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Twill Pattern Borders

Decorative 'twill' patterned borders have been produced in a variety of ways, and here our goal will be to sort them out. Some superficially similar weaves have hidden features with diagnostic importance-- particularly among South Persian textiles.

Reciprocal Brocading in a Twill Pattern

Heavy, colorful pattern yarns alternate in this weave with thin, hidden ground wefts. We must probe with a needle to find these wefts underneath--they are not visible in photos.

Saddlebag Face. South Persia
23" x 23" (60 cm x 58.5 cm)

PRIMARY STRUCTURE: Symmetrical knots;
H: 9, V: 9, 81 per square inch (H: 35/dm, V:
35/dm, 1225 per square dm). Pile inclines
upward. Moderate to severe warp depression.
Liberal use of discontinuous wefts.

SECONDARY STRUCTURES: Reciprocal
brocading (twill and pointed twill patterns) in the
closure strip; Overlay/underlay brocaded
borders; 2 color, 4-span twining for narrow
borders.

YARN SPIN: Z.

WARP: 2-ply mixed brown/grey/tan wool.

WEFTS: 2 shots between knotted rows: 4-ply
sinuous white cotton alternates with a pair of taut
wool singles.

PILE: 2 wool singles.

OVERCAST SELVAGES: 2 warp units (2,2),
overcast with red wool singles.

UPPER END FINISH: Hem.

[MM--0102. M. Mallett]





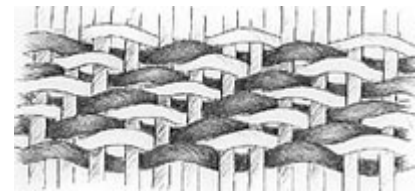
On this saddlebag face with "twill" patterning in a *reciprocal brocade*, tiny red ground wefts are only visible if you probe with a needle or fold the tab horizontally.

The red and blue borders on either side of the "twill" here are *complementary-weft weave*. The black and white borders are *twined*, as are a couple of the red and blue borders; these are all rather mixed together.

Tassels are formed with loose loops of unknotted yarn; fragments of an original binding on the front survive.

Complementary-Weft Weave in a Twill Pattern

Twill patterning that looks very similar to that above appears without any ground wefts underneath. Instead, two weft elements of contrasting colors merely follow opposite, complementary paths. In the diagram, the first yarn weaves over and under two warps; a contrasting color then follows, weaving over and under the opposite warps. The next two-color sequence is offset by one warp.



Neither this weave nor the brocade weave described above are actual twill weaves, but are structures that imitate twill.

Reversals in the twill-pattern alignment are easily formed by changing the direction in which floats are offset. 'Pointed twill' zigzags or diamonds can be formed by varying the length of selected floats.

Khamseh Saddlebag Face. South Persia**28" x 28" (70 cm x 71 cm)****PRIMARY STRUCTURE:** Symmetrical knots;
H: 7.5, V: 10, 75 per square inch (H: 30/dm, V: 42/dm, 1260 per square dm). No warp depression.**SECONDARY STRUCTURES:****Complementary- weft weave with four-span floats (pointed twill pattern) in the closure strip, also in a separate narrow band; 2-color twining.****YARN SPIN: Z.****WARP:** Two-ply dark brown wool, loosely plied.**WEFT:** Medium brown or ivory wool, one or two singles; 2 picks. Wefts do not cross.**PILE:** 2 wool singles.**OVERCAST SELVAGES:** 2 warp units, each a cord made with three wool warps replied; overcast with red wool singles.**[DD-139. Daniel Deschuyteneer]**

It is notable that along the top end of this bag face the old standard complementary-weft "domino" motif has been copied in knotted pile.



Unlike the closure strip on the first bag, this "twill" motif is woven with no ground weft, and thus is a *complementary-weft weave*. Without a tiny invisible plain weave underneath, the structure is less stable, and wide gaps have resulted between the variously colored discontinuous sections.

A narrow border of pink and green twining edges the narrower complementary-weft band.

Hamadan area rug. West central Persia
3'3" x 4'6" (154 cm x 213 cm)

PRIMARY STRUCTURE: Symmetrical knots; H: 9, V: 10, 90 per square inch (H: 35/dm, V: 39/dm, 1365 knots per square dm). No warp depression.

YARN SPIN: Z.

WARP: Cotton.

WEFT: One weft shot between rows of knots; brown wool is plied with white cotton and used along with 2 thin brown wool singles.

PILE: 2 wool singles.

OVERCAST SELVAGES: Two warp units of 4-ply wool, overcast with black wool or goathair.

LOWER END FINISH: Red and blue wool heading cord of countered twining; band of complementary-weft weave in a pointed twill pattern, edged with single rows of soumak.

UPPER END FINISH: Complementary-weft weave band in a pointed twill pattern, edged with soumak.
[JB-100. Jim Bowen]

Opinions on a more exact attribution for this rug have ranged from Maslaghan to Bakhtiari. As with any of the rugs included on these pages, we will appreciate information that can firmly establish the provenance.



The *complementary-weft* band of red and green on this rug forms a pointed twill pattern. A heading cord was made with two countered rows of twining in red and green. We see only one of the two rows here; the second is underneath. See the *Heading Cords* page for more information on these constructions. Heavy rows of black soumak wrapping edge the band.



In this frayed section, the interlacing sequence of the red and green complementary-weft weave can be clearly seen. No ground weft was used.

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