



Harrisville Shetland wool in a balanced plain weave at 12 epi and 12 ppi, hung on the bias.



Harrisville Shetland wool in a balanced plain weave at 6 epi and 6 ppi, hung on the bias.

Draping qualities also depend on how a fabric is cut and then constructed, whether on the bias or with the warp running vertically or horizontally. The most drape usually comes from a bias-cut fabric, but cutting pieces on the diagonal wastes cloth, and for weavers cloth is too precious to waste.

Setts and Weave Structures

The term “sett” refers to the number of warp ends and weft picks per inch used to weave a fabric. To determine the sett for projects in plain weave, wind the warp yarn around a ruler for 1”, being careful not to stretch the yarn, overlap the wraps, or leave gaps between them. Then count the number of wraps. For a balanced plain weave (the same number of ends per inch as picks per inch), divide this number by 2 to get

the number of warp ends and weft picks per inch. If you’re mixing yarns in the warp, wrap the ruler using each yarn in proportion to its use in the final cloth. You may want to wind more than 1” to get an average of all the yarns.

On either end of the balanced plain-weave spectrum are warp-faced weaves and weft-faced weaves. In a warp-faced fabric, the weft doesn’t show; in a weft-faced fabric, the warp doesn’t show. Both weaves are usually dense and relatively stiff—suitable for mats and rugs. The weft-faced structure in the Saori-Inspired Belts, for example, produces the sturdy hand appropriate for a belt.

Warp and weft sett greatly affect drape. The two photos above show samples of Harrisville Shetland wool (1,800 yd/lb) woven in balanced plain weave at 12 epi/ppi (left sample) and 6 epi/ppi (right sample).