

The laboratory furnishes wool from the sheep to the Arts & Crafts Guild, wool which has already been washed & carded, ^{and is} ready to be hand spun

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Spinning

The spinning technique is what differs

The Navaho spindle differs from those of other Southwest tribes. The disk whorl is located near the bottom of the spindle stick which is about ²⁹/₁ inches long. The spinner rests the stick on the ground leaning it against the thigh, and with a twirling motion winds the hand stretched wool onto the spindle during the first spinning. Proper stretching is an important factor of good spinning. Wool is always spun twice, sometimes more, depending on the desired fineness of the yarn. The first spinning works the strands of wool loosely together. On the second spinning greater stretching is possible and good weaving yarn is produced.

Since the American occupation of the Southwest, traders and others have tried to introduce the spinning wheel, but the Navaho women have always rejected it, ^{preferring to use} their spindles of ancient origin. *probably for reasons of room and portability.*

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Knitting

The Navaho also practise knitting, though interestingly enough it is usually the men who knit, making leggings or footless stockings. Originally sticks of hard wood were used for needles, later wire, or the ribs of old umbrellas served well. Regular knitting needles were of course carried by the traders when the demand for them was manifest. As many as four or five needles are used. The knitters create a raised rim at the top of the stocking with a left hand stitch, giving a firm edge for long wear. A knitted or plaited band is added at the bottom to pass under the foot to keep ^{the stocking} ~~it~~ from working upward.

Where there are a number of weavers in a ~~small~~^{certain} area, it is hoped that they will unite to improve the weaving wool for their own looms. The benefit they would receive would repay them many times over.

The spinner first attaches a roving to the upper end of the spindle, and with the butt end resting on the ground, she starts ~~a~~ roving onto the ~~stick~~ spindle with a spinning motion of the stick. Then resting the upper part of the spindle on her thigh, she rolls the spindle with the palm of her hand in a drawing motion ~~to~~ toward her body. With the free end of the roving held in her left hand out from the top of the stick(see page ----) she stretches the wool as it slips off the top of the twirling spindle. The skill lies in the steady motion of the spindle as she twirls it with her right hand, while at the same time she uses just the right amount of pull to stretch the twisting strands. As a given length of roving is twisted and stretched ~~into~~ into yarn, the spinner winds ~~xxxxxxx~~ it onto the spindle just above the whorl where it is stored until she has a sufficient amount to wind off ~~into~~ into a ball. Each successive ~~pinning~~ makes the yarn finer and stronger.