



THE COMMERCIAL FLOORING REPORT

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WOVEN CARPET AND INSTALLATION

In this article, when woven carpet is referred to, we are talking about Axminster and Wilton products. Woven Axminster and Wilton carpet is the Rolls Royce of the carpet industry. It is the oldest form of machine made broadloom carpet.

Products from this process grace the most elegant and luxurious institutions and facilities in the world. There are only a handful of woven Axminster and Wilton carpet manufacturers in the world and a smaller number yet who produce significant volume of commercial carpet. The primary markets specifying these carpets are hospitality; high end hotels, casinos, high end restaurants and any property that qualifies as the best of the best in its particular category. Almost all woven Axminster and Wilton carpet manufacturing takes place outside the US. The majority of woven carpet now comes from China but is owned by the same manufacturers who've been in the business for decades. Only

- 1) Couristan
- 2) TaiPing
- 3) Brinton's
- 4) Ulster
- 5) Innovative
- 6) Crossley
- 7) Desso
- 8) Axminster
- 9) OW Axminster
- 10) Bloomsburg

a few woven manufacturers exist in the US and they primarily produce corporate type carpet; very little Axminster or Wiltons.

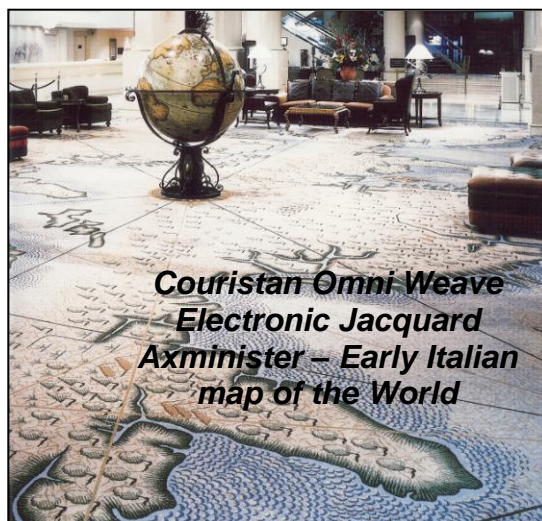
The highest end woven Axminster or Wilton carpet is most often constructed of an 80/20 blend of wool and nylon (80% wool / 20% nylon) but it can be made with 100% nylon, either solution dyed or yarn dyed.



Wilton Loom



Brinton's Wilton Carpet

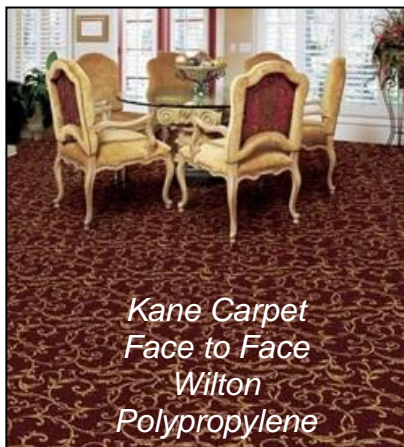


*Couristan Omni Weave
Electronic Jacquard
Axminster – Early Italian
map of the World*



Innovative's Axminster Carpet

The latest face to face woven Wilton carpets are made with polypropylene, offering yet another element to woven broadloom carpet. The patterns and design, color and construction of Axminster and Wilton carpet are normally custom creations. With face to face Wilton's, most of these products are running line patterns. The tufted carpet sector of the industry has made extraordinary strides in emulating woven carpet but it has not achieved parity. Woven Axminster and Wilton carpet extols the elegance and luxury of the finest products on the planet. One of a kind woven carpet is truly art for the floor. No other carpet has the visual intricacy and impact of a custom woven carpet; it shouts individuality. Woven Axminster and Wilton carpet requires understanding by the marketplace. For example in heavy wear commercial installations, a good Axminster will outperform a Wilton. The patterns are normally large, the colors extravagant, the carpet is very often made to fit the space, it can and often does conform to the configuration of the floor and the building's design, it becomes an integral part of the building or space design and it reflects a perspective on what the space is supposed to mean. It is a product that must be installed



Kane Carpet
Face to Face
Wilton
Polypropylene

by craftsmen who are devoted to their skills and specialize in installing it. This is a product that should cost more because it isn't just carpet and those who know the right way to install it aren't just installers.



Couristan Installation



Since woven Axminster and Wilton carpet is constructed and manufactured in a completely different manner than tufted carpet it has different inherent characteristics. For one, it can only be rolled in the length; rolling it in the width is near impossible. Most of the stretch, if not all of it, is in the length of woven carpet. It takes far longer to manufacture woven carpet than tufted carpet as the machines run at slower speeds. The patterns in woven carpet are very distinct and, despite the endless patterning ability of high speed tufting machines, they still can't make patterns like those that can be made on a

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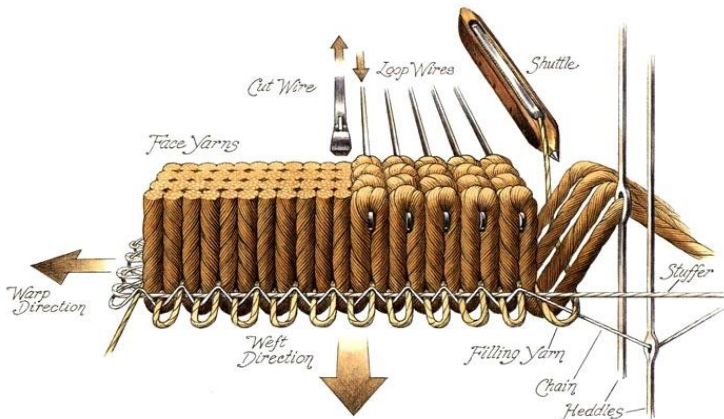
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weaving machine that produces Axminster and Wilton carpet.

Woven Carpet Construction Diagram



Understanding woven carpet is, quite frankly, limited to very few people in the industry and as those individuals mature that number is dwindling. The manufacturers and representatives of woven carpet are truly an elite group; those who possess skills and knowledge of a very specialized product, "the cream of the cream". Woven commercial Axminster and Wilton carpet is at the mountain peak when it comes to categorizing textile floor covering materials.

The installation of woven Axminster and Wilton carpet is also a very specialized skill.



Installation - Seaming Diagram and Completed Installation – Couristan Carpet

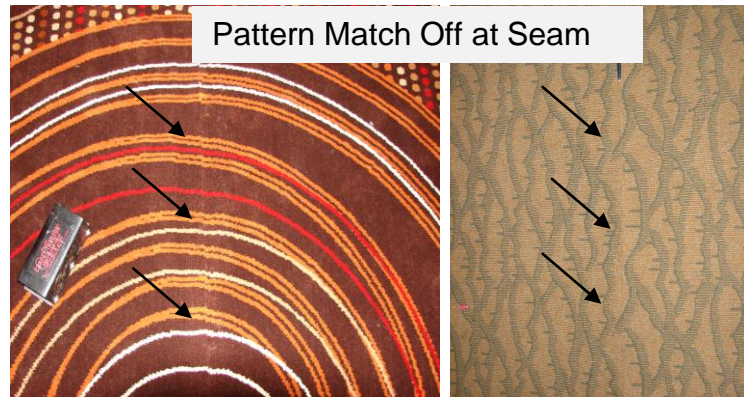
You can't stick any installer, seasoned or not, on an installation project of these products. There are actually very few firms in the country that can install woven carpet properly and exactly as it should be installed. It requires a different mindset and understanding of carpet installation to work with woven carpet. This is not the type of work that should be open for bid and given to the lowest bidder without any woven carpet skills or experience.

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Pattern Match Off at Seam



Pattern not Aligned Correctly



Seam not Trimmed Properly

Clients willing to make the investment in woven goods should expect and demand quality and qualified installation. There have been comments we've heard that "we've installed lots of woven carpet and know how to do it," only to find that they only wanted the work and were willing to say anything to get it. Since most commercial installations of woven carpet involve the double glue method, a failure of this type installation can get very costly.

Woven carpet, especially when double glued, is the kind of product you either install right or wrong, there is no in between nor is there a "fudge factor." You can't think you know how to install woven carpet; you really have to have the skills to do it. This is like going to a medical specialist; a surgeon for example. You want the best; a specialist who has a reputation for being the best and has the most success at his particular area of expertise. Most woven carpet failures are installation related.

DOUBLE STICK INSTALLATION	
CARPET PILE	
ADHESIVE	
CUSHION	
ADHESIVE	
FLOOR SURFACE	



The Architect and General Contractor have a responsibility to provide their customer with the best product and service ensuring that the customer's expectations are met. This can't be done with the lowest bidder on a woven commercial installation, particularly if the product is custom made. In most markets there aren't installation firms that possess the skills necessary to properly install woven Axminster or Wilton carpets. That expertise normally lies with a handful of truly skilled craftsman

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U.S. Patent 7,231,815. Additional patents pending

who do nothing but woven carpet installation. This is not to say that there aren't local firms in major metropolitan marketing areas or in specific locales, such as Las Vegas for example, which is a hot bed for installation of woven Axminster carpets, that can't perform woven carpet installation. But this isn't always the case.

We've been called upon to save many woven carpet projects, from the layout of the job, overseeing an installation, to the installation itself or taking it over if jeopardized, to specifying a manufacturer who can handle the complexity of the woven carpet needed for a project. There have been projects where it's been necessary to send in an LGM expert to oversee a woven installation, take over the installation, or in the most intricate of circumstances, salvage a failed installation. Relative to salvaging a failed installation; this is like bringing in the Special Forces for a very special operation that requires the best of the best for success.

Working on projects throughout the world that require custom woven Axminster or Wilton carpet is not something many of you may do, but there are a lot of projects, or even a portion of a project, where this product is used. When you do have a project that involves these types of products, you need to be aware that it is different and therefore requires special treatment.

If you should ever need assistance, guidance, help with a solution or just want to talk about a project with woven carpet you have, don't hesitate to call us. We exist to serve you and to help keep you out of trouble or get you out of it.

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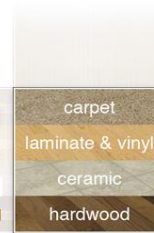
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