threads through a textile as it was made.
Make a Paper Weaving

You will need:
• A few pieces of different colored construction paper
• Pencil
• Ruler
• Scissors
• Glue stick

Instructions

1. Fold one piece of paper in half, hamburger-style.

2. Use a pencil and a ruler to draw a straight line about an inch from the open edge of the paper (not the folded edge).

3. Using scissors, cut across the folded paper from the folded edge up to the line. Don’t cut all of the way through.

4. Unfold the piece of paper. You should have several cuts running from one end of the paper to the other, stopping about one inch from the top and one inch from the bottom.

5. Cut out long strips of different colored paper. You can use a ruler and pencil to draw straight lines to help you cut straight. You can make the strips the same width or different widths.
6. To start your weaving, insert a strip of paper into one of the cuts on your weaving. Thread the strip behind the first strip of your weaving, then above the next strip. Follow this pattern of under and over until you make it across the entire sheet. Leave a little extra length of paper on either end of the strip for now.

7. Push the woven-in strip up to the top edge of your paper.

8. With a new strip of paper, weave into the large sheet following the opposite pattern. If you started with the strip going over the first strip of your weaving, the second strip should go under the first strip of your weaving. Weave the strip across the entire length of the paper.

9. Push your second woven-in strip up to the previous strip. They should make a checkerboard pattern.

10. Repeat steps 6–9 until the entire paper is full.

11. You can leave the overhanging strips on your weaving as tassels, or you can cut them to line up with the sides of the paper as shown above.

12. Glue the end of each strip to the edge of the paper on the front and back of your weaving to finish.
This ivory plaque, excavated at Megiddo, is carved in the Mycenaean style and shows a winged griffin. This mythological creature had a lion's body and an eagle's head and wings. A very similar plaque has been found in the Cycladic island of Delos over six hundred miles away. Other examples are seen on wall paintings in nearby palaces and in the Egyptian Delta. This plaque may have been made in the Aegean, may have been carved by an Aegean craftsperson in the Levant, or may have been a local imitation of an Aegean griffin. The symbol may have been associated with royalty, made by artisans who traveled over land and sea between the palaces of the eastern Mediterranean.