

About Natural Rug Dyes

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Natural Dyes

Until the late nineteenth century only natural dyes were used for coloring weaving yarns. Natural dyes include plant dyes, animal dyes, and mineral dyes. Traditional vegetable dyes include woad, a plant of the mustard family, and indigo, a bush from the pea family, both used for blue dye. Yellow is produced from saffron, safflower, sumac, turmeric, onion skin, rhubarb, weld, and fustic. Madder root has been used since ancient times for reds. Browns and blacks come from catechu dye, oak bark, oak galls, acorn husks, tea, and walnut husks. Henna is used for orange. For green, indigo over-dyed with any of a variety of yellow dyes is used.