

Design Resource

Kullu Cap - Himachal Pradesh

Traditional Hat

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/resource/kullu-cap-himachal-pradesh>



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Introduction

Himachal is the Land of snowy mountains with abundant rainfall and rich forests. Himachal Pradesh art and craft are renowned worldwide, reflecting its environment, people, and traditions. Painting, weaving, wood carving considered a part of their life. Himachali people are talented and hardworking, and this reflects in their art and craft. Handloom weaving is the cultural heritage of the Himachal people. Both men and women are involved in weaving activities. During the winter season, when all people are inside the home, and all other activities like horticulture have done, secondary occupations like handicrafts, spinning, and weaving is being carried out. The leather works, Kullu shawls, Chamba rumals, carpets, Kangra paintings, and woodwork are some of the beautiful handicrafts that belong to this tiny hill state.

Kullu is the capital town of the Kullu district in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The beautiful handicraft of Kullu reflects its strong cultural heritage. The extreme cold temperate of this region is suitable for sheep and goat rearing, which also fulfills the necessity for woollens. Almost every household in the district owns a pit loom, and everyone can be seen spinning yarn on a spindle. Kullu Valley habitats weave for themselves as well as for commercial purposes. Kullu is famous for its shawls with geometrical patterns and bright colors.

Along with the other handicrafts of Himachal Pradesh, Kullu caps are also famous artwork. These caps derived their name from the place of their origin, which is Kullu. Kullu cap, a traditional headgear, is an essential part of the local man's attire. The colourful cap is made out of pure wool. Each area has its style of design on caps. The cap is round in shape and is flat on the top. The front part of the cap is decorated with a beautifully patterned band. A band is woven separately on small looms with colourful borders, which brightens the front part of caps. The backside, which covers the head, is made of local woolen yarn and is sometimes made of cotton or any other light material.



Skilled senior female artisan involved in yarn spinning activity.

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The work station of the weaving process.



Senior artisan winding the yarns in warping wheel.



The parts of the cap are stitched together on the stitching machine.



Caps are worn only by the local people everyday.

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Tools and Raw Materials

The following are the tools and raw materials used for Kullu Cap:

- **Charkha- Spinning Wheel:** It is generally used to wind the yarns on pirns.
- **Fly Shuttle:** It is generally used to insert weft yarns for weaving.
- **Warping Beam:** It is used to prepare lengthy warp threads.
- **Pirn and Bobbins:** Small spools spun with yarn for weft.
- **Canvas:** It is used to give stiffness to the cap.
- **Woolen Cloth:** The primary raw material used for the cap.



Woolen yarns are used for weaving the design strips of the cap.

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Yarn spindles and warping wheel used for warping the yarn.



Handlooms are used to weave the designed band for the cap.



Canvas is used to give stiffness to the cap.

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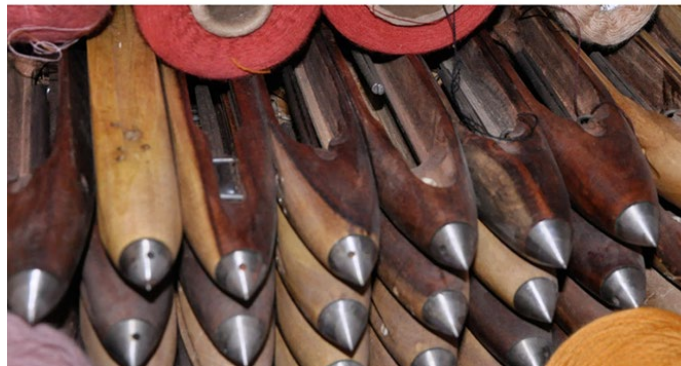
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Spindled yarn is placed in a flying shuttle for the weft process.



Wooden logs of the size of the cap.



The iron box is used to reduce wrinkles on the cap.

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Making Process

Handloom weaving is done on the four-pedal Loom. The weavers do weaving at home, and most men are involved in the process. Warp yarn is loaded to the beam, where the old warp yarn is preserved for continuing the new cloth weaving. The threads are knotted to the past yarn present in heddles, and the shaft is fixed to the handloom where the weaving process occurs. Weaving is an interlocking of two separate yarns at right angles like weft thread and warping yarn, which makes a fabric. In the handloom, the weft yarn is spun to the small bobbins that are placed inside the wooden instruments called a shuttle. The weft yarn-loaded shuttle is moved between the warp yarns, which makes the weaving process appear. Heddles hold the warp yarns in the Loom. The alternate warp yarn is picked up by one heddle, and the rest of the other warp yarn is owned by other heddles. The movement of the pedals moves two heddles up and down, which makes the warp into two parts and opens a small passage every time the pedaling is done. That passage is where the shuttle is moved from right to left and left to right, correspondingly. Thus, the weft yarn is weaved and interlaced between the alternate warp yarns. The shuttle can be moved by the hand or pushed with force with a small hand mechanism applied that is called a fly shuttle. Once the shuttle is moved, the weft yarn is tightened and advanced towards the previous weaved yarn with the help of a reed beater. Reed is a wooden block with tiny passages made for the warp yarn to insert. Reed is moved to and fro for tightening the weft yarns. This is like a repetitive process, which happens only when a weaver pedals with the legs, runs the fly shuttle with his/her right hand and moves the reed beater with the left side. All these movements should occur in correspondence to acquire the smooth flowing of the weaving process.

Cutting: For making a cap, the woolen cloth is cut in a round shape and also cut like a strip. The woolen fabric is cut in a round shape for making the crown of the cap according to the required measurement. The two layers are required for the top of the cap. Then the necessary piece of strips is cut for the sideband according to the measure.

Stitching: Firstly, the top portion of the cap is prepared by attaching the two round-shaped cloths. The canvas is placed in between the two finished-shaped fabrics, and circular stitching is done on the machine. The canvas gives stiffness to the cap. Then both the edges of the strip and top are stitched together using the sewing machine. The front part of the cap is attached to a designed border. At last, the prepared cap is put upon the wooden block and ironed to remove wrinkles.

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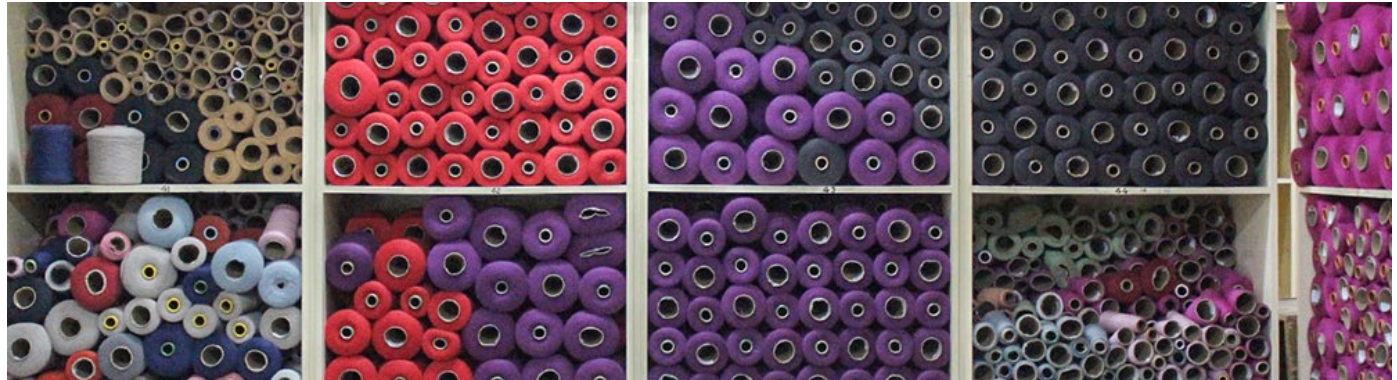
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Imported woolen stacked according to the colours.

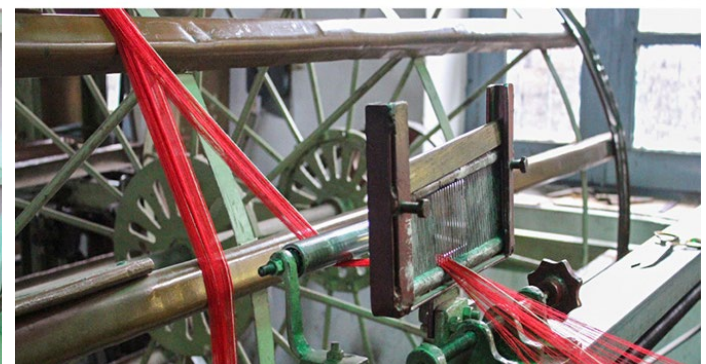
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Yarns are wound to the spindle, which is placed in a flying shuttle.



Yarns are extracted from various spindles and warped on the warping wheel.

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The design fabric is weaved in the handloom.



The fabric is cut into required size of the cap.



Canvas is placed along with a cloth and passed through the lamination machine.

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A strip of cloth is placed and stitched with the canvas.



The designed fabric cloth is stitched with the canvas.



A border is stitched above the designed cloth.



Canvas and lining cloth are stitched together circularly to form a cap shape.

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All the parts of the cap are stitched together to form a cap.



The cap is brought to its shape.



The cap is placed on the wooden log and ironed.

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Products

The price of a Kullu cap depends on the cloth used and the pattern on the border. These caps are characterized as small, medium, and large. The cost of Kullu Caps ranges from Rs. 20 to Rs. 250 or more. These days, plain velvet caps in maroon and green colours are also available in the market.



Beautifully finished cap.



Beautifully finished cap.



Caps arranged with attractive designs on them.

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This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral at [NID, Bengaluru](#).

You can get in touch with Prof. Bibhudutta Baral at [bibhudutta\[at\]nid.edu](mailto:bibhudutta[at]nid.edu)

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