

## Carpet Piles Explained

Carpet is back! Whether it is refreshing the look of your home interiors or just the need to transform your home, carpets can be a versatile and stylish material that will liven up your home.

Let's start with the different types of carpet fibres available:

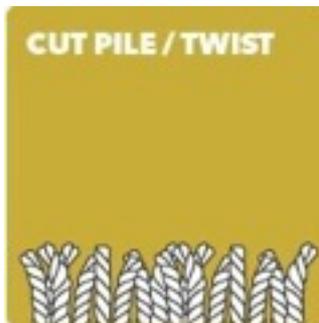
**Cut pile;**

**Velvet;**

**Shag pile;**

**Berber.**

The properties of these carpet fibres vary in quality and also each type should suit a different use and application around the house. The choice is yours, be it luxury carpet pile for your living room or something more durable by opting for man-made synthetic carpet fibres.



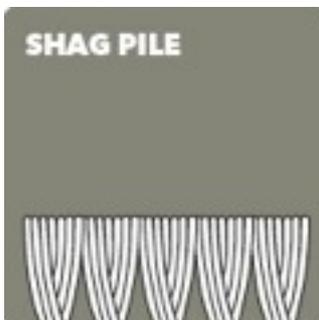
### Cut pile / Twist

The most popular type of carpet is the cut pile. It is created from yarn which has been tightly twisted together. It mainly comes in plain colours and has a mottled textured appearance. This is a great option for those seeking a general purpose and economical style around the home.



### Velvet pile

This carpet describes exactly how it feels. The Velvet pile has a very smooth, silky feel with an elegant cut pile finish. This is ideal for bedrooms in need of that luxurious and cosy feel. However, velvet pile is comparatively expensive in relation to some other types of carpet due to the high grade material which goes into the manufacturing process.



### Shag pile

Shag pile is made in the same way as cut pile, but has much longer tufts for a fantastically luxurious feel. The shaggy appearance was extremely popular back in the Seventies and this look is increasingly making a comeback at present.



### Berber / Loop Pile

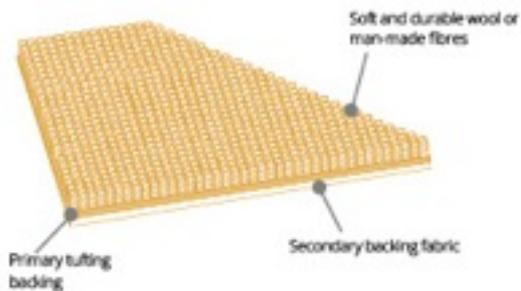
A type of carpet which is excellent for durable all purpose use, is looped



## Saxony

Saxony is similar to Shag pile in as much as it also features longer tufts than some of the other styles. It can best be described as a dense cut pile and people often favour it for use in bedrooms and living rooms.

## What is Carpet?



- Soft and safe underfoot
- Great heat insulator
- Helps to reduce noise
- Lots of colours
- Different textures
- 'Locks' away dust between cleans

Carpet has been a mainstay of the UK home for seven decades or more, its warmth and softness offering a cosy feel that no other floor can match.

Traditionally woven from wool, recently man-made fibres and tufted carpets have come to dominate, many of which offer stain-resistance to withstand the trials of busy family life. These carpets offer excellent

value and fibre types such as polypropylene, wool and nylon can be mixed to benefit from individual properties.

Carpet offers the home a great range of benefits, not only 'locking' away dust and dirt until it's vacuumed up, but also providing comfort underfoot, reducing sound and helping rooms to feel warmer. Of course, for maximum effect a good quality underlay should be used. For families really wanting that cosy and traditional feel, carpet should be high up on the list and if you need reassurance that stains can be easily removed, choose a stain-resistant variety.

With cut and loop piles available, and even a mixture of the two, carpet comes in lots of interesting textures that can add depth and vitality to your floor. Colours too are wide ranging and while neutral and natural tones are popular, carpet is also available in some really great shades. From bright pop colours to rich and regal tones of blue and red, the only limit really is your imagination.

As carpet is supplied in sizes cut to your room, it is really important that you measure correctly. Don't forget to accommodate for any wastage and if in doubt make sure you seek the advice of a professional installer.

## **Carpet Types and Grades, Styles, Colors, and More**

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The number of carpet choices available can easily overwhelm buyers. Taking a second to break it down and learn about the styles and types available will make the purchase decision easier. Understanding what the options are will help in choosing the best carpet for the situation.

### **Styles and Types of Carpet**



Carpet is most commonly found in two types of construction: cut pile and loop pile. Each construction offers various styles to choose from.

**Cut Pile:** This carpet gets its durability through the fiber used, the density of the tufts, and the twist of the yarn. There are four popular styles to choose from: textured plush, Saxony, frieze, and cable.

- **Plush:** This has a smooth and even finish, providing a more formal look.
- **Textured:** This style uses low density fibers of uneven heights. The resulting look hides dirt with an informal look, but it is not suited for high traffic areas.
- **Saxony:** This has a smooth and even finish, but the fibers are longer than a textured plush, and the fibers have a twist. Though this is the most popular style of carpet on the market, it has a tendency to show footprints and other marks more than other carpets.
- **Frieze:** This carpet style features long fibers with more twists, so the resulting texture is informal. It hides foot prints and other marks easier than other carpets, but is generally not suited for high traffic areas. If the piles are longer, it is called “shag.”
- **Cable:** This style of carpet is made with thicker and longer fibers to provide a more “cozy” feel to the carpet when walked on.

**Loop Pile:** Loop pile carpets do not cut the yarn tips, making the loops visible. They are durable in construction, and are considered an “all-purpose” carpet. There are various styles to choose from including: level loop, patterned multi-level loop, and cut and loop.

- **Level Loop or Berber:** This carpet style features packed short looped fibers. This provides a durable surface for high trafficked areas with an informal appearance. Some color flecks in the fiber may make it easier to hide dirt, but the height of the fibers may make the seams more visible.

- **Patterned Multi-Level Loop:** This carpet style features loops of varying heights to create a texture and or pattern.
- **Cut and Loop:** This carpet style is a mixture between cut pile and loop pile fibers. The variant makes for a textured appearance that is ideal for highly trafficked areas. As an added bonus, this type of carpet also hides dirt and stains.

## Quality of Carpet

Carpet quality is determined by a variety of factors including: the fiber type, the fiber construction, weight, density, and twist. There are some manufacturers that refer to carpet by grade, but there is no universal grade system in place for carpet. The “grades” assigned to carpet by the manufacturer are generally used as a marketing tool. Though traffic ratings are important, one company’s “high traffic” rating may be better than another.

### Weight

The weight of a carpet is important as it shows how many fibers are present. The more fibers, the heavier the carpet; the heavier the carpet, the better. The face weight of the carpet is usually provided when selecting the right carpet for a home or business.

### Fiber Types

The durability, look and feel, and price of carpet are partially determined by the fiber used to make it. The most common fiber types are: nylon, olefin, polyester, acrylic, wool, and blends.

- **Nylon:** This is the most popular fiber type used for carpeting. There are two different kinds of nylon used to make carpeting: nylon 6, and nylon 6,6. Nylon is present in roughly 60% of all carpets sold in the United States. During manufacturing, dye is added to produce a variety of colors. Nylon is a highly durable fiber, resistant to wear and tear. It is generally not a stain repelling fiber, though treatments are available to help

protect it against staining. It is a conductor of static electricity, and when left in direct sunlight for long periods of time, will fade.

- **Olefin:** This fiber is not as resilient as nylon, but it is less likely to fade. It is a strong fiber that is resistant to wear and tear. This is an ideal fiber for any outdoor carpeting use because it is resistant to mold and mildew. This is not a comfortable carpet to walk on with bare feet. The seams of the carpet fibers may be more visible than with other fibers.
- **Polyester:** Polyester is increasing in popularity because it is a more cost effective option than other fibers. It is not suitable for highly trafficked areas, because it is less resilient than nylon fiber and is more likely to show damage and fade. If used with a thick cut-pile construction, it has a soft feel.
- **Acrylic:** Acrylic is not a widely used fiber, but it provides the look and feel of wool based carpets, without the expense. It is not a major conductor of static electricity, and is resistant to mold and mildew.
- **Wool:** Wool is the most expensive fiber in the carpet market today, because it is the only natural fiber used in carpet production. It feels good against bare feet and is highly durable. It is stain and dirt resistant, but will fade easily in direct sunlight.
- **Blends:** Blends of these fibers are used to improve the overall quality of carpet in terms of look and feel, and durability. The most commonly used blends are wool and nylon, and olefin and nylon.

## **Fiber Construction**

The durability of a carpet relies heavily on the fiber construction.

- **Bulked Continuous Filament:** Otherwise known as BCF, Bulked Continuous Filament is yarn made from one strand of fiber. Texture is added to the yarn to add to the bulk of the carpet which helps to make the twist more permanent, increasing durability and the life of the final carpet. All Build Direct carpets are made with this construction.
- **Staple:** Staple construction is fibers made into short pieces of yarn, which inevitably causes the carpet to shed, and the fibers must be removed by vacuuming.
- **Twist:** Carpet fibers are twisted around additional fiber to strengthen the final carpet. It makes it more resistant to wear and matting, and texture changes.

- **Heat Setting:** Heat setting “locks in” the twist, to keep it from unraveling to strengthen the final carpet.
- **Tufting:** The finishing step to produce carpet, the fibers are pushed through needles and tufted to the backing. This is the step that determines the density because of the amount of yarn and how close the tufts are.

## Density

Density is important to the life of a carpet because it shows how many fibers are used in the pile and how close the fibers are tufted together. The rule of thumb is: the denser the carpet is, the better quality it is. Test the density by running fingers through the carpet to determine if it possible to feel the backing. If it is hard to feel the backing, the carpet is dense.

## Colors and Patterns

Colors and patterns are available in all kinds of carpet, regardless of construction, fibers, and type. There are enough colors and patterns available to suit any decor. Light colors make a room seem larger than it is, but they will show dirt and stains easily. Medium colors will hide dirt and stains a bit, so they are ideal for areas near the entrances of a building. Multiple colors may make a room look dated if the colors are not carefully chosen because they are not as common. They will also hide dirt and debris. Patterns are a great choice for children’s rooms because they come in a range from geometrical to floral.

Armed with this information, buyers will be able to determine the best carpet for the room(s) in question and the available budget for the project. When properly cared for, carpet can last many years and be an excellent investment.

Read more: <http://www.builddirect.com/learning-center/flooring/carpet-types-grades-styles/#ixzz3mUFwZL4s>