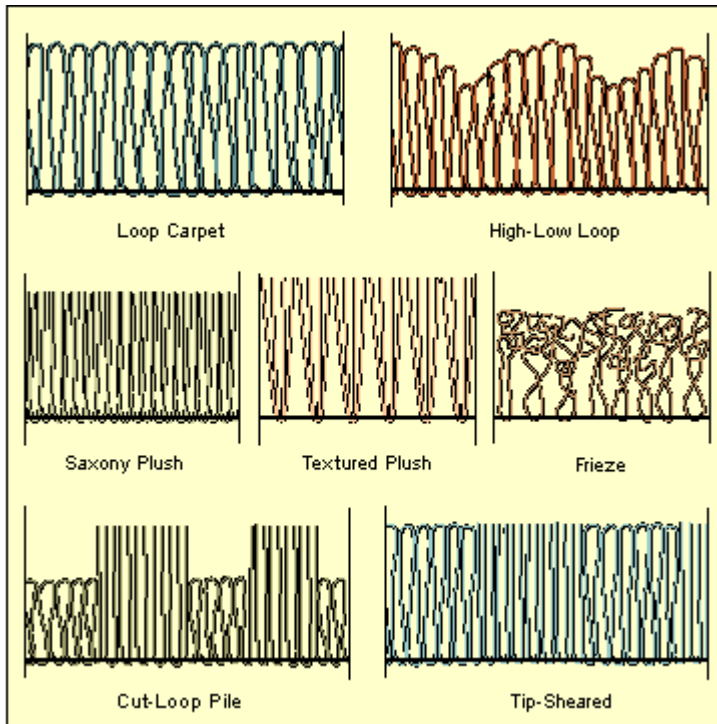


The Carpet Buying Guide

Carpet can offer more versatility, comfort, ease of maintenance and health benefits than other flooring options. It is also more "budget-friendly" than most other choices and there are styles to coordinate with every décor.



Carpet diem! That's tweaked-Latin for "carpet day," a day in the life of a home remodeling project that is well worth seizing. Few remodeling milestones are as fun or gratifying as the day wall-to-wall carpeting is rolled out and stretched into place. Within a few hours, a bedroom awakens with color and style, a living room radiates warmth and luxury or a family room grows quiet, cozy and comfortable.

According to The Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI), more than 6 out of 10 American homeowners prefer wall-to-wall carpet for those kinds of family spaces. To meet that level of demand, over one billion yards of carpet will be produced this year, enough to run a 12-foot-wide swath around the Earth's equator. Six times.

Why the popularity? Carpet's benefits are obvious: it is comfortable, quiet, warm, relatively affordable and quick to install, available in thousands of colors and styles, and it can unify a home's interior.

Carpeting can also be less durable than other flooring materials, depending on the wear it receives and the material it is made from. It also can be more difficult to keep clean, depending again on the material and the height of the pile.

Carpeting is made of synthetic or wool yarn sewn through a backing of canvas or other material. The loops can be of varying heights and are often cut to make the carpet's pile. Some carpets are a combination of cut and uncut loops.

The most durable and common synthetic carpeting material is nylon, which wears well and can be quite stain resistant. Other synthetic materials are olefin, polyester, and acrylic—the latter, more expensive

fiber has a texture more like natural wool and which is more expensive. Wool has the most pleasant and natural texture, and is also the most expensive carpet material.

Carpet can be applied over almost any subfloor or existing flooring—except for old carpet! A thick pile will hide irregularities in subflooring in a way that most other floorings won't.

Getting Prepared

Before your new carpet hits the floor, iron out these details. Remember, your retailer will provide you with installation experts.

Who is responsible for moving furniture in the room?

Who removes and disposes of the old carpet and padding?

Are there any extra charges for these services?

Where will the carpet seams be placed?

ROOM PREPARATION

Be sure to prepare the room for the installation.
Vacuum the old carpet to avoid airborne dust or particles.

Make sure the carpet installation is the last remodeling project for the room, after any painting, wallpapering or construction

It is best if the roll of carpet is at normal room temperature when it is rolled out for installation. If it is being installed in a new house, and it is during winter months, the carpet should not be delivered prior to installation and left to sit in an unheated environment. If pre-delivery is unavoidable, then the heat in the house should be turned on to a normal temperature.

DURING INSTALLATION

You've got a role to play during the big roll out.
Vacuum the floor after the old carpet and padding are removed.

Inspect the new carpet as it's unrolled for the proper color, texture and style.

Make sure the installers properly stretch the new carpet to minimize wrinkles and ripples.

If the new carpet prevents doors from opening, arrange to have them trimmed and rehung.

Ventilate the room well - open doors, windows and run exhaust fans.

AFTER THE EVENT

Set the stage for quality care.
Vacuum to remove the loose fibers.

Ventilate the area for the first 48 to 72 hours, so the new carpet smell will disappear.

Durability

The measure of how long your carpet will look and feel good. Ideally, carpet will retain its original texture and appearance for years to come. Durability depends on finding the right balance of three important factors defined below:

Fiber

During carpet manufacturing, natural or synthetic fiber is converted to yarn and tufted, or locked into a backing to form the pile or surface that you walk on. There are five major types of carpet fiber - nylon 6,6, nylon 6, polypropylene (olefin), polyester, and wool; the most popular being nylon.

Ideal for carpeting, nylon 6,6 is a man-made fiber that is wear-resistant (soil and stain resistant). Its natural properties allow for a very wide range of colors and color blends and the newest fibers offer the look and feel of wool, but with much less maintenance and expense. All STAINMASTER® carpets are made of 100% premium nylon 6,6 fiber with soil and stain protection not found in other fibers.

Twist

The twist of the fiber is the way the fiber filaments are spun into yarn, and how the yarn is in turn twisted upon itself. Twist is usually locked into the fiber with a steam or heat-setting. The tighter the twist, the more the carpet will resist changes in appearance and texture. All STAINMASTER® carpet construction is conducted under strict twisting specifications.

Density

Density describes the amount of pile in the carpet and how close the tufts are to one another. In general, the more dense the carpet the better the quality. Check density by pressing your fingers on the carpet and trying to reach the backing. It will be difficult to reach the backing of a very dense carpet. With the tufts facing outward, bend the carpet into a U shape to see how much of the carpet backing shows. The less backing you see, the more dense the carpet.