

# Ask *the* Experts



## **Pride of Persia Rug Co.**

Persian Rugs

### **What does kpsi mean?**

One factor in describing rugs is the knot count, or the number of knots per square inch, known as "kpsi." This is among the most misleading and confusing aspects of rug quality analysis. Knot count is just one of about 20 factors used to measure quality and value, and it is not equally important in all types of rugs. For example, a new mercerized cotton ("art" silk) rug from Kashmir may have 625 kpsi, while an antique Persian Serapi may have fewer than 50. Looking only at kpsi, the Kashmir would seem to be the better rug, yet that is certainly not the case.

When considering knot count, compare similar rugs to each other. An Isfahan is expected to have a high kpsi; a Heriz is not. Both rugs have their merits, but don't compare them based on knot count. Before asking about kpsi, make sure it is relevant. We want to know the kpsi for rugs from Qum or Isfahan or Hereke, but other factors are more much important when evaluating Heriz, Bakhtiari, or Oushak rugs. Asking about the knot count for certain types of rugs identifies you as a novice. Asking for the "thread count" or "stitches" is even worse. A piece of advice we've heard other experts give: "Don't be a knot counter."

*For more than a decade, Mehdi Abedi and Lisa Slappey have taught "The World of Persian Rugs" through Rice University's Glasscock School of Continuing Studies. They are the owners of Pride of Persia Rug Co., which specializes in older Persian rugs along with high-quality newer rugs from around the world.*

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