

Plait. 1. Braid.

2. A flat fold in a garment, as on a shirt-bosom.

3. Straw-plait is made in various ways, and after a variety of patterns, known by the name of the place whence it is brought, as *Leghorn*, *Tuscan*, *Dunstable*; or by the number of strands, as *seven*, *double-seven*; or by other characteristics, as *split*, *vandyke*, *open*, etc.

The straws are carefully selected, cut into equal lengths, bleached by exposure to sulphur fumes, split lengthwise, and plaited together, according to the taste and the market.

The Leghorn, for instance, is a 13 plait, 6 straws being turned to the left and 7 to the right, so as to cross each other at right angles; the outer one of the seven is turned down, under two, over two, and under two; the outer straw on the other side, which now has seven, is next turned down, passing below, above, and below, in the same manner.

Straw is split by a wire which has a series of sharp edges equal in number to the number of splits into which it is desired to divide the straw. The slips are softened in water to render them pliable in plaiting. The plait is flattened between wooden rollers.