

YEL-BA-CHAI RUG

HOW TO ORDER NAVAJO RUGS

Write plainly to avoid mistakes and delay. If the purchase is to be shipped to someone else give their names and addresses plainly also. Be sure to enclose payment, sending money order, bank draft or your personal check. Currency or stamps should be sent registered mail.

Rugs will be shipped on approval to persons furnishing satisfactory references. We prefer this method, feeling once you see Navajo rugs in your own home you will not be without them.

If dissatisfied with your purchase, return it promptly in good condition, and your money will be refunded by return mail.

Drolet Trading Post

U. S. Licensed Post

Navajo Rugs and Silverware

J. M. Drolet P. O. Tohatchi, N. M.

On U. S. Highway 666
42 Miles North of Gallup, N. M.

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**UNITED INDIAN
TRADERS ASSOCIATION**
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ORGANIZED FOR THE PERPETUATION AND PROMOTION
OF HANDMADE INDIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS



The Story of the Navajo Rug

*A Highly Symbolic Art Done By
Primitive Indians*



W. T. Mullarky Photo

◆ A Weaver at Her Loom ◆



FANCY GRADE RUG

the larger size.

AVERAGE GRADE RUGS POPULAR

Average grade rugs are most popular. Average grade includes Navajo rugs of average quality in design, weave, color and uniformity. In size they cover a range of approximately three feet by four feet, three by five, three by six, four by five, four by six and on up to room-size rugs. Many color schemes are available.

Fancy grade rugs include rugs of better weave, design, color and uniformity than average grade rugs. Their range in size is the same as average rugs but they cost a little more.

YEI-BA-CHAI RUGS INTERESTING

Yei-ba-chai rugs are Navajo rugs whose designs feature copies of the Navajo gods and dancers prominent in the tribal ceremonials. Sometimes the figures are exact copies of the figures seen in Navajo sand paintings. They make unusual pieces for floor, table, bed or wall. Their prices correspond to those of the fancy grade. Authentic Yei-ba-chais, ceremonial rugs, are museum pieces. They are exact reproductions of the beautiful sand paintings.

CHIEF BLANKETS

Chief blankets are of unusual design, difficult to weave. On them the pattern is so arranged that these rugs may be folded a number of ways, and after each folding show the same design that appears in the center before folded. Blue, red, black and white are the colors predominating in Chief

blankets. They are in the fancy grade, priced accordingly.

UNUSUAL QUALITIES

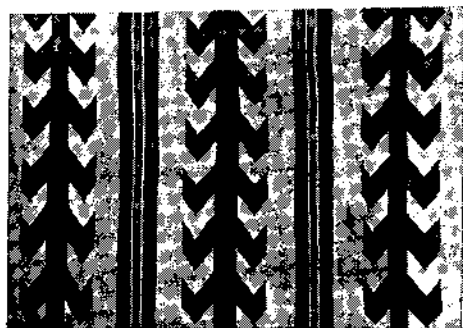
With age Navajo rugs improve in appearance and value. Wear knits the fibers more closely together and mellows the tone of the colors. Navajo rugs are entirely hand made, untouched by machine. No two are identical. They also differ from other weaving in being reversible, the same on both sides.

ARTISTIC AND SYMBOLIC

Patterns on Navajo rugs are created in the mind of the weaver. Designs and figures in the rugs are inspired by the scenery about the weaver—flat mesas, abrupt canyons and fantastic rock formations—all in bright colors. The clouds, sun, rain and other manifestations of Nature contribute too. Symbols of religious and tribal significance are also used extensively. All these are cleverly worked into the general pattern of the rug by the weaver, an artist in the true sense of the word. Navajo weaving is done today in the same manner in which it has been done for generations.

Contrary to popular belief, the Navajos are self-supporting, an independent, virile and energetic tribe. Through us they proudly present their arts and crafts to discriminating people.

By purchasing a Navajo rug you are directly encouraging the arts and crafts of the original American.



VEGETABLE DYE RUG

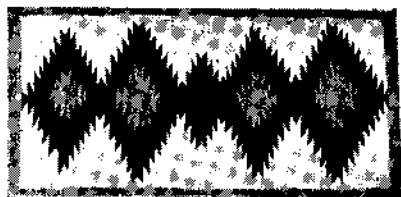
IN AN arid land of vivid coloring the Navajo Indians thrive and prosper. Seventy years ago they numbered ten thousand; today there are more than 45,000.

Over a fifteen million acre reservation, America's largest, the Navajos graze their great flocks of sheep and goats. Because of the sparse vegetation on their reservation, which is located in northeastern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico and part of Utah, they live in a semi-nomadic fashion, moving occasionally for the benefit of their animals.

Their homes, called hogans, are crude dwellings made of logs covered with adobe mud. Near every hogan is a loom on which the colorful Navajo rugs are woven by the women and girls. Along with their horses, silver jewelry and flocks, the loom is an outstanding characteristic of the Navajo people.

Just how long the Navajos have known the art of weaving is still under dispute. Some authorities say many centuries; others that weaving was learned from the Pueblo Indians after 1540 when the Spanish came to the Southwest bringing sheep. Regardless, the Navajo weaver has so improved her product that today Navajo rugs compare in artistry, durability and beauty with the weaving of any people.

Before 1900 there was a demand for all Navajo blankets in the locality where they were made. Indians used them as blankets and wore them on their backs. As Navajo flocks increased, prices paid for wool decreased. Early Indian traders, sensing this trend, encouraged the weaving of rugs and sought a market. It was then that



THROW OR RUNNER

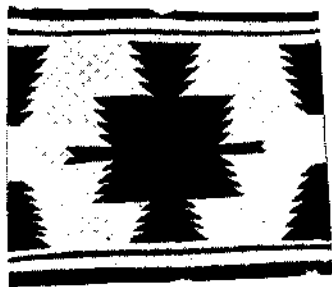
the Navajo blanket ceased to be an article of Indian apparel and became a rug or decoration in the white man's home.

SETTING UP THE LOOM

The Navajo loom is unique in simplicity. Let us watch Yis-clo-yazzi (Little Weaver) set up her loom and do her weaving. Yis-clo-yazzi is a typical Navajo woman who learned to weave when a little girl, hence her name. First she sets two poles in the ground six feet apart. The Little Weaver lashes two cross-pieces between them, one at the top and one at the bottom. Next she winds a rope loosely 'round and 'round the upper one. At the bottom of the loops thus formed she inserts her supplementary yarn-beam, a straight bar of wood about five feet long. To this she attaches a smaller bar which hangs about two inches below the supplementary yarn-beam. Around the smaller beam Yis-clo-yazzi firmly ties the woolen warp, strong cords of wool carefully prepared. The lower ends of the warp are tied to the yarn beam at the bottom of the loom which is anchored about four inches above the ground by being tied to the bottom cross-piece. Thus the stout warp is held taut. And there is Yis-clo-yazzi's loom!

HOW A RUG IS MADE

On the ground a foot away, she squats tailor-fashion. The warp hangs vertically before her, and she never rises while weaving. A stick holds the alternate cords of the warp apart and tight as harp strings. The stick forms the openings in the warp through which Little Weaver runs the wool without difficulty. As soon as each



PILLOW TOP

thread has been introduced to its proper position, she pounds it down firmly with a long, thin, hardwood batten stick. No wonder a Navajo rug will hold water or stand the trappings of a lifetime!

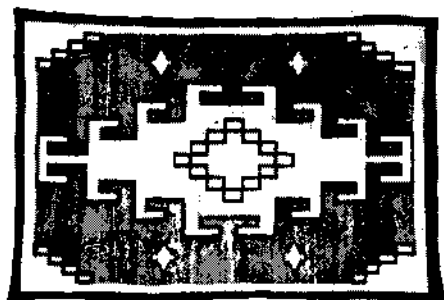
For each unit of the intricate pattern Little Weaver has a separate skein; and the unhesitating skill with which she brings them in at the proper intervals is astonishing.

As Yis-clo-yazzi weaves, she has no pattern to go by other than that which she created and retains in her own mind. No weavers other than Navajos can do this remarkable thing.

By the time Yis-clo-yazzi has woven the woof up to a point about three feet above the ground, it is evident some new arrangement is necessary. Weaving is tedious enough without having to stand to do it. Little Weaver simply loosens the spirally wound rope on the pole above so its loops hang two feet lower, thus letting down the supplementary yarn-beam by the same amount. She then makes a fold in the loosened rug, and sews the upper edge of this fold to the yarn-beam below. Then the rope is tightened. Yis-clo-yazzi continues weaving in this manner until the rug is finished — slow arduous work requiring many, many weeks.

PREPARING WOOL AND DYES

Preparation of the wool takes as much or more time than weaving. Frequently the weaver helps shear the sheep. Then she cleans, cards, spins and dyes the wool. All these are slow difficult processes done in primitive fashion. Wool from the sheep



AVERAGE NAVAJO RUG

is white, black and brown. Grey is obtained by mixing black and white wool. These are called the "natural" colors. Vegetable dye rugs are composed of all or some of the "natural" colors, and colors produced by dyes which the weavers make from products of their country. They are more delicate in hue, often pastels.

"Natural" and vegetable dye rugs are less common today than rugs made up of "natural" colors in combination with bright colors made by aniline dyes which weavers get from traders.

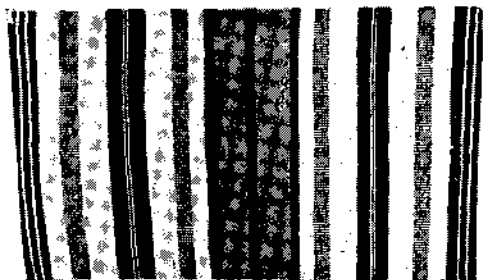
PILLOW TOPS AND TROWS

Pillow tops and throws, see illustrations, are the commonest uniform sizes of Navajo weaving. The pillow tops are approximately twenty inches square. They are used to cover pillows, chairs, and on tables and walls.

Throws, often called runners, make ideal table and bench covers. They are excellent scatter rugs. Many are used for decorating chairs, walls, and as occasional pieces. Because of their low cost, pillow tops and throws are excellent souvenir and gift items.

SADDLE BLANKETS

Saddle blankets serve best under saddles but many are used as rugs. Sometimes they are found on tables, walls and auto seats. Designs are simple, usually consisting of wide stripes or a small design in the weave which prevails throughout the piece. Their approximate sizes are twenty-six to thirty inches wide by fifty to sixty inches long. The illustration shows



SADDLE BLANKET