

Surface Textures

The following techniques are worked within the plain weave fabric as weaving progresses. They make raised surface textures which you can use to vary your fabric.

Soumak

Soumak is like the outline stitch in embroidery, but it is worked as the cloth is woven. It can be added to either balanced or weft-faced plain weave. Some oriental rugs are constructed entirely in soumak technique.

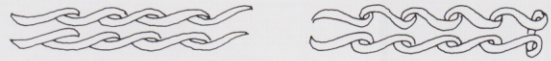
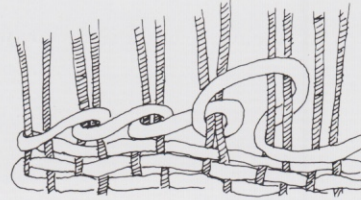
The weft can be carried on a short shuttle or in a butterfly. Start on the left selvedge with a closed shed. Lay the weft yarn in a loop away from you, move over four warps and bring the shuttle back under two warps. Pull the weft snug. Repeat across the warp. Weave at least one

Soumak can be varied by the direction in which you work it and by the number of warps it travels across in each wrap. The diamond at the top was made with the diagonal technique explained on the next page.



row of plain weave after each soumak row, and remember to alternate the plain weave sheds.

The direction in which the soumak row slants depends on the direction in which it was worked. If you work from left to right each time, it will always slant the same way. If you alternate the edges from which you start, every two rows of soumak row will look like an embroidered chain stitch, instead of layers of outline stitch.

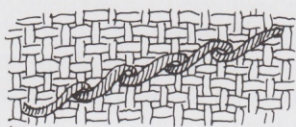


Pile can be long or short, dense or sparse, cut or uncut. Each knot can contain a single color, or several shades.



The number of warps over and under which the soumak weft travels can vary. Try going over two and back one, or over six and back two. You can work one or two rows of soumak as a border for another technique or use a different number of plain weave rows between soumak rows.

An interesting variation of soumak creates a diagonal line of texture. Using a contrasting pattern weft, work one soumak wrap within a row of plain weave. Weave several rows of plain weave, then work another soumak wrap a few warps over from where the first one was made. Weave several more plain weave rows, and so forth. You can control the angle of the diagonal line by the number of plain weave rows you use between soumak lines.



Pile techniques

Knots or loops can cover an entire piece, in the manner of the Scandinavian rya rugs, which were developed to imitate sheepskin rugs. They can also be used as accents, if a few rows of knots or loops are added to a wall hanging, pillow, or runner. Placed according to a plan, they can form free designs.

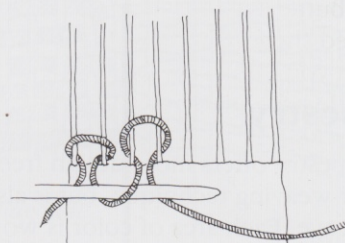
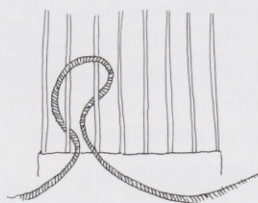
To create pile, draw loops of yarn to the surface of the weaving or tie short lengths of yarn around the warp ends. The loops can be cut or left as they are. Cut and uncut pile can be used in the same piece. Rows of plain weave between the loops or knots hold them in place.

Use a firmly twisted wool yarn for the pile. You can run a yarn of different texture or fiber along with the wool for variety and sparkle, but avoid yarns that ravel or shed loose fibers.

To work the pile from a **continuous length** of yarn, begin by winding three or four strands of yarn together in a butterfly. You'll work on a closed shed (heddle in neutral position) and make each knot around two warp ends. Push the butterfly down between the two warp ends, bring it up to the left of the lefthand warp, up to the right across both warps, down to the right of the righthand warp, and back up between the two warps next to the fell line.

Tighten the knot. The pile length is formed between the knots. Wrap the weft around your finger to form a loop; you will control the length

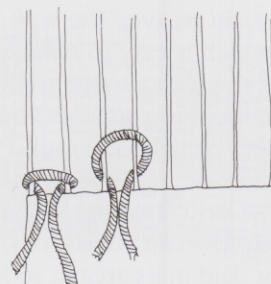
of the pile by the amount of yarn you use in the loop. Very small loops of uncut pile can be wrapped around a dowel rod, pencil, or knitting needle. Work the next knot around the next two warps and make another loop. Repeat across the warp.



Knots made from a continuous piece of yarn.

Weave several rows of plain weave before you make another row of knots. If you want cut pile, snip each row of loops after it has been secured by some plain weave.

Making pile from **short lengths of yarn** allows you to use up miscellaneous bits of yarn, and you can change the colors that appear in each knot. Cut 3- to 4-inch (7.5 to 10 cm) lengths of yarn, in a single color or a variety of harmonizing colors. Use three or four strands together to tie each knot around two warps. Lay the strands over the two warps, then take the tails around and bring them up between the two warps and toward you. Tighten the knot until it's secure. Repeat this process across the warp. Weave several plain weave rows before you do another row of knots.



Knots made from short lengths of yarn.