

Shuttle-Craft Bulletins: Weft Faced Rugs

The November 1932 Bulletin topic is weft-faced rugs. Weft-faced weaving is one in which the weft yarn completely covers the warp and is the only yarn seen on the fabric. One of the best most recent books on the weave is *Weft-Faced Pattern Weaves, Tabby to Taquete'* by Nancy Arthur Hoskins. This book has 33 samplers and many beautiful color photos of the patterns.

Mary Meigs Atwater's article was on the use of the weave for rugs. She recommended a heavy woolen yarn for weft, with a preference for coarse linen as the warp. Bold, simple patterns give the best results. She said that Overshot was the poorest weave structure for rugs, preferring Summer and Winter or Crackle. She included four, 4-shaft rug drafts, three in Summer and Winter and one in Crackle weave. Here is the first one, that she called a Rug of Spanish Type. She wrote that it would be an excellent design for the combination of several colors: typically, as done by Spanish weavers in black, red, green and tan. Another option would be blue and white for a colonial look. A heavy rug would be produced by weaving on opposites, with stripes of solid color made with treadling 1,3,2,4 (remember you can transpose for a rising shed loom), using a tabby shot in carpet warp after each pair of pattern shots if desired. Then for the pattern blocks treadle 5 with dark, 7, with light, 6 with dark and 8 with light for as long as desired, then reverse the colors for the other block. This draft requires 10 treadles, but a treadle short cut is provided. This rug is the same on both sides, so transposing the treadling is not strictly necessary. You can also use cotton chenille for the weft.

Here are some additional rug weaving resources:

A great reference for weaving rugs, with 6 chapters on weft-faced weaves, is Peter Collingwood's book: *The Techniques of Rug Weaving*, available online: https://www2.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/books/cp_rug1_1.pdf

The Iowa weaver blog (<https://iowaweaver.blog/category/summer-and-winter/>) has beautiful examples of weft-faced rugs woven in Summer and Winter.

Tips for determining sett: <https://peggyosterkamp.com/peggys-weaving-tips-sett-weaving-balanced-warpfaced-weftfaced-fabrics/>

Tom Knisely Video on How to Weave a Good Rug: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZ7RwOl8II0>

Mary gave weft, warp and color suggestions for the other three drafts in the Bulletin, as well as instructions for a braided rug, with an illustration on how to make the braid from cotton chenille tape. Check them out.

