A LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THE WEAVING LOOM

04.11.2015 | **FASHION FABRIC SOURCING**

Video: History of Weaving

The First Loom

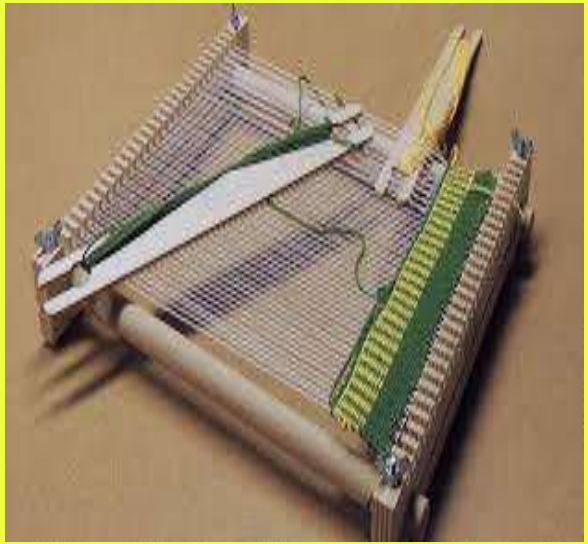
The first looms didn’t start to evolve dramatically until the Middle Ages, machines such as this one were used.

The treadles lift several different heddles allowing complex patterns to be obtained.

This invention is likely to be of Chinese origin.

However the first known fabrics date from the end of the Neolithic period and were found in Turkey and Palestine.







B L A

Weaving

As civilization began to move away from the use of animal hides as their primary material for garments, it was discovered that lacing or knotting lengths of fiber together could create fabric.

This way of cloth-making began some time before 5000 BC, with finger weaving, tying and twisting debuting as some of the first textile techniques.

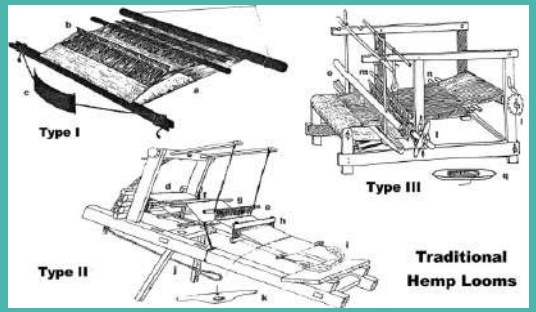
During the Neolithic period, weaving began to develop into the process it resembles today with one of the first iterations of the loom a warp weighted loom.

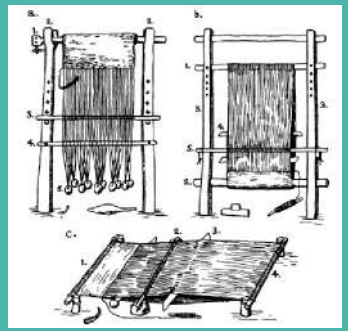
What is Weaving?

Weaving is a precise craft, involving each individual thread being aligned into perfect placement.

As you might imagine, this can be difficult and time-consuming.

Fortunately, this complex process is made far easier by the weaving loom and the advancements made with this important tool over the course of fashion's history.





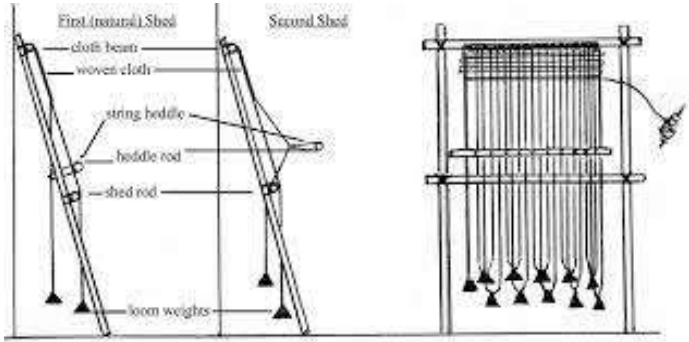
WARP WEIGHTED LOOM

The warp-weighted loom is a simplistic weaving tool in which the warp threads are positioned vertically.

As the name suggests, the threads are pulled taut and kept under tension by weights that have been fastened to the end of the warp.

The fabric is woven from top to bottom, beating the weft threads upwards.

Evidence of early versions of this loom were found in Serbia as well as Switzerland.



Backstrap Loom

Another early version of the weaving loom is one that is still widely used in various cultures around the world even today: the backstrap loom.

This particular style of loom is found mostly in South and Central America, particularly Guatemala and Peru.

However, versions of it also exist in parts of Asia such as Japan, Indonesia, and India; as well as Navajo and Zuni Native Americans.

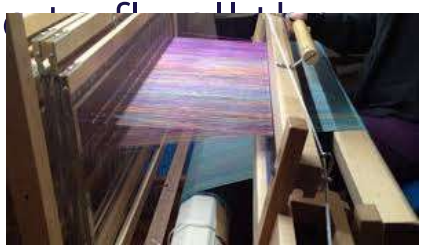
The earliest evidence of a backstrap loom can be traced to Eastern Asia during the Bronze-Iron Age.

Flying Shuttle Loom

Another crucial development in weaving to come out of this time period was the invention of the flying shuttle. The shuttle is a tool that holds the weft threads, and is slid through the warp, weaving them into the fabric.

In earlier iterations of the shuttle, the shuttle was slid through the warp by hand, which meant that in order to weave larger pieces, weavers had to pass the shuttle down to one another, which was an inefficient solution.

In 1733, the flying shuttle was invented by British weaver John Kay. A mechanized system, this technology allowed the shuttle to fly all the way across the warp uninterrupted, which sped up the weaving process significantly.



This tool would be hugely popular in weaving for the following two centuries.

Fluid Jet Loom

By the beginning of the 20th century, electricity allowed automated weaving to progress even further.

Electric motors appeared in place of steam engines, and by the 1940's looms were fully mechanical.

A tool called a projectile briefly replaced the flying shuttle, but this too would be improved upon.

Swiss loom manufacturer Sulzer created fluid jet looms- which are exactly what they sound like. A pressurized jet of water or air pushes the weft threads through the warp.

This innovation is the current technology used in weaving

Weaving

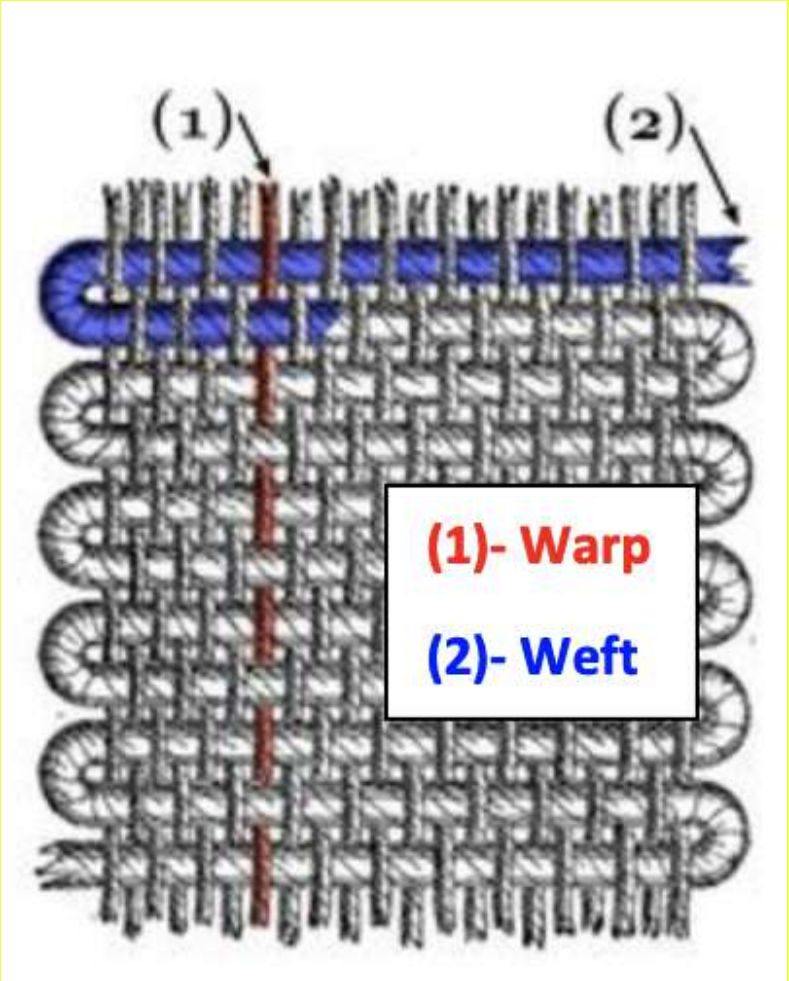
Weaving Weaving is a method of fabric production in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads are interlaced at right angles to form a fabric or cloth.

The method in which these threads are interwoven affects the characteristics of the cloth.

The way the warp and filling threads interlace with each other is called the weave.

The majority of woven products are created with one of three basic weaves: plain weave, satin weave, or twill.

The longitudinal threads are called the warp and the lateral threads are the weft or filling.



Video:
A Brief History
of Weaving