

*Here Are Things To Look For When Buying*

# THAT NEW RUG

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During the last two years the files of consumer-advising agencies have been bulging with questions and angry complaints about rugs.

The troubles seem to center about three factors: (1) New fibers which behave differently from the more familiar wool, (2) New family living habits which are hard on rugs, and (3) A new method of manufacture which produces look-alike rugs in a wide variety of qualities. The quality of rug which withstands the wear given by a couple of quiet adults may be hopelessly inadequate for a family with active children and pets.

## More Exposure to Light

Picture windows and window walls flood rooms with light and sunshine such as the closed and shuttered parlors of the past never experienced. Rug colors have to stand up to the greater fading action of such strong light.

Modern families stay home more with their family rooms and barbecues, and even sit in one place in front of the television for long periods — wearing out the rug in that one spot! We like light colors but light colors do soil more easily.

High labor costs and the high cost of scarce carpet wools forced manufacturers to find some way to produce rugs at a price most of us could pay. They tried new fibers. Cottons and rayons in rugs come in beautiful colors but soil quickly. Small rugs of these fibers can be washed, but large ones in light colors may require expensive professional cleaning regularly.

## Nylon is Expensive

Nylon rugs wear long and radiate heat but still are expensive. Three per cent of nylon, the amount used in many "nylon-viscose" rayon rugs adds little to the wearing quality. It will take at least 20 per cent to make much difference. Saran rugs are stain resistant, but so far dull in

color. Acrilan is the newest fiber in medium priced rugs. Its manufacturers claim strength, resistance to soiling, and resilience for it.

Rugs can be made on an expensive machine which weaves a thick, firm cloth base of strong heavy jute, cotton or linen threads. Carried along in this foundation cloth are the yarns which are regularly pulled to the top to make the surface of the rug. Quality and price can be lowered by making these surface yarns shorter and further apart, or by using poorer grades. Carpet made this way is usually called "woven carpet."

## The Needle-Tufted Rugs

Manufacturers of tufted bed spreads and bath mats came up with a way of making rugs on their less expensive and faster working machinery. These "needle-tufted" rugs have surface loops stitched to a piece of already woven cloth. Cheaper grades use a thinner base and shorter loops placed further apart. All have a rubbery paint backing to protect the stitches on the side next to the floor.

When the base cloth wears in holes, the needle-tufted rug is gone. The purchase of a couple extra square yards for patching purposes is sometimes advised. (If laid somewhere on top of the main rug like a scatter rug, it will soil and fade so that it will match the main rug when a patch is needed.)

## Traffic is a Factor

Rugs of poorer quality may give good service in infrequently used rooms. The average family living room through which the main traffic of the house passes is no place for anything but a very sturdy rug. If the cost of a large rug seems high, perhaps the now fashionable "area rug" in a good quality is the answer. Such rugs usually cover only the area under the main group of furniture. They must be chosen to make a pleasing design with the color and texture of the rest of the floor.

In a market full of beautiful merchandise but varying qualities, one should deal with a reputable merchant. Tell him what kind of wear the rug you seek must be able to take. Ask questions about fiber content, moth proofing treatments for wool rugs, etc., and look for hang tags or printed labels to support the salesman's claim. Compare different priced rugs and see what surface yarn height and closeness, or base cloth strength is given for the money. Put a good pad under the rug to prolong the life of your investment.

Multiplying the length by the width in feet of the rug size you wish and dividing that total by nine gives the square yards needed. A little waste over that amount may be necessary because the rug does not come in the most useful width. A large amount over that total usually means you are being cheated. Reputable merchants will gladly show you how they figure. Sizeable scraps may be placed under the TV viewer's favorite perch.

If the salesman guarantees the rug to wear satisfactorily for a certain length of time, it would be wise to insist that such guaranteed wearing quality be spelled out in writing, either on tags attached to the rug itself or in the sales contract or bill of sale.

**BELOW, Joan Cooper of Casa Grande, home economics student, has pulled out one row of the stitched-on tufts in a piece of needle tufted carpet. She is noting also the comparatively low tufts and how far apart the rows are in this sample.**

