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Complementary-Weft Borders

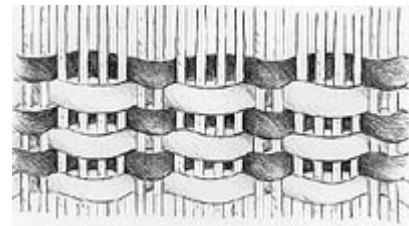
This structure, with its characteristically intricate patterns, has been used primarily for decorative borders--both on flatweaves and on the skirts of knotted-pile objects. It is not actually an 'end finish,' however.

In a *complementary-weft weave*, weft yarns of contrasting colors are used in pairs, and each weft complements the action of the other exactly. If a light weft passes over four warps and under two, its dark-colored companion follows, passing under four warps and over two. The sequences are changed to vary the patterns: some wefts might go over and under 3 warps, or they might go over 5 and under 1, but they are always used in complementary pairs. All wefts are allowed enough ease to cover the warps completely, making this a weft-faced weave.

When only two colors are used, the back and front faces are similar. The interlacement pattern is the same on both; the position of the colors is merely switched. Small X's, for example, may be light on one face and dark on the other.

Typical patterns are very small: little triangles, diamonds and rosettes predominate. The blocky Qashqa'i so-called 'domino' border features one of the more complex motifs.

The only real confusion in identifying this structure sometimes occurs when twill and pointed twill designs are articulated with this method. If those have thin ground wefts hidden underneath, they are *brocaded* instead. I will post twill examples on a separate page.



Northwest Persian Rug

49" x 83" (124 cm. x 212 cm.). Circa 1950.

PRIMARY STRUCTURE: Symmetrical knots, H: 4.5, V: 7, 31.5 knots per square inch. (H: 18/dm, V: 28/dm, 504 per square dm). No warp depression.

SECONDARY STRUCTURES: Complementary-weft weave bands (in X and rosette motif) in red and blue, or brown and blue wool singles. Single and triple rows of 2-span black goathair twining edge and separate the pattern bands; white cotton is also twined with the goat hair for accents.

YARN SPIN: Z.

WARP: 3-ply undyed cotton.

WEFT: 2 picks of thick light blue cotton; in some areas, two-ply brown wool alternates with cotton. Wefts cross between sheds.

PILE: 2 thick wool singles; height: 1 cm.

SELVAGES: 2 warp units (1,1) interlaced by the ground wefts. Remnants of variously colored wool singles can be seen in the area under later overcasting.

UPPER END FINISH: Oblique wrapping with the ends interlaced downward.

LOWER END FINISH: Twined cotton heading cord.
[DD-103. Daniel Deschuyteneer]



Complementary-weft weave borders along with black goathair twining. The patterning reverses exactly from the front side to the back. The rug's twined cotton heading cord can be seen in both of these photos, edged with black goathair twining.



Back side of the rug above.

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