

## RUG SHRINKAGE

Dimensional changes in hand woven rugs are a natural and expected occurrence. Rugs are woven under tension, mostly uneven tension. When these rugs are trafficked and washed these foundational tensions can change sometimes resulting in shrinkage.

The foundation or backing of a hand woven rug is comprised of warp and weft yarns mostly made from cotton, wool, or silk. The warp yarns run the length of the rug and are placed on the loom under great tension. The warp yarns travel side to side going over and under the weft yarns. When the rug is wet these yarns will swell and this causes the yarns to contract which in turn causes the rug to shrink. Most of the time, this is not really noticeable. One reason for this is virtually every rug is washed before it goes to market, so future washings result in minimal shrinkage. Another factor is the density of the pile yarns. A more densely knotted rug typically has less shrinkage.

Some rugs may experience more significant and or uneven shrinkage. This almost assuredly has happened after its post weaving wash. However after the wash the rug was blocked, a process where the rug is stretched then wet on the back and fixed under tension to dry. So now when the rug is washed for cleaning it simply rebounds to its previous state. Your ARCS cleaner can usually re-block the rug to a satisfactory result.

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