

The Best Carpet To Buy From An Experienced Carpet & Upholstery Cleaner's Point of View:

Carpet is available in many colors, weaves, fabrics and densities. They all look beautiful when new. When shopping for new carpet, it's natural to gravitate to the colors we like first, but it's the construction of the carpet that will determine how long you're happy with your purchase. Follow these guidelines and your choice will stand the test of time.

Choose The Weave First: Carpet can be woven into cut pile (plush), or looped pile (flat-looped commercial or Berber) or a combination of the two. Cut pile carpet tends to feel softer and be more desirable for your home while carpet that is formed into loops tend to feel coarser and be less inviting.



Then Look For The Fiber Content:

Jute, Sisal, Cotton and other natural fibers can be used to create some beautiful and trendy carpets. Since all these fibers tend to shrink when wet, the manufactures of these fibers recommend dry powder cleaning only. Since most spots and overall soil are best removed with the hot water extraction system, this leaves you with what we consider an unclean-able and very impractical textile for day to day use.

100% Wool carpet is also a natural fiber, very durable and resistant to abrasion, very expensive and very absorbent. With proper care, wool is very cleanable with our hot water extraction system. Wool's affinity for liquids is what allows it to absorb and hold the vibrant colors you see even in antique wool area rugs. It also means that it is easily stained by liquid spills. As a lower price alternative, wool is often blended with acrylic which. A wool/acrylic blend carpet is still an expensive carpet that we do not recommended in light colors due to premature graying in traffic lanes from abrasion.

Polyester, Olefin (Polypropylene) & Acrylic are low quality, inexpensive synthetics. They are basically spun plastics, colored through the entire fiber, which means they are typically very stain resistant. The negative attributes to these fibers are more prominent; They are oil-loving which means they tend to attract cooking oil particles and body oils from pets, and are more likely to be permanently stained by oily spills or tracking. Liquid spills tend to soak directly into the backing and pad, only to continue to resurface, sometimes even after professional cleanings. They tend to crush and matt more quickly because they are not very resilient. Soil removal in these fibers is generally very good, however light colors tend to show

gray traffic lanes, which is not soil, from even moderate wear and abrasion which is permanent. We have many disappointed clients who own this type of carpet.

Carpet manufacturers often blend fibers together to capture the positive attributes of each one, or to create a less expensive alternative. Adding 10 or 20% of a lower grade fiber does not seem to save enough money to make up for the lower overall quality of the carpet. Our experience is that, over time, it is the negative attributes of the individual fibers that tend to stand out. **We don't recommend blends.**

Nylon is still the most popular fiber used in carpets today. In spite of the stain resistant improvements made to nylon since the mid-80s, we still recommend you be very careful with color damaging products like tile cleaners containing bleach and keeping foods with high dye content similar to Kool-Aid and colored soda drinks like grape and orange soda out of carpeted areas. Nylon's variety of colors and its balance between moderate cost and high level of resiliency makes it an easy choice for many carpet buyers. Our years of experience in carpet maintenance has shown us that a properly installed, high-density, 100% nylon carpet will give you the best appearance level and the greatest overall satisfaction of any fiber available. Well, maybe...read on...

New CornCarpet Technology

What makes CornCarpet unique? Aside from the fact that it is made from corn. CornCarpet has stain resistant properties built in to the fiber. The durability is also superior to most carpets available today.

What is the Process? The process begins with the growth of corn. This corn is not the type of corn that you would typically eat. The corn kernels are converted into corn starch. This process then takes a special turn by adding special elements and through a process the corn is then able to polymerize into a bio-plastic. The material is then able to be pushed into an extruder and hair like polymers exit the machine. These polymers are then able to be spun into yarns.

Is the complete carpet bio-plastic? No, the construction of the carpeting requires other types of materials to be used. Latex is used as a glue to assemble the carpet, the primary and secondary backing is plastic.

What is the Stain Resistance? CornCarpet is very stain resistant to most common stains such as food, oil, dirt, grease, etc. Some types of stains can so damage to the backing but not the surface fibers, such as urine, paint thinners and items such as these. These would normally not do damage to the carpet, but in a larger quantity or if allowed to sit for an extended period of time it could break down the latex in the backing.

What is the Wear Resistance? When comparing different carpet fibers we have found that CornCarpet allow for wear resistance that is superior to a similarly constructed nylon. We have found that it has a performance level of a wool fiber without the problems associated with wool.

Check For Density Ratings

The amount of carpet fiber woven into a square yard of carpet is its density. Carpets with a low density tend to be inexpensive. They crush and wear out sooner. It is similar to the thread count in woven fabrics like shirts or sheets. Higher is more and more is usually better. More is also usually costlier but a better investment and value over time.

Now Choose Your Color

Bright colors can help a room to appear larger but require more frequent cleanings to maintain a high level of appearance. Brighter colors will also show the disparity between the bright-unused areas and the dull wear patterns that eventually show up over time from normal wear and abrasion. I've seen some high quality 100% nylon last 10 years (with proper cleaning and maintenance) before showing gray traffic lanes and I've seen lower quality fibers show the gray in less than 1 year. Medium and dark colors tend to give a room a warmer, more inviting and comfortable feel and can help hide wear patterns and spots and soils between cleanings.

What about upholstery fabrics?

Choosing upholstery fabrics is very similar to carpet except that the synthetic fibers not recommended for carpet tend to make pretty decent upholstery fabrics because your upholstery generally receives more gentle treatment. You won't find a lot of nylon upholstery fabric out there today. There are a lot of polyester, Olefin (polypropylene) & acrylic upholstery fabrics that tend to last about as long as the frame and foam on most upholstery built today. These lower cost fibers are even blended with cotton to create some pretty durable and cleanable fabrics.

Consider the arms and cushions to be the "traffic lanes" of your upholstery. Choosing bright whites, yellows and blues are nice in formal rooms but the arms and cushions of well-used furniture will show the same permanent gray (not soil) from abrasion over time as a light colored carpet would. Medium and darker earth tone colors will look better longer.

Cotton is still the "Fabric of Our Lives". Cotton canvas and denim are especially tricky; too light a color will leave you with permanent stains, too dark a color will fade with wear, abrasion and cleaning. In cotton prints choose the lighter background and let the print provide the color because they are less likely to fade than dark background prints. Chintz is a cotton print treated with a water-based finish that creates a shined or polished appearance. This shine wears off from abrasion and cleaning leaving arms and cushions dull appearing compared to other less used or lighter cleaned areas. Cotton jacquard (reverse) weaves are a greater concern for color bleeding, but we find most are cleanable after a color test. Many natural fabrics are labeled with tags that state they are "Dry Clean Only" or may use an "S" code for solvent only cleaning. Because of the explosion hazard and toxicity concerns, solvent cleaning is very rare today. Brothers Carpet Cleaning doesn't do any solvent cleaning anymore. We can determine if your "Dry Clean Only" labeled upholstery can be successfully wet cleaned, using our thorough hot water extraction system, with some simple tests during an on-site inspection.

Like every textile, carpet & upholstery requires regular maintenance. Clean textiles look better and last longer. Remember to:

- *vacuum frequently*
- *place walk-off mats at each entrance. If you keep the dirt out of your home in the first place, your carpet will last longer and stay cleaner.*
- *Remove spots as soon as possible. If you are unsure how to remove a carpet spot, call us BEFORE you try. Improper spot removal can permanently stain your carpet.*

We are here to help!

Call **Brothers Carpet Cleaning at 541-485-4567** for expert dependable service!

