

ASK THE DESIGNER: Finding the Perfect Area Rug

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?I grew up in a home with wall-to-wall broadloom. I moved into a home with beautiful hardwood 2 years ago. While I love the elegant look of the wood, I'm starting to miss the cozy feel of carpet. What do I need to know before buying my first area rug??

There are lots of things to consider before you begin looking for a rug. Start by asking yourself the following questions: What type of lifestyle do you lead? Do you have kids? Pets? Where will the rug be located? What purpose will it serve in that space? What is it made of? How easily does it clean?

A rug serves many purposes ? it can define a space, distinguishing areas in an open concept home. It can be a source of comfort adding a soft layer between your feet and the floor or if you have small children it can help to cushion falls. Rugs can give you peace of mind that your floors are protected from scratches and every day wear. Lastly, they are great for acoustics. They can reduce noise by absorbing excess vibrations as well as help to block the sound of footsteps from travelling to the floor below.

The right carpet can set the tone for an entire room. Its colours and patterns give soul to the space, bringing it to life and reflecting the personality of the home.

When deciding on a rug, quality is an extremely important factor.

Our friends at Weavers Art say that premium natural fibers such as wool and silk are best for durability and your health. Both wool and silk are non-allergenic, fire retardant and wool is especially stain resistant. It also acts as an insulator helping a space feel warmer in the winter months and cooler on a hot summer day. Hopefully we start having some of those again soon!

There are also synthetic fibers. Machine-made rugs can be very cost efficient and can provide a level of durability perfect for high traffic areas like the family room.

Now you're ready to decide on a style. Consider your personal taste as well as the colour of the floor, walls and existing furniture. If your space is quite busy with lots of patterned furniture or wallpaper, you may want to choose a solid-coloured rug or something without a lot of texture. If your furniture and space is more simple and classic, a rug with a fun pattern or texture will be a welcomed addition helping to anchor the room nicely. The design of a carpet should reflect you and your family's style. You should search for a rug with the same zest as you would if you were selecting a piece of art.

It's always important to speak with professional sales people who can help you make the best decisions.

My clients often ask what size rug is right for their space. The scale of the rug should be in line with the rest of the space. I like to consider the volume of the room, ceiling height, and the size of any other décor elements. For a living room, when seated, both feet should be on the carpet.

In a dining room, a rug can frame the dining set and in an open concept home it can define the space altogether. While there are no definite rights or wrongs, it's important to pick the right size that best suits your space. This is where I would advise you to bring in a floor plan of your space and we can always help with the selection process.

A high quality carpet will have the same impact as a beautiful piece of art. Take your time looking around, ask questions, take photos and have fun with it. Once you've found the right piece you'll know. Most stores will let you borrow the rug to see how it suits your space- go ahead and try out a rug to make sure it's the one! You'll fall in love with it all over again every time you enter your room.

Feel free to send me your comments or questions to askjean@nichedecor.ca