

## Bamboo Weaving Patterns

There are six basic bamboo weaving patterns: square, hexagonal, octagonal, mat, netting, and chrysanthemum-base. Artisans have developed numerous variations on these, resulting in more than 200 weaves in total.

Square, hexagonal, and octagonal patterns are symmetrical cross-weaves differing in the number of crisscrossing elements. The square pattern (*yotsume-ami*) is made with vertical and horizontal strips, crossing alternately above and below one another. This simple weave is very easy to understand and is thus widely used.

The hexagonal pattern (*mutsume-ami*) has strips in three rather than two directions, creating hexagons in the open spaces between. It is often used for making baskets to transport animals, vegetables, and the like. The octagonal pattern (*yatsume-ami*) consists of double rows of both vertical and horizontal strands with diagonal strips overlapping in both directions, creating large octagonal spaces. Because of its large gaps, this type is seldom used for practical items.

The mat pattern (*gozame-ami*) uses sturdy vertical strips with relatively wide spaces in between, which are filled in with thinner horizontal strips to give the final product flexibility. This weave is traditionally used to make tools for farming and fishing.

The netting pattern (*ajiro-ami*) features diagonally woven strips alternating in direction by row. It is extremely strong and is often used for tea ceremony implements and carrying bags.

Finally, the chrysanthemum-base pattern (*kikuzoko-ami*) consists of sturdy strips radiating outward from the base, between which finer strips are woven in a circular pattern. This weave is commonly used to create items with cylindrical bases.