



Rug Hooking 101 - How to Get Consistent Loops and Evenly-Spaced Rows

Are You Feeling a Little Cramped? Uneven loops that make your work appear bumpy and loops that are hooked too close together are two of the biggest problems facing new rug hookers. For my first rug, I tried to cram a loop in every hole in my canvas, which resulted in a hard, unforgiving hump in the center of one of my motifs. Unfortunately, that rug ended up in the recycling bin because I had no one to help me achieve a smooth, even result. The solution is so easy!

First of all, it surprises most beginners that only about 40 percent of all the holes in a given project actually get “hooked”. The other 60 percent are empty and provide breathing room between so your finished rug doesn’t curl. If your wool is approximately 3/16” wide (called a #6 cut) to 1/4” wide (called a #8 cut), my tried-and-true method is to ***hook a loop in the first hole, hook a loop in the next hole, skip a hole, and repeat.*** In other words, ***hook two loops and skip a hole, hook two loops and skip a hole.*** If you are working with a finer cut of wool, you will want to skip fewer holes. Likewise, if you are using a wider cut of wool, you should skip more holes. The bottom line is you want your loops to fill the area so you cannot see empty space between them, but not be so crowded that they push each other out of the way.

Do You Have Uneven High and Low Loops? This is a problem that frustrates many beginners, but if you follow three simple steps, your loops will be the same height:

- (1) Generally speaking, hook your hoops as high as they are wide. In other words, if you are using wool cut 1/4" wide (the #8 cut), then hook your loops approximately 1/4" high.
- (2) As you pull your loop up through the canvas, pull it away from you, not toward you. This will keep you from pulling out or distorting the previous loops in your row.
- (3) Over-pull your loop. As you pull up the loop, pull it nice and high--maybe even an inch or two above the canvas--until the wool is snug on the back side of the canvas (you don't want any loose loops on the back). Then use your free hand underneath the canvas to pull the loop back down to match your other loops.

Remember, because your project is made with love instead of a machine, your loops are going to have personality and charm of their own. Don't get discouraged--just get them as close to the same height as possible and enjoy the hand-made beauty of your project.

How Far Apart Do You Space Your Rows? I hook my rows so the loops "touch shoulders" on the front, but I see no empty white space between them. When you turn your rug over, you'll notice it's totally the opposite--a properly hooked rug will have a small space between each row so the rug does not curl.

Where Can You Find Rug Hooking and Other Patterns? Visit me at <http://www.americanpiedesigns.com>!



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