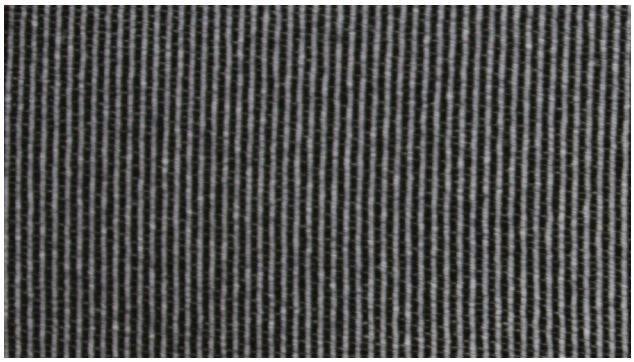
FABULOUS FIBRES

At its simplest, weaving is 'over and under', with the weft thread travelling over one warp thread and then under the next. However, by changing this pattern, the finished piece of fabric can be made to look quite different.

A common weave pattern is a twill. To create this, the 'over and under' pattern varies on alternate passes of the shuttle across the warp. On the first pass of a 1/3 twill, it will go under the first warp thread and over the next three. On the second pass, it will go over the first, under the second warp thread and over the next three, and so on. The characteristic that unites all twill weaves is the diagonal lines it produces across the fabric.



A woven piece of silk can be measured in either ends per inch (epi) or picks per inch (ppi). An end refers to one warp thread, and one pick is one pass of the shuttle from one side to the other.

Discussion point… the two pictures show ottoman and organza fabrics. Which do you think has a greater EPI and how does this effect the composition of the fabric?

Silk is an incredibly versatile fabric. Throughout its history the Mill has woven silk for a range of different uses, from soft furnishings to linings for Burberry raincoats and even electrical insulation during the Second World War.

Discussion point… silk is being used medically within the human body, why is it more suitable for this purpose than man-made materials?

Because silk fabric can be woven with many different weave structures, it can take on a range of different properties for different uses. Satin fabric will reflect the light beautifully and creates stunning ball dresses. Strong and sturdy ottoman is ideal for academic and legal gowns.

WHITCHURCH SILK MILL
HERITAGE OF WEAVING