

WHAT SHALL I WEAVE

by ELLIS PRENTICE COLE

When my pupils ask what they shall weave to sell, they are told: "Make things for women to wear."

Weave the cloth, then make the garment, if you are skilled, if not, have a tailor or garment-maker do the work. If your customer is a good seamstress (and there are only a few of them these days) have her make the garment. I used to offer the cloth for handbags, but found the women either could not or would not make them up. Finished articles are what they want.

Sell direct to the customer; agents eat up the profit.

Your sales talk should be all about "hand work". Do not attempt to compete with the machines either in price or quality. If the beauty, quality, originality and exclusiveness of your hand-woven material makes no appeal to your customer, argument is useless.

As we can not compete with the factories in mass production we must make the things it would not pay the factories to make.

I submit three projects for your consideration:

No. 1 is a parka or hood which has found favor. Many varieties of material and weaves may be used, limited only by the ingenuity and taste of the weaver. Bernat Peasant wool set 15 threads to the inch or homespun at 18 threads are very satisfactory and there are many others on the cards. For warp I used a dark brown and for the tabby a rich red, the stripes in pattern of contrasting colors set to weave 24 inches when off the loom. Only 17 inches of cloth, including the stripes for the ties, will be needed.

First a two-inch stripe was woven, which, with the fringe is to be folded back for the front; then eight inches of tabby for the body. Now two pieces each three and one half inches wide with the stripe in the center, for the neckpiece and ties, and the cloth is done. Between the pieces I put in a shot of light color and stitch on either side to prevent raveling, before cutting the cloth. The making is simple: Sew the two pieces for the neckpiece and strings together at the back, turn in the edges a quarter of an inch and stitch close to the edge as the tailor does.

The diagram will show the darts necessary to fitting the back. Fold back the fringe and the two-inch stripe and stitch along the front. Now attach the neckpiece so that the neck is covered, press, and there you are, ready for the coldest weather. For a child an edging of fur may be added around the face and a tassel at the tip.

Project No. 2. A Sports Jacket

"Now you *have* done something," exclaimed the visitor on seeing the jackets woven in the Navajo method. This material is easily woven on any loom. The warp is set far enough apart so that it entirely disappears in the weaving. Several weights of cloth may be made according to the thickness of the yarn. This method makes a much thicker cloth than the same weight of yarn would if the warp was set close together as in regular weaving. The better Navajo blankets have a tightly twisted warp of wool. If cotton warp is used it should be double sleyed for strength and wearing quality.

This method of weaving is fully treated in *The Weaver*, Vol. II, No. 4.

In making up this cloth, the pattern should be laid on the goods and outlined in chalk, and each piece stitched on a sewing-machine before cutting the goods, to prevent raveling. If you are not fully skilled in garment making it is better to have the work done by a good tailor. The garment should be lined throughout. This cloth is also used for hunting jackets and ski suits.

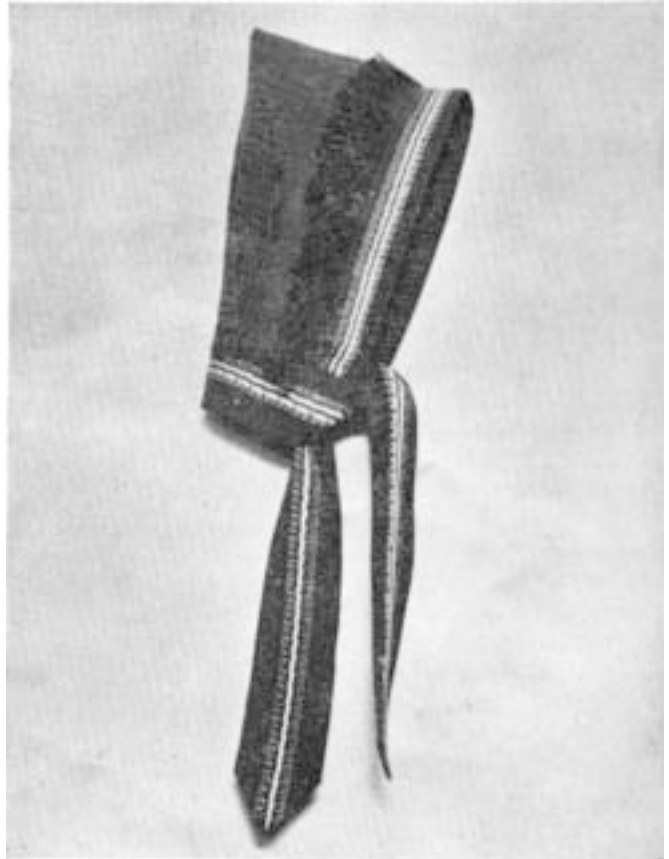
The patterns in Navajo cloth cannot be woven on a mechanical loom and must be put in by hand, so here is one cloth that belongs entirely to the hand weaver. If stripes are wanted the long way of the cloth, they are obtained by alternate shots of contrasting colors using a shuttle for each color.

The colors used by the Navajo women are a mixed gray for body, natural white, red and black for the designs.

Project No. 3. A Sofa Set.

The sofa looked all right in the store but when we got it home it was too bright a blue, so I wove this set to protect it from wear and to tone it down a bit. This can be done in wool, or if a wash piece is wanted, in roving, candle wicking or colored warps, using the same material for both warp and weft.

As I wished the stripes to go the long way of the goods, the warp was set in a plaid design, using a dark blue, a light blue and a narrow gold stripe. To tone it all down a rich brown was used for filler with a shot of red about every ten inches for accent.



No. 1. *The Parka or Hood*

The photograph will show the four pieces in use. The piece for the seat is four feet long, for the back it is three feet and for the arms 18 inches each. The width was 22 inches when taken from the loom. The pieces are not fas-

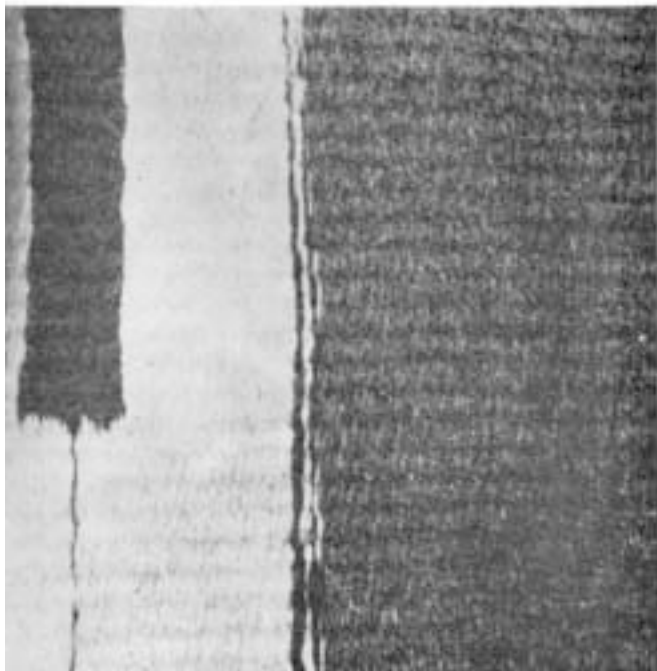
tened and are easily removed for cleaning. They not only protect the upholstery but add interest to the piece. The piece on the floor is a plaid on the same threading and is used as a chair back. As my Indian friend says, "You like um?"



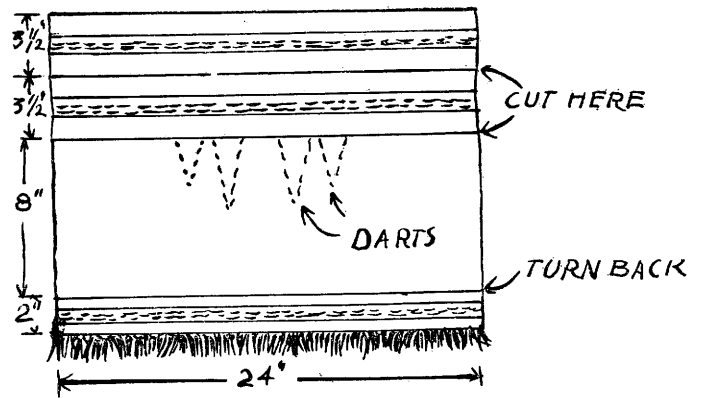
Project No. 2. Sport Jacket in Navajo Method



No. 3. The Sofa Set



Closeup of Navajo Weave



DIRECTIONS FOR PARKA

Direction for Weaving and Making up the Parka