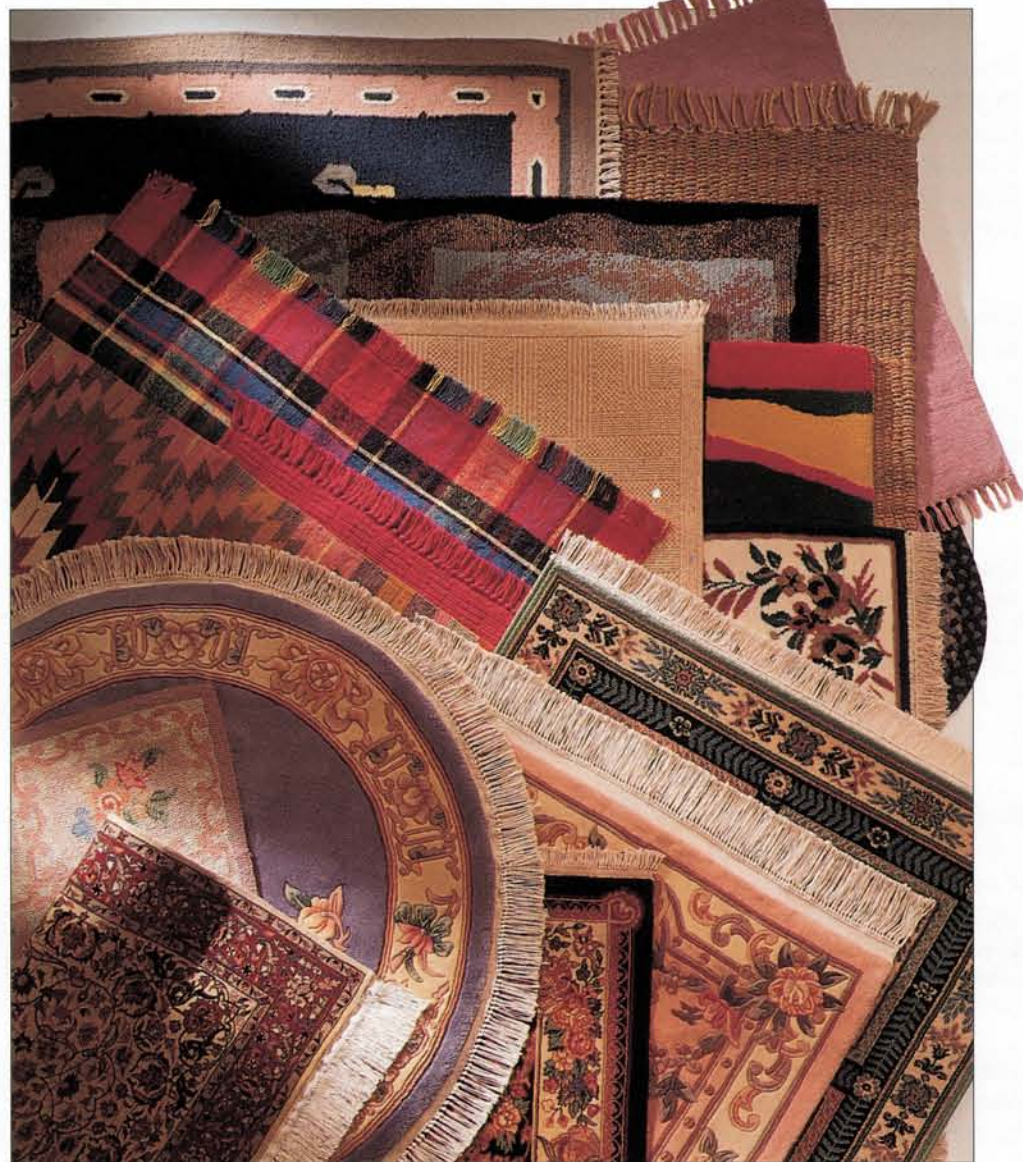


CHOOSING AN AREA RUG



Choose from a variety of colors and materials to keep what's under foot in keeping with the room.

Buyer's Checklist

The type of weave in a rug and the fibers it is made from greatly affect its texture and durability.

TEXTURES AT A GLANCE

Rugs look different depending on how they are woven. Some are created with a lengthwise warp and crosswise weft. Others are woven on canvas or burlap.



Needlepoint rugs are hand crafted from close stitches drawn through canvas or fabric.



Sculpted rugs have hand knotting; sculpting is done after the rug is woven.



Sisals come in a variety of weaves, from braided to herringbone to basketweave.



Hooked rugs are handmade, formed by drawing strips of fiber through canvas or burlap.



Rag rugs can be made in several ways, most often woven, braided or crocheted.

HIGH QUALITY WOOL



Wool is the ideal rug fiber. The best wool rugs have vibrant colors and clean easily. Wool has lanolin, a natural fabric protector, and its moisture content makes wool flame-retardant. It is traffic-resistant and retains color and shape better than any other fiber.

Cleaning Wool Rugs

STAIN	RECOMMENDED CLEANER	TIPS
ALCOHOL	Detergent/white vinegar* or cleaning fluid	Never rub stain. Press with paper toweling until moisture is absorbed.
COFFEE	Glycerine	Test on unseen area of rug and blot. Glycerine is available at drug stores.
GREASE	Cleaning fluid or scrape and vacuum	If using cleaning fluid, do not overwet the stain; this causes "rings".
MUD	Detergent/white vinegar*	First remove solids with spoon or blunt knife. Work from edge of stain.
PET STAINS	Professionally clean immediately. Pet stains affect rug dyes.	Don't walk on moist area of rug—have treated immediately.

*Equals one teaspoon mild detergent to one teaspoon white vinegar to one quart warm water.

A Sampling of Rugs

Area rugs are available in a wide variety of fibers and textures. What you purchase depends on your price range, room decor, color scheme and location.

TYPE OF RUG	QUALITY	TEXTURE/PILE	FIBER CONTENT	SPECIAL TIPS
ORIENTAL 	Quality is measured by knots per square inch, which ranges from 150-500+. Also determined by the materials used, knots, color, age and condition.	Texture is determined by the style of weave (knotted or sculpted) and the type of fiber used in weaving. Wool is hard-wearing, resilient and remains plush.	Oriental can be found in varying grades of wool, silk, cotton and synthetic fibers, or combinations of wool and synthetics. Better quality fibers are higher priced.	Don't throw away a fine oriental that has been damaged beyond repair. Undamaged parts of it can be used to cover stools, benches and pillows.
DHURRY 	The best dhurries are made of wool with a tight knot. Cotton dhurries, though inexpensive and good looking, attract dirt and lose their shape after washing.	Dhurries and kilims are considered flat weaves (without a raised surface or pile), although dhurries have a slightly pebbly texture like American Indian weaving.	Wool woven onto a cotton foundation is long-lasting and won't lose its shape when cleaned. More expensive dhurries will include wool or silk in their foundation.	Inexpensive dhurries are often available with fringed edges. These rugs are often used in high traffic areas since they won't mat down and can be washed easily.
SISAL 	Quality depends upon type of fiber used, design in the weave and country of origin. Jute and wool sisals are best because they aren't as scratchy as most naturals.	Textures range from coir, which has a very rough texture, to wool sisal, which feels like densely woven wool. Sisals are also available in different weaves.	Consists of various natural vegetable fibers. A rougher material like coir is best suited for use as a doormat or an outdoor rug.	Some higher quality matings have a latex or vinyl backing, allowing for easy removal of dirt particles, which tend to fall through the matting.
MACHINE-MADE 	Berber-style rugs range in quality. Some are inexpensive rugs made from synthetic materials. Others, like Karastans, are made of good quality wool.	Various textures and styles, such as axminster (cut pile yarn in woven grip with ridged back, or loosely woven with smooth back) and wilton (cut pile, cut and loop, or looped).	Available in wool, but more commonly found made from synthetics. Today's synthetics can match the texture of wool and offer resistance to fading.	Acrylic is a low-cost alternative to wool. It is resilient, retains its color, and resembles wool. Use a stain guard to protect it. It is not as easy to clean.
RAG 	Typically inexpensive. Made from remnants and leftover materials, rag rugs can also be custom made in sizes ranging from 36" to 8'x10'.	Flat weave with a slightly nubby texture. Also found in weaves like crocheted (low maintenance, unless snagged) and braided (seams may come apart but repair is easy).	Cotton is the most common fiber used, but they are also available in nylon and wool. Except for wool rugs, you can throw them in the wash and air dry for easy care.	Available in rounds, ovals and runners. Easy to find in department stores and craft fairs (where pieces may be more unique). Enhances country decors.

DOLLAR SENSE

To save on cleaning costs, any rug will benefit from suction vacuuming once a week. Regular vacuuming gets rid of particles that may cut into the foundation threads. Note: never use a vacuum on a silk rug.

HANDY HINTS

Pieces of carpeting with glued or sewn finished edges make great throw-away area rugs. For a layered look, place area rugs directly over carpeting to balance wear in high traffic areas.