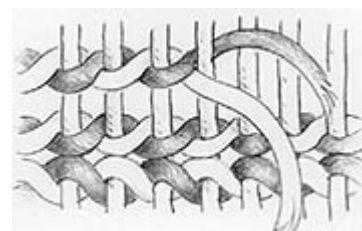


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Twining

One of the most ancient and basic of all fiber constructions, *twining* has served both utilitarian and decorative purposes. On a separate page we have seen twining used for heading cords. Twining has also frequently been used to space and secure the warp at the beginning of a rug, providing a sturdy base against which to pack plain-weave wefts. Other times it has been used simply for narrow decorative borders.



No shed is opened on the loom for twining. The weaver simply encloses a warp with two yarns, gives them a twist, then encloses the next warp and twists again. She may instead enclose two, three or even more warps between twists. We describe this as '2-span' or '3-span' twining.

If the artisan reverses the direction of twist in successive rows, the twining is said to be 'countered'--as in the lower two rows of the drawing. This is especially effective when two colors are contrasted. Twining always looks the same on the front and back of the weaving. In this respect it differs from soumak, which has short spans on the back, and longer spans on the front.

Twined details are common on rugs from many areas, and have been combined with a wide variety of structures. We will include distinctive examples here.

Malayer Knotted Pile Carpet. Iran
51" x 82" (129.5 cm x 208 cm)

STRUCTURE: Symmetrical knots; H: 8, V: 9, 72 per square inch. (H: 32/dm, V: 35/dm, 1120 per square dm).

Lavish use of weft inlays. No warp depression.

SECONDARY STRUCTURE: 2-color, 3-span twining in several rows.

YARN SPIN: Z.

WARP: 6-ply white cotton.

WEFT: multi-ply cotton; 1 shot.

PILE: 2 wool singles.

SELVAGES: 3 warp units (2,3,1), overcast with lavender wool singles.

UPPER END FINISH: "" obliquely interlaced band.

(See photo on the *Obliquely Interlaced Bands* page.)

LOWER END FINISH: Twined heading cord.

[KK-25745. Ken Kashani]



Above the fine twined heading cord on this rug, five decorative rows of two-color twining also secure and space the warps evenly. Plain-weave wefts separate the twined borders.

Bijar Knotted-Pile Carpet. Iran

4'9" x 7' (229 cm x 331 cm)

STRUCTURE: Symmetrical knots; H: 14, V: 10, 140 per square inch (H: 55/dm, V: 39/dm, 2145 per sq. dm).

Complete warp depression.

YARN SPIN: Z.

WARP: 8-ply white cotton.

WEFT: Various; mainly tan or pink wool singles; 2 shots.

PILE: 2 wool singles.

SELVAGES: Not original.

END FINISHES: 2-color, 4-span twining edged with 8/4 soumak.

[AA-740001. Allan Arthur]





A combination of black and white twining and red rows of soumak make an attractive end finish on this Bijar rug. The absence of ground wefts in this area make soumak a stretchy construction, and the twining is more firm.

Another Bijar example appears on the *Looped Wrapping* page, where countered rows of twining and looped wrapping were both used in an attempt to strengthen the end.

South Persian Kilim

3'10" x 6' (114 cm x 180 cm)

STRUCTURE: Interlocked tapestry.

SECONDARY STRUCTURE: Decorative end band of two-color, two-span twining (4 rows). The colors are offset, and the twist reversed after 2 rows.

YARN SPIN: Z.

WARP: 3-ply cotton; 13 per inch.

WEFT: 2 wool singles; 36 per inch.

SELVAGE: 2 cotton cords; uneven two-color overcasting with 2-ply wool.

[DD-137. Daniel Deschuyteneer]



Perhaps someone can tell us if the uncommon *single interlocked* tapestry structure normally suggests a Lori provenance. Among Asian tribal weavings, I have only seen *twined* bands of the sort shown here on Lori pieces, although they are common on Moroccan rugs from the High Atlas Mountains. An Ouaouzguite example appears on the Heading Cord page.



Four rows of brown and yellow twining, with no intervening weft, make a decorative band at the end of this kilim. After each twined row, the colors were switched, offsetting the colored segments. After two rows, the direction of twist was reversed.

This kilim offers an excellent opportunity for us to compare two structures that are often confused in rug analyses: *dovetailed* and *interlocked* tapestry.

This detail from the kilim above shows an **INTERLOCKED** structure. Yarns from adjacent color areas are joined *between* the warps. This makes quite irregular pattern edges, but a flat surface. The front and back are the same.



In contrast, this photo shows the much more common **DOVETAILED** tapestry structure. This is sometimes called "shared warp" tapestry, because two contrasting colored yarns encircle the *same warp* when they meet. In this photo they can be seen clearly *overlapping* on a single warp. Because more yarn is squeezed into those small spaces, ridges are formed at the junctures. The front and back of the kilim look the same. [Photo: Wayne Barron]



Kurdish Rug. Western Iran
45"x 93" (177 cm x 366 cm)

STRUCTURE: Symmetrical knots, H: 7, V:

11, 77 knots per square inch (H: 28/dm, V: 43/dm, 1204 per square dm). No warp depression.

YARN SPIN: Z.

WARP: 2-ply light tan wool.

WEFT: 2 red wool singles, 2 shots.

PILE: 2 wool singles.

SELVAGES: Overcast with red wool.

UPPER END FINISH: Obliquely wrapped band; warp ends finished on the underside with two rows of overhand knots, offset.

Balanced plain weave with 2-color, 3-span twining. See the *Obliquely Wrapped Bands* and *Knotted Meshwork* pages for photos.

LOWER END FINISH: Twined heading cord, followed by 3-strand twining. Balanced plain-weave band with 2-color, 3-span twining.

[MU-100. Mesut Ulusoy]



After a twined heading cord was lashed to the loom, this weaving was begun with a thick row of 3-strand twining. For this, the weaver used three pairs of ivory yarns; these are most clearly seen at the left side of the photo. Such three-strand twining is uncommon.

The plain-weave band is a balanced weave; the row of red and green twining through the center of the band is purely decorative.

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