



EST. 1989  
Oxbridge



# Interior Design Guide

*Complimenting your home with colour and carpet*

## Helping you to understand..

Oxbridge Flooring was established in 1989. Since then we have visited over 33,000 houses so we know a thing or two about carpets and flooring.

This simple guide will offer you step-by-step guidance on choosing, preparing and caring for your carpet to ensure it remains an attractive part of your home for many years to come.

Contents	Page
An introduction to carpet	3
Basic interior design	4 - 8
Tufted Carpets	9
Woven Carpets	10
Wool Carpets	11 - 12
Wool Alternatives	13
Underlay	14
Preparing to install	15 - 16
Caring for your carpet	17
Dealing with stains	18
Troubleshooting	19
Our commitment	19



## There's much more to carpet than just colour..

Carpets are normally taken for granted by us all but in reality this everyday item is not quite as simple as it first appears.

Carpets begin their life in the design studio where colours are matched to create modern or traditional designs suitable for today's discerning customer.

Once design is complete, the carpet is woven or tufted (depending on the carpet type) to produce the finished product which passes through rigorous quality procedures before being delivered to your home.

Carpets face degrees of use and it is important to choose the right kind of carpet for the location or it will wear poorly. The choice of suitable and complimentary underlay and accessories will prolong the life of your carpet and help it retain its appearance for years to come.

There are a number of different carpet options, each constructed with specific benefits and qualities. Your Carpet 1st retailer has a number of years experience and can provide you expert advice on the correct carpeting for your purposes, be it colour, design, texture, fibre, wear or a combination of all.



This guide will help you to choose the correct colour, style and construction of the perfect flooring for your home.

## Planning your Colour Scheme

You will need to decide which colours combine well, whether they are toning, harmonious or complementary. By getting to grips with the rules of colour, you can give your room a professional look.

### Primary colours

Primary colours are three key colours - Red, Blue and Yellow. They cannot be made from any other colour.

### Secondary colours

If you mix equal amounts of the primary colours, you get the Secondary colours - Purple, Green and Orange.

Red + Yellow = Orange

Red + Blue = Purple

Blue + Yellow = Green

### Tertiary colours

If you mix a primary with a secondary colour, in a ratio of 2:1, you get a Tertiary colour. Red-Orange, Blue-Green etc.

### Cool versus hot

Look at the colour wheel and you will see the left hand side of the colours are 'warm' or 'hot' and the ones on the right are 'cool' or 'cold'.

This is useful when you want to create a mood in a particular room or need to make your space cosier or lighter.

### Neutrals

Neutrals are one of the easiest groups of colours, or non-colours to work with. They don't appear on the colour wheel and include Black, Grey, White and sometimes Brown and Beige. They all go together and can be layered and mixed and matched. No neutral colour will try to dominate over another.

### Accent colours

An accent colour is a colour used in quite small quantities to lift or to add punch to a colour scheme.



## The Colour Wheel

\* An accent colour should be in a complementary colour. It works best if it's a bright, vibrant colour. Accent colours are perfect if you're scared of using strong colour - simply add a splash of an accent colour with a cushion, a vase or a throw.

\* Keep most of your room in shades and variations of one single colour. Choose a number of items in a harmonious colour. Then pick out just a few objects in an accent colour.

### Clashing colours

To use clashing colours is thought to be a no-no. At weddings, everyone is worried that the mother of the bride will clash with the mother of the groom. But in the home, if they are used carefully, they can look fantastic.

If they are of equal tonal strength, you can mix them together. Don't stop at two, you could try three or four. But if one is paler or weaker than the rest it will get lost in the overall scheme.

## Create a Mood

Using a mood board will give you a direction for your creativity, somewhere to crystallise your thoughts and a way to share your ideas with others.

Begin by choosing your main base colour from the colour wheel. This might be a colour you particularly like. Most people are always drawn to a certain colour. Use the colour wheel to look at what colours go with existing colour items and decide whether to go for a tonal, harmonious, or complementary scheme.

### Colour schemes

For best results, choose one of the following schemes.

**1. Tonal** - use just one colour but varying tones of it throughout a room or use more than one colour but all with the same depth of tone.

**2. Harmonious** - pick colours next to each other or near each other on the wheel. These schemes generally give a look that's easy to live with and are tranquil and restful.

**3. Complementary** - or 'contrasting' colours lie opposite each other on the colour wheel. Complementary colours generally inject some life into a scheme, are more daring and will make more of an impact but might not be so easy to live with.

### Create a mood

Try using warm, advancing colours in areas where you want people to feel welcomed such as living rooms, dining rooms and halls. You may want to make your bathroom a relaxing, stress free spa with watery colours reminiscent of the sea. Or you may want to nudge your family to get going in the morning and inject some energy with splashes of zesty acid pastels. Take your inspiration from nature. You may want your dining room to be smart and formal for lots of corporate entertaining with navy blue or you may want a relaxed, informal feel where all the family can relax.

A chic, contemporary bedroom could be conjured from layering neutrals or create a dramatic boudoir with purples and reds.



Play around with lighting to create moods for different situations, for example, romantic, practical, formal, entertaining etc.

### Linking rooms with colour

You may have loads of ideas for different colour schemes in each room of your house and be dying to give them all a try. But stop and think of the overall effect when all the doors are open and you can see into each room. In a smaller house this can tend to look a bit of a mish-mash.

If you'd like to draw the whole scheme together, choose an overall colour for the entire house and then use it in different ways in each room. Larger houses are slightly more forgiving as long as you pay attention to the meeting points.

Choose harmonious colours. You could paint one room blue, the adjacent one a greeny blue, the next purple etc.

Alternatively stick to one colour but use a different tone of it for each room, for example, going from a pale shade of blue to a dark one. This works especially well if your rooms open into one another. If one room is wallpapered, try picking out one shade from it to paint the next room or use the background colour of the wallpaper as your base colour.

To unify your whole house, keep all the woodwork the same colour - preferably white.

## The Psychology of Colour

Ever since man understood fiery red meant danger and those purple berries were poisonous, colour has been associated with moods and feelings.

The colours used to decorate rooms in a house can affect the occupants' moods.

### Red

Associated with: danger, passion, energy, warmth, adventure, optimism  
Best for: dining rooms as it promotes sociable and lively feelings, and stimulates the appetite  
Pitfalls: it can be overpowering and lead to headaches. Either vary the shade, paint one wall red, or use it for accessories only. Don't use red in a baby's room.

### Pink

Associated with: love  
Best for: bedrooms as it can be peaceful and restful.  
Pitfalls: can be appear to be very girly and sickly sweet. To counteract this, introduce hints of dark charcoal or black.

### Orange

Associated with: stability, reassurance, warmth, and is thought to aid digestion  
Best for: living and dining rooms  
Pitfalls: might keep the occupant awake when used in a bedroom. It can make a room look smaller because it's an advancing colour, so make sure the room gets plenty of light.

### Green

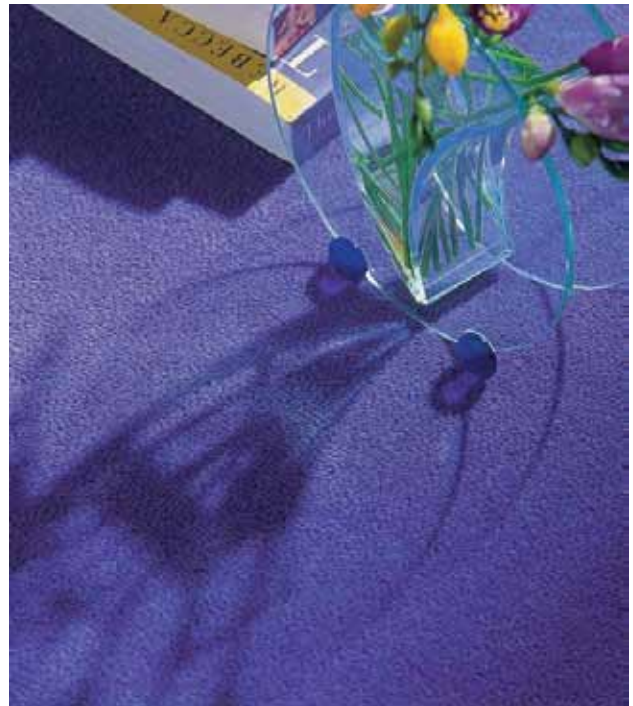
Associated with: nature and energy, calming and restful, balance (halfway between red and blue) security, stability  
Best for: bedrooms, living rooms  
Pitfalls: too much green is thought to make people too complacent or too laid back. Inject some red or orange to counteract these feelings

### Blue

Associated with: calming and soothing; promotes intellectual thought; believed to keep hunger at bay; loyalty, serenity, authority, protection, contemplative.  
Best for: bedrooms, bathrooms, studies  
Pitfalls: can look cold and unwelcoming. Make sure it doesn't look too chilly by choosing a blue with a warm undertone

### Yellow

Associated with: sunshine and energy, stimulates the intellect  
Best for: kitchens, dining rooms or north-facing rooms  
Pitfalls: not very restful for a bedroom. Yellow is thought to enhance feelings of emotional distress



Feeling intellectual? Try blue...

### Lilac

Associated with: spiritual matters - suggests the misty area between the sky and heaven, feminine  
Best for: bedrooms and bathrooms to create a stress-free sanctuary  
Pitfalls: can be insipid. Liven it up with black or silver, or both

### Purple

Associated with: creativity, fertility, joy, but also magic, evil, death and sex  
Best for: bedrooms  
Pitfalls: can be overpowering

### Brown

Associated with: security, stability and very practical  
Best for: living rooms  
Pitfalls: introduce a livelier colour for mental stimulation such as green or blue

### Black

Associated with: death, eccentricity, drama. It's a non-colour that absorbs colour and reflects nothing back  
Best for: using in moderation  
Pitfalls: depressing - think of all those angst-ridden teenage bedrooms. Use it to temper the sweetness of other sugary colours such as pink, but don't use it as a base colour

## Light and Colour

The most important thing is to look at your chosen colour at all times of day. Pin up a sample and keep looking at it day and night and under electric light. Fluorescent strip lighting, in particular, will change its appearance.

- The light in this country is cold and northern, which makes colours look dull.
- Work out which direction your room faces. If it's north-facing then it's likely not to get much sun and it will probably feel cold. Shades from the cool side of the colour wheel will make it look even colder, so warm it up with cosy tones.
- A south-facing room will get lots of light. If you want it to look sunny choose warm shades, although these might be overpowering in the full glare of the sun. To keep the room light and airy, choose cool shades.
- If your room is dark and dingy, painting it brilliant white won't help. White without light looks grey.
- Overhead lighting makes colour look flat. Try using a dimmer and lots of ambient lighting.
- A pale neutral may look washed out in strong daylight or artificial light - try a more intense shade.
- Halogen bulbs give a truer representation of colour than ordinary tungsten ones.

## Natural Inspiration

Nature is one of the most inspiring influences when planning colour schemes.

If you are lost and uninspired when it comes to finding the perfect palette to decorate your home, simply look around you. Just like Mother Nature, you can make it work for you.

Flowers are perfect for studying complementary



colours. Look at the delicate mauve of a crocus bulb paired with its opposite colour of vibrant yellow on its stamens, or consider the vibrant red berries nestling beside a glossy, green holly leaf.  
Leaves

Nature demonstrates how a toning scheme never needs to be dull. Think of the several different shades of green leaves, grass and trees beautifully co-existing.

If you want a harmonious colour scheme, study the myriad shades of golden yellow and russet reds slowly turning into copper on an autumnal day, or look at a garden border to see how the pinks of lupins graduate into the bluey mauves and purples of delphiniums and foxgloves. Clashing colours may also brighten many garden borders.

Use beach influences, copy the perfect neutrals of slate grey pebbles mixed with the muted browns and caramels of driftwood and sand.

## Tricks with Colour



A few simple changes to the colour scheme in a room can make it appear more spacious or cosy.

There are plenty of tricks with colour that can be used to enhance the size of rooms in a house. Careful use of colour can offer a simple, but effective, way of making a home feel more cosy.

Follow these design rules to transform an existing living space into a dream home:

### To make a room appear larger

- Choose colours from the cool end of the colour wheel.
- Paint all surfaces the same colour.
- Keep flooring dark and walls light, the floor space will appear to expand.
- A low ceiling will appear higher if painted a lighter shade than the walls or put some mouldings up and paint them a darker shade than the ceiling.
- Use the deepest tone of colour near to the floor and the lightest shade on the ceiling. This will give the illusion of space. Try it the other way around to see how a room can be made to look smaller.
- Large pieces of furniture will appear smaller if they are the same colour as the walls.
- A small room doesn't have to be painted in light colours. Emphasise its cosiness by painting it a midnight blue or deep red.

### To make a room appear cosier

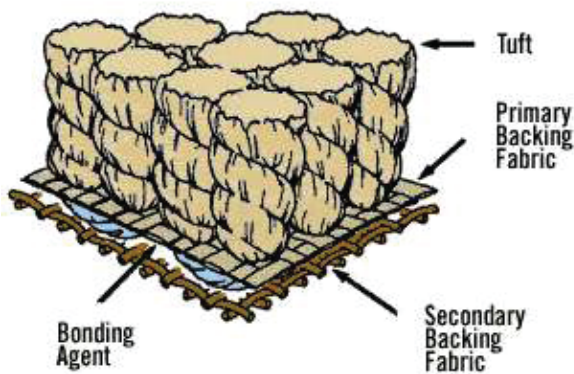
- Choose colours from the warm side of the colour wheel.
- A sunny yellow will 'heat up' a room, but don't go overboard, complement it with a white ceiling and woodwork to keep it looking fresh.
- A warmer shade used on the ceiling will bring the height of a room down and make it feel cosier.
- When using bright colours such as orange and red, remember to maintain balance by keeping the floor and carpet neutral.

### Other tricks

- The far end of a long corridor will seem closer if painted in a darker shade.
- In a long corridor-like room, paint the two, shorter end walls in a slightly darker shade to make the room appear squarer.

## Tufted Carpets

With the advances in technology, 95% of all carpet produced today is tufted. A roll of tufted carpet can be produced in an hour that would take 8 hours to weave. Hundreds of yarn-threaded needles are pushed through the backing fabric to form the loops of a tufted carpet, which may be left as loops or cut. A secondary backing is usually glued on for extra strength and stability. A wide variety of styles and textures can be then created using various techniques.



### Loop Pile

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#### Berber

Berber carpets are similar in appearance to the thick woollen carpets made by the Berber tribes of North Africa and Asia. The loopy structure is made from thick or bulky yarns of wool, nylon, polypropylene or a blend of these fibres to give a cushioned effect. Berber carpets are available in a variety of colours and can be either level loop or multilevel loop.

#### Level Loop

A very flexible and durable carpet is produced when all the loops are created the same height giving a very natural casual appearance even though commonly made from synthetic fibres. The tight loop texture tends to disguise marks and therefore makes a loop carpet an ideal blend of luxury and practicality.

#### Multilevel Loop

With a surface texture of varying loop heights creating an informal random appearance, multi-level loop carpets are very forgiving when it comes to marks and stains making them ideal for high traffic areas and busy family rooms.

### Cut Pile

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#### Freize

Freize (pronounced fre-say) carpets are similar in texture to a saxony, but the yarns are more tightly twisted and should always be heat set. The densely packed, low pile surface creates a coarse pebbly texture which is both durable and good at hiding marks and stains making a very good carpet for high traffic areas and family rooms.

#### Saxony

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Saxony carpets are made of twisted yarns which should be heat set. Rather than blending together the tips remain very distinct forming a very elegant finish. Saxony textures have a tendency to show footprints and vacuum marks and are therefore more suitable for occasional rooms in the home.

#### Twist

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The popular twist textured carpet is the cut-pile standard. The carpet yarn is tightly twisted and often heat set to retain this texture. The result is a versatile finish ideal for plain colours.

#### Velvet

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Velvet carpets, sometimes called 'velour' or 'plush' all have a level surface pile of approximately 5 - 10 mm depth which is then sheared to give a very fine finish. With very little twist in the yarn the ends of the fibres blend together further enhancing the smooth appearance. Velvet carpets tend to show footprints and vacuum marks and 'shade' with heavy use causing the carpet to look different because of the light reflecting off it. Velvets are a luxury for occasional rooms.

## Tufted Carpets

### Cut and Loop

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When some of the pile is cut to form a tuft and some left as loops a variety of surface patterns and textures is created. This multi-level surface is excellent for hiding footprints and marks making a cut and loop pile carpet ideal for heavy traffic areas and general purpose rooms in the home.

### Bonded

Bonded carpets, sometimes called 'fibre bonded' or 'fusion bonded' are created by firing fibres into an adhesive backing material - the fibres are not stitched into the backing in anyway. The technique is primarily used for commercial carpets.

### Shag Pile

Shag pile carpets have had varied popularity. The pile can be up to 50mm long and the structure of the carpet is very casual and loose but the surface flattens easily and lacks durability.

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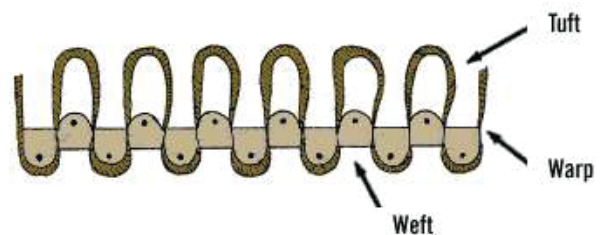
## Woven Carpets

Woven carpets are in a tiny minority of today's production but are some of the finest carpets produced and are used for prestigious installations.



### Axminster

The pile of the carpet is woven into the backing and then cut to length creating a 'u' shaped tuft to give a velvety surface finish. The weaving process locks in the yarn to create a highly durable carpet as well as a luxury feel.



The process allows for intricate designs and colours to be used although modern tastes for plain carpets have reduced the demand for patterned carpets.

### Wilton

Wilton carpets are produced in a similar way to axminsters - the main difference being that a continuous yarn is woven all the way through. The carpet pile is then sheared to create a range of cut and loop pile textured effects. The resulting carpet is high quality and extremely durable.

### Flat Weave

Manufactured in the same way as a wilton, flat weave is a loop pile which allows the yarn to be woven across a wider area to create a flatter more textured finish.



## Wool Carpets

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Throughout history wool carpets have had the reputation for quality. As a fibre wool is known for the excellent appearance retention and pressure withstanding qualities. The very best wool for carpet manufacture is 'strong' wool from sheep breeds found in Britain and New Zealand

### 100% Wool or 80/20 - 80/10/10 wool rich

Man made fibres are no match for wool . Naturally superior in both strength and performance there is no need to blend with other fibres to improve it. Manufacturers choose to use synthetic fibres within the yarn blend for a number of reasons. These include fibre flexibility, dyeing, heat setting, stain resistance, durability and cost. These wool rich blends offer industry standard carpets which perform well in the home.

### The Benefits of Wool Carpet

#### Practical

Strong and resilient - A wool carpet will provide superior performance for many years as it can offer unique resilience and long lasting durability. The

naturally occurring crimp in the wool fibre provides automatic 'bounce' so pile compression is reduced maintaining the appearance of the carpet for many years.

#### Easy Care

As a natural fibre, wool has an inbuilt resistance to soiling due to it's natural oils and the microscopic scales on the outer surface of yarn. As a result additional anti - soil treatments are unnecessary. Simply vacuuming the carpet will keep it looking good and whilst wool initially repels spills, prompt and complete blotting with white paper towels or an absorbant cloth is advised and will address many household spills.

#### Comfort

Soft and warm - Naturally warm and luxurious underfoot wool carpet is a natural insulator improving heat retention and the energy efficiency of the home.

Peace and quiet - Wool carpet absorbs sound and cushions the home against echo and room to room noise transfer.

# Carpet Fibres Explained



## Wool Carpets

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### Safety

**Fire retardant** - Wool is naturally fire resistant, has a slow ignition rate and tests show that it is self extinguishing within seconds. It meets many safety regulations without additional treatments and for this reason is favoured in contract locations for this reasons

**Fall friendly** - Carpet cushions and provides a softer floor which protects against serious injury caused by falls in the very young or elderly.

### Internal Environment

**Indoor environment** - With a complex physical and chemical structure wool is a natural 'smart' fibre helping create a balanced atmosphere in the home. It breathes and absorbs humidity in the air, releasing it when the atmosphere becomes dry and helps improve air quality by absorbing airborne toxins in indoor air.

**Anti - allergy** - The minute scales on the wool fibres surface grab hold of dust particles until vacuumed safely away which helps to reduce the amount of dust particles floating in the atmosphere. Wool does

not give off harmful emissions or promote the growth of bacteria and wool is not a food source for dust mites.

### Eco/Environmental

**Natural and Sustainable** - Grown on sheep which graze freely, wool is both 100% natural and fully sustainable. As shearing is a necessary part of animal husbandry the carpet industry has a fresh supply of wool available every year.

**Energy Efficient** - Wool is energy efficient in the home and also in carpet production.

**Biodegradable** - Wool fibre is biodegradable in soil and will produce nitrogen, sulphur, carbon dioxide and water all of which are plant nutrients.

**Environmentally Assessed** - Wool is an environmentally responsible fibre that has been measured in terms of its ecological impact. A Life Cycle Analysis study carried out by Leeds University to ISO 14040 standard for British Wool concludes that it compares favourably when measured against man-made fibres.

## Alternatives to Wool

### Polyamide (Nylon)

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Nylon is often added to wool to create a woolrich carpet with increased wear resistance, particularly in lower pile weights and densities.

Nylon's molecular structure provides an extremely hard wearing fibre that by many is now considered the industry standard within commercial contract locations.

### Polyester

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Polyester carpet fibre gives a luxurious feel to thick, cut pile styles and it also provides a good depth of colour. However, it is not as resistant to flattening as some other fibres although it does wear well and provides good resistance to water-soluble stains.

### Polypropylene

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Polypropylene is becoming widely used in carpet manufacturing, either as part of a blend, or in its own right. While it withstands footfall well, it is not as resilient as other fibres. Polypropylene is highly stain resistant as the fibres are created in the colour of the carpet and are not dyed. Polypropylene carpets are so stain resistant they can be cleaned with bleach.

### Silk

Being so delicate, silk is rarely used in carpet but it does bring a certain something to the finest hand made rugs, particularly those from the Middle East and Indian regions.

### Jute

Used mainly in the backing of carpets from a traditional point of view, jute is gaining popularity as a natural fibre floorcovering and its depth of texture makes it great for rugs.

### Coir

Coir is made from the fibres of coconut husks and it is a strong and resilient fibre. The husks are



Someone's having a bad day... Thankfully a Polypropylene carpet can handle this.

harvested and then soaked for months before being beaten into submission, washed and then dried. The pale yellow fibres are then spun into yarn that is then woven into flat weave carpeting or as many people will recognise it, into cut pile doormats that are great at removing dirt and moisture from soles.

### Sisal

These are some of the toughest fibres in the business and unlike most natural fibres it can be dyed. When combined with wool, sisal can also take on a softer side and is being favoured by natural flooring manufacturers for its aptitude at creating colourful, natural floors.

### Seagrass

Hailing from the paddy fields of China, Seagrass is a rapidly replenishing resource. Once the fields have been flooded with seawater, the fibre is harvested and spun into yarn that has an impermeable quality. While this makes it hard to dye, it also makes it relatively easy to care for.

## Underlay

It is essential that your new carpet is laid on a new, good quality underlay. This will ensure that you get maximum wear and excellent appearance, as well as providing heat and acoustic benefits.

Don't make the mistake of believing that you will save money by utilising your old underlay. It will probably have little, if any, life left in it, and certainly next to no bounce or resilience.



### Good underlay will...

- Improve underfoot comfort
- Reduce flattening and improve appearance retention
- Absorb the pressure of foot traffic and reduce wear
- Improve thermal insulation and warmth
- Increase sound insulation
- Smooth out sub - floor imperfections
- Last the lifetime of the carpet

### Poor or old underlay will...

- Feel hard and unwelcoming
- Reduce carpet life
- Cause wrinkling and premature wear spots
- Cause carpet fibres to breakdown more quickly
- Not meet British standards

### How Thick?

A maximum of 12mm is recommended as working with gripper rod becomes difficult if any thicker, but rooms with heavy traffic will need a thinner denser underlay. The combination of thickness and density is all important as a thick underlay with a low density may not perform well. Typically the thicker the underlay the better quality it will need to be - 9-7mm is the most common domestic thickness with 11mm often used for luxury installations.

### Types of Underlay

#### Sponge Rubber

The most popular underlay on the market, available in flat or waffle patterns in a wide range of weights for different applications. It performs well for comfort and has a durable spring retention.

#### PU (Polyurethane) Foam

The foam provides excellent comfort and performance levels with lots of thickness options - and its light weight helps handling. The product can be recycled again after use.

#### Crumb Rubber

Flat and dense, crumb rubber underlay is good for heavy footfall - offering maximum protection but a little less comfort. Crumb rubber is very good for stair nosings.

#### Combination

A rubber crumb base with a felt top layer offers a good combination of protection, durability and comfort. It also allows carpet seaming to bed into the felt top.

#### Underfloor Heating Underlay

Always ask if there is underfloor heating. Most manufacturers offer specialised products. Underlay and carpet with a combined tog rating up to 2.5 can be used - which means the underlay would normally have a tog rating of 1.0.

#### Felt

This traditional, but environmentally friendly underlay is made from recycled fibres - wool, jute and synthetic - to create a firm dense pad with excellent thermal insulation. Still a popular choice among contractors when stretch fitting woven carpets.

#### Pre - tackified Underlay

A self - adhesive single stick underlay in both needlefelt and PU. A removable system for heavy use when comfort is desired.

## Preparing to Install

### What to do before your carpet is delivered

We want your purchase experience to be as good as you do. We want the fitting process to go as smoothly as possible with the minimum of disruption and inconvenience and for you to be delighted with your choice of carpet and supplying retailer.

### Removing your old carpet

It pays to be prepared. Old carpets are heavy and can be dusty when removed from the floor so a well ventilated room is advisable and it is wise to vacuum the carpet one last time before you begin. You may need help to remove the carpet as it, and the old underlay, will be heavy. Finally vacuum the floor to remove any remaining dust or dirt.

Some retailers may remove the carpet and underlay for you. But it pays to check in advance as this is not usually typical.

### Airing the room

Ventilating the room during installation will help to remove some of the materials involved in carpet and flooring installation which could have an adverse effect on air quality. Open all windows and doors whenever possible and also whenever convenient during the following days.

### Warning!

Installing carpet and flooring is a difficult job handled by our professional flooring installers who specialise specifically in the products we supply. Please remember that they are not plumbers, electricians, tilers, joiners, removal men or appliance engineers.

Please ensure that any possible hazards such as cables, wires or pipes, which could cause injury or damage are brought to their attention as soon as possible.



### Moving your furniture and appliances

Ideally all areas should be totally free of furniture as this will go a long way to ensuring a professional finish to your new carpet. Any breakable or valuable items, such as vases, lamps and decorations should also be removed. Electrical items i.e. televisions or computers should be disconnected and removed from the area if at all possible.

In kitchens and utility rooms please disconnect all appliances and where practical remove them from the area.

If removal of old flooring or moving of furniture or appliances presents a problem please inform us prior to the installation date as this work can often be arranged at additional cost.

### Colour matching

Manufacturers endeavour to match colour wherever possible, however you can expect some colour variation from a sample due to the nature of carpet manufacture and differing lighting intensity.

## Preparing to Install

### Opening doors

Sometimes the pile height of a new carpet may be higher than your old one. Doors may not open as freely and should be planed on the bottom. Fitters may need to remove doors to complete the fitting. Adjustment of the doors can sometimes be arranged at extra cost.

### Eliminating waste

Always plan your flooring economically to avoid waste, but as all rooms are different shapes and sizes, some waste is unavoidable. Fitters will leave any large pieces of waste for your retention.

### Carpet seams

There are some occasions when seams are unavoidable, however the modern methods now available ensure these are not detrimental to the performance or appearance of the carpet. It must be pointed out that seams are never invisible and professional fitters will endeavour to position them where foot traffic is lightest.

### Colour changes

The shade of the carpet depends on the angle of the light that falls on the carpet pile. Brush the pile in the opposite direction and the shade changes. Such changes are characteristic of cut pile materials.

### Making a fitting date

You can schedule a date that is convenient for you but please remember that not all products are immediately available from suppliers.

### Use professionals

Buying carpets and underlay can be an expensive process. The appearance and longevity of your carpet will be enhanced dramatically by having professional installation. NICF registered fitters are recognised as the best.

# Looking After Your Carpet

With just a little care, your carpet will last longer and look good throughout its life. You can keep your carpet in top condition by following the simple guidelines in this guide.

Remember, if you vacuum regularly and treat stains immediately, your carpet will keep its beautiful appearance for much longer.

### Vacuuming

Surface dirt is unavoidable and sometimes unsightly, but dirt that is trampled down between the tufts has an abrasive cutting action that can eventually wear away the fibres. The best way to delay or prevent this destructive wearing action is to give your carpets a regular vacuuming.

There is a common myth that you should let a new carpet "settle in" for a week or so. In fact, entirely the reverse is true. Virtually all new carpets will shed a small amount of loose fibres and these should be removed by vacuuming as soon as possible. Otherwise the fibres will be walked back into the carpet and can cause a matted appearance.

Loop pile carpets, particularly Wool Berbers, should not be cleaned with a vacuum which has a beater attachment - this can cause excessive fluffing and matting - this type of carpet should be vacuumed with the suction head only.

Entrance mats and barrier mats will reduce the amount of dirt carried on to your carpets from outside the home, but please remember that these mats must also be cleaned regularly.



## Dealing With Stains

Accidental spillages on carpets are an unfortunate fact of life and no carpet is totally stain-proof. Remember the golden rule that instant treatment can mean instant cure. NEVER RUB - but always blot to a damp dry state.

Liquid spills should be soaked up immediately with absorbent tissue, preferably white, or a clean, dry cloth.

Avoid excessive rubbing and always work from the outside edges of the stain into the centre to avoid spreading. Use a blunt knife or spoon to gently scrape away any solids.



### Cleaning Solution

#### Detergent Solution

A teaspoon of neutral detergent, such as 'Stergene', to half pint (quarter litre) of warm water.

#### Detergent/vinegar solution

Add one teaspoon of white vinegar to the above detergent solution.

#### Ammonia Solution

One tablespoon of household ammonia to one cup of warm water. **WARNING:** Always test a small 'out of the way' area of your carpet for colourfastness prior to tackling the stain.

#### Dry Cleaning Solvent

A proprietary brand of dry cleaning solvent should be used. You will also need a blunt knife and some white tissues or absorbent cloth to blot up the stain as it is released. The modern alternative is K2R, a dry spray, which is best left overnight to work on any stain before vacuuming off.

### Dealing with spillages or damage

#### Blood, chocolate, egg, ice-cream, glue, grass, gravy, fruit

Scrape up excess with a blunt knife. Use detergent solution, starting at the outer edge and blotting dry. Follow with ammonia solution. Blot dry. Do not rub.

#### Milk, soft drinks

Blot up the surplus spillage. Use detergent solution, starting at the outer edge and blotting dry. Follow with ammonia solution. Blot dry. Do not rub.

#### Fats, shoe polish, lipstick, oil, solids, nail polish, tar, vomit, wax, grease, chewing gum

Scrape up with a blunt knife. Use dry cleaning solvent, followed by detergent/vinegar solution. Blot dry. Do not rub.

#### Coffee, tea, alcohol/wines, perfume, urine, liquid foods

Blot up the surplus spillage. Use detergent/vinegar solution. Work from the outer edge of the stain, using a little at a time and blotting up with dry cloths frequently. Do not rub.

## Troubleshooting

The following items are common with all kinds of carpets which occur during use. These items are not defects.

### Shading

All cut pile carpets, particularly plain or tonals, are liable to shading - that is to show light and dark patches due to uneven crushing of the surface, commonly known as "pile pressure". No care on the part of the manufacturer can avoid this tendency which is inherent in all pile fabrics. It is not detrimental to the wear of the carpet, nor is it a defect.

### Flattening

All carpets are subject to flattening in varying degrees. Flattening is caused by the compression of the pile by footwear and furniture.

Heavy furniture may crush the carpet pile so wherever possible use castor cups. Furniture should not be dragged across a carpet. Try to rearrange your furniture occasionally to avoid uneven wear. Regular vacuuming will help to alleviate flattening, bringing the pile back up to its normal position.

### Sprouting

Occasionally a tuft may protrude above the carpet surface. This is not a manufacturing fault, simply trim this down to the general level of the surrounding carpet with a pair of scissors. NEVER try to pull the tuft out of the carpet.

### Fading

Today, almost all of the fibres and dyes used in making carpets exhibit excellent properties of colourfastness to sunlight. However, all carpets are subject to a degree of fading with age but this is generally unnoticeable over the years.

Carpets fitted in extremely sunny rooms with large windows can be protected by drawing your curtains or blinds during periods of strong sunlight.

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