

# THE CARPET CHRONICLES



*Highlights from the  
CRI Blog for retailers  
and their customers*



# WHY IS CARPET THE #1 FLOORING CHOICE?

## *Flooring expert discusses carpets benefits and advantages*

An article titled, “[Carpet – Benefits and Advantages](#)”, written by flooring contractor [John Rutledge](#), highlights some of the reasons carpet is still homeowners’ #1 flooring choice.

### **1. Carpet Provides Safety**

First and foremost, a carpeted floor is a safer floor. Carpet is inherently slip-resistant, so the soft surface and cushioned under-padding not only reduce the impact of a fall, but also the likelihood of it happening in the first place.

### **2. Carpet Provides Sound Reduction**

Carpet stifles noise and reduces echoes in three ways; absorbing the impact of foot traffic, soaking up room sounds and echoes and finally, by blocking sound from carrying between floors (especially helpful in condo apartments or multi-family homes).

### **3. Carpet Offers Warmth & Insulation**

Carpet provides excellent warmth underfoot, making it a great choice for chilly bedrooms or stark offices. Carpet also acts as an insulator. The combination of the carpet and its under-padding acts as an additional layer of insulation in your home and can even add to the R-value of your home.

### **4. Carpet is Easy to Care For**

Most carpets made today are made to be highly stain-resistant, meaning cleanup is easy. With just a damp cloth or a quick vacuuming, your floors look as good as new. Because carpets trap dust and allergens, they can also improve the air quality in your home as long they’re properly cleaned and vacuumed on a regular basis.

### **5. Carpet is Extremely Affordable**

Typically, carpet costs significantly less than other types of flooring like tile, marble or hardwood. Even with professional installation, carpet tends to cost much less than other types of flooring options.

To read the full blog entry, click [here](#)



## I'VE HEARD SOME NEGATIVE THINGS ABOUT CARPET. ARE THEY TRUE?

### *Home Renovation Expert Bob Vila Praises Carpet and Dispels Myths*

On his [Bob Vila Nation](#) home renovation blogging community, well-known renovation expert Bob Vila features an article titled, "[Flooring Myths Dispelled](#)" that lists some of carpet's benefits.

"Carpet is a cozy and comfortable flooring choice. It is soft on your children's feet and makes your home slightly quieter by muffling noise."

...and clears up some common misconceptions about soft floor coverings.

"A common myth about carpet is that it is unhygienic. Some people think that carpet should not be used in the homes of asthma sufferers because it traps dust. However, by immobilizing dust particles, carpet fibers actually stop dust from circulating in the air of your home. These allergy-triggering particles can be removed completely from the home by vacuuming your carpets regularly."

The [article](#) was originally posted by [Todd Vendituoli](#) on his [Building Blox blog](#).

To read the blog entry, click [here](#)



## IS CARPET REALLY SAFER THAN OTHER FLOORING CHOICES?

### *Carpet Adds to Safety at Home*

Carpet and Rug Institute President [Werner Braun](#) writes a column on a very important benefit of carpeted floors: added comfort and safety.

This article, titled “Carpet a safety device”, says, “The reasons people continue to put carpet on their floors are almost as varied as the choices of colors, patterns and textures of the carpet itself. Make no mistake; carpet is the floor covering of choice for a reason... Carpet continues to make our homes and businesses a better place by providing a softer surface that is ideal for cushioning our footsteps, reducing slips and falls and minimizing injuries when falls do occur; not to mention, carpet underfoot just feels better.”

The article mentions one study that shows carpet is 82 percent less stressful to stand on for prolonged periods compared to hard surfaces. Multiple studies show that pleasing surroundings play a vital role in job performance, and teachers and others who spend much of their workdays on their feet appreciate the cushioning carpet provides. In schools, carpet helps create a better learning environment for teachers and students alike.

It has been well-established by both OSHA and insurance companies that well-maintained carpet and the presence of floor matting at entrances help ensure safer floors. Carpeted surfaces are significantly more effective at preventing slips and falls than hard, smooth surfaces. And when accidents do happen, they tend to be less severe on carpet.

Carpet’s inherent safety is borne out by a study of 225 “slip and fall incidents” from hospital records of older patients. Of the group falling on carpet, only 17 percent sustained injury. In the group falling on hard surface flooring, nearly 50 percent sustained injury.

Not to mention, have you ever dropped a dish or glass before? Chances are you probably spent the next few minutes cleaning up broken dish and glass if it wasn’t on carpet.

To read the full article, click [here](#)



## IS IT ME OR DOES CARPET JUST FEEL BETTER?

***“Carpet means comfort”:  
Saving energy, adding warmth and comfort to homes and offices.***

“Put yourself in your bed during the coldest morning you remember, and think how warm you felt all snuggled under the covers. Not wanting to move.

“If you did start any of your mornings on a cold floor this past winter, then you understand how nice it is to step onto carpet.” Carpet and Rug Institute President Werner Braun talking about carpet’s warmth in a home.

Not only does carpet and pad provide insulation that keeps energy in the form of heat from escaping through the floor, it also makes the air closer to the floor feel warmer.

Research conducted over the past few years at the [Georgia Institute of Technology](#), as well as independent scientific studies, that demonstrate how carpet increases the R-value, or insulation level, of the carpeted area. The R-value (thermal resistance) measures how much a material resists the movement of heat through a ceiling, wall, or floor in a building. The higher the number, the more effective the insulation. [more](#)

Also, [Dr. Alan Hedge](#), a professor of [Design and Environmental Analysis](#) at [Cornell University](#), points out another way carpet makes a room warmer. “Carpet feels warmer to the touch than other floor coverings because the air at room temperature is trapped by the carpet fibers, and that pad of air acts as an insulator,” he says.

To read the full article, click [here](#)



## CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT R-VALUE AND WHY I SHOULD CARE?

### *If Home Insulation is Sexy, Carpet Should be “R Rated”*

The word is out: according to President Barack Obama, home insulation is “sexy”. In a speech he talked about how many jobs would be created if Americans retrofitted their homes with more energy-efficient building materials, like additional insulation and energy-efficient windows and doors. While he didn’t mention it by name, **I contend that carpet belongs on the list of energy-saving products.**

Carpet has long been recognized for decreasing the energy loss from a room and making the room feel warmer to the people inside.

This research confirms carpet and pad significantly increase R-value compared to other flooring materials. The enhanced R-value realized with the use of carpet can significantly contribute to energy savings and lower utility costs.

So, if the President’s pulse races (and whose doesn’t?) at the idea of creating jobs through improved home energy efficiency, how must he feel about carpet? One can only imagine.

To read the full article, click [here](#)



## I'M ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS. IS CARPET?

### ***Carpet and Sustainability: A Great Investment For The Future***

“The carpet industry is not only designing ways to make carpet last longer, it’s also designing ways to reduce the environmental footprint. Manufacturers are voluntarily addressing this problem by recycling old carpet materials into new carpet production or alternative uses, as well as refurbishing old carpet into new carpet tiles. Because less waste means a better future for us all.” It continues:

#### **What You Should Know about carpet sustainability for carpet dealers and consumers:**

- Through the Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE), carpet companies are taking the initiative to work with government entities and product suppliers to develop market-based solutions for the recycling and use of post-consumer carpet. For more information, visit [carpetrecovery.org](http://carpetrecovery.org)
- It is estimated that carpet recycling efforts currently have saved more than 1.5 billion pounds of waste from being deposited in U.S. landfills.
- Many times, carpet is replaced before it is worn out because it no longer has the appearance of a new carpet. CRI understands the investment put into a carpet - and also the environmental ramifications of replacing carpet before its time. That’s why we created the CRI Seal of Approval program – to extend carpet’s longevity.
- The Seal of Approval program helps customers identify carpet cleaning products that clean effectively without harming the carpet. From spot cleaning to periodic deep extraction cleaning, proper carpet maintenance is the first step in preserving the life of carpet. For a list of certified carpet cleaning products, click on Seal of Approval at [carpet-rug.org](http://carpet-rug.org)
- The carpet industry is constantly looking for ways to continue to reduce its environmental footprint.

To read the entire sustainability fact sheet, click [here](#)



## ISN'T CARPET BAD FOR ALLERGIES AND ASTHMA?

### ***NFT: Scientific Facts Dispel Carpet & Asthma Myths***

The April 2009 issue of [National Floor Trends Magazine](#) features an article entitled, [Scientific Facts Dispel Carpet and Asthma Myths](#). The article looks at the “urban myths” of carpet – that it causes, or at least worsens, allergy and asthma symptoms, and contributes to unhealthy indoor environments.

But carpet is losing market share, plagued by a persistent myth that it contributes to unhealthy indoor air quality and can act as a trigger for asthma and allergies.

The article refers to a study compiled for CRI by [Mitch Sauerhoff](#), a respected toxicologist who surveyed professional literature and more than 23 scientific studies for his report, “[Carpet, Asthma and Allergies - Myth or Reality.](#)”

In it, Dr. Sauerhoff concludes that the negative perceptions are not consistent with current research. He states that:

“Based on the available science, carpet does not cause asthma or allergies and does not increase the incidence or severity of asthma or allergies symptoms. In fact ...multiple studies have reported fewer allergy and asthma symptoms associated with carpet.”

In the final paragraph of the NFT article, it states, “For more than 50 years, millions of consumers have enjoyed the benefits of carpet. Billions of square yards of carpet have been installed in the vast majority of United States’ homes and office buildings, with very few health-related complaints.”

Click here for a pdf of the article, “[Scientific Facts Dispel Carpet and Asthma Myths.](#)”



## CAN YOU GIVE ME SPECIFIC FACTS ABOUT CARPET AND AIR QUALITY?

### *Choose Cleaner Air. Choose Better Health. Choose Carpet.*

- There is no scientific study linking the rise of allergy and asthma to the use of carpet. Indeed, multiple studies actually disprove any correlation. [link](#)
- A 15-year Swedish study found no link between carpet usage and the incidence of allergy or asthma. In fact, when carpet usage in Sweden decreased by 70 percent, allergy reactions in the general population increased by 30 percent.
- Also, an 18-nation study of nearly 20,000 people found a statistical relationship between carpeted bedrooms and reduced asthma symptoms and bronchial responsiveness.
- One more point: A 2003 study of more than 4,600 school children in New Jersey found that having carpet in a child's bedroom was associated with fewer missed school days and less need for asthma medication. If carpet helped the children, it can certainly help adults in the same home as well.
- A possible explanation: carpet acts like a filter, trapping allergens away from the breathing zone so they can be removed through proper vacuuming and deep cleaning extraction. For best results removing pollutants trapped in carpet, use [CRI Seal of Approval](#) vacuums and CRI Seal of Approval cleaning products and systems.

To read the full article, click [here](#)



**IS THERE ANY WAY TO KNOW  
WHICH PRODUCTS ARE BEST FOR  
MAINTAINING MY CARPET?**

## ***Working with the Industry. Looking Out for Consumers. A Guide to CRI's Seal of Approval Program***

### **What's the Seal of Approval Program?**

"The CRI Seal of Approval program tests the effectiveness of carpet cleaning products and certifies those products that remove difficult stains or a sufficient amount of soil without damage to the carpet. Not all products clean well enough to earn this distinction. Seeing the CRI Seal of Approval logo on products helps consumers recognize that they are buying quality products." It continues:

### **What types of products are tested?**

Under the Seal of Approval program, tests are conducted on cleaning solutions, deep cleaning extractors, deep cleaning systems and vacuum cleaners.

### **Why is the Seal of Approval program necessary?**

Not all cleaning equipment and solutions achieve the same results. This program scientifically and independently measures which products work best, so consumers can make informed decisions.

### **How does the Seal of Approval program benefit customers?**

Effective carpet cleaning helps maintain the life and beauty of the carpet. This means customers get more enjoyment out of their carpet and more value for their investment. In addition, properly maintained carpet leads to better air quality and improved health benefits in the home or work environment.

### **What else should people know about carpet cleaning?**

Today's carpets are more stain resistant and durable than ever, making them relatively easy to clean and maintain. However, preserving the life and beauty of carpet depends on several factors: the quality of products and equipment used to clean carpets; the frequency which carpets are cleaned; and the skill and knowledge of the people doing the cleaning.

To read more about the Seal of Approval program click [here](#)



## IS THERE A WAY TO RANK CARPETS BASED ON INDOOR AIR QUALITY?

### ***Leadership is in the Air.***

### ***~ Green Label Plus Sets a Higher Standard for Indoor Air Quality***

There is a growing demand to make indoor environments as healthy and “green-friendly” as possible. Choosing the right materials is a critical step. To assist in the process, CRI has created Green Label Plus for carpet and adhesives to raise the bar on lowering emissions.

Green Label Plus is a voluntary, industry testing program for carpet and adhesive products that establishes the highest standard for indoor air quality (IAQ) ever set by the carpet industry. The Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) created Green Label Plus to identify carpets and adhesives that are tested by an independent, certified laboratory and meet stringent criteria for low chemical emissions.

#### **Here are some facts:**

- It ensures customers they are purchasing among the lowest emitting carpet, adhesive and cushion products on the market.
- It is designed for architects, builders, specifiers and facility managers who want assurances that carpet and adhesive products meet the most stringent criteria for low chemical emissions.
- It represents the fourth time the carpet industry has voluntarily enhanced the IAQ standard for its products.
- Green Label Plus meets, and even exceeds, California’s indoor quality standards for low-emitting products used in commercial settings such as schools and office buildings.

To read the Green Label Plus fact sheet, click [here](#)



## WHEN SHOPPING FOR CARPET, WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER?

### *The Steps Towards New Carpet*

There are three important steps to think about when purchasing new carpet.

#### **Carpet Color**

While beige is always a popular choice and can make a room look spacious, bolder colors make a statement, and when chosen carefully, can provide the perfect complement for your furniture and draperies. Many homeowners today are choosing environmental colors, like blues, deep greens, rosy quartz, and stony neutrals to set just the right tone for their home.

#### **Carpet Texture**

Cut pile is still one of the most popular types of carpet. It achieves its durability through the type of fiber used, the density of tufts and the amount of twist in the yarn. Highly twisted yarn holds its shape longer, making it a smart choice for high-traffic areas.

#### **Carpet Style**

Today's carpet offers a wide variety of choices in style that we didn't have in days gone by when most of what we had to choose from was conventional cut pile, or level loop, which consisted of yarn in uncut loops. New technology can produce multilevel loop and cut-loop patterns allowing diamond, bow, pin dot or fleur-de-lis designs that "pop out" in sculptured effects.



## SO I'VE CHOSEN MY CARPET. WHAT ABOUT THE CUSHION?

### ***Better Carpet Cushion Makes for More Comfort, Life for Your New Carpet***

The truth is, once you choose a carpet, you are only partly done with your carpet purchase. You also need to think about **carpet cushion**. It's the thing that will have the biggest impact on how much you enjoy your carpet.

[FabulousFloors](#) magazine ran an article that pointed out carpet cushion serves two purposes: First, it makes your carpet feel better and stay beautiful longer. Second, it extends the life of the carpet and makes it easier to keep clean.

"...it is **cushion, far more than your carpet, which determines how your carpet and rugs will feel when you walk on them**. Plus, the correct cushion helps maintain your carpet's original appearance over the long haul. (It also increases air flow between your floor and carpet or rugs for better, more efficient vacuuming.)

**Cushion functions as a shock absorber**, taking the pounding of everyday foot traffic. The right cushion will help your carpet look and feel younger for a long time.

**Better-quality cushion** also provides features which run-of-the-mill padding never dreamed of, like **blocking moisture and fighting odors from spills, plus providing thermal and sound insulation between floors**.

**How to Get Started:** Check the carpet manufacturer's requirements for both thickness and density. Choosing the wrong cushion can damage the carpet with problems like wrinkling, buckling and degradation.

A general rule of thumb for most residential carpet is to choose cushion no more than 7/16 inch thick.

If you have a Berber or a low-profile carpet, choose a cushion no more than 3/8 inch thick.

Bedrooms, dens, lounge areas and other rooms with light or moderate traffic can use thicker and softer cushion, while high-traffic areas like living rooms, family rooms, hallways and stairs require thinner, firmer cushion.

To read the entire entry on selecting carpet cushion, click [here](#)



## WHAT PREPARATIONS DO I NEED TO MAKE TO HAVE CARPET INSTALLED?

### *Quick Tips for Carpet Installation*

Make sure that you know what services your installer will provide and what you need to handle yourself. For example, there may be an additional charge to move your furniture. Keep these things in mind before hiring an installer.

#### **Here are things you'll want to do:**

- Remove all breakable items from areas being carpeted and detach and store wiring from TVs, stereos, VCR/DVD and computers.
- Determine who will remove and dispose of the existing carpet and cushion.
- Check recycling options in your area.
- Think about carpet placement.
- Ask that seams be placed in less visible areas, but don't expect seams to be invisible.
- Before installers arrive, complete other remodeling projects you have planned in the room, such as painting and wallpapering.
- Vacuum the old carpet to avoid the possibility of airborne dust and dirt.
- And after the carpet and cushion are removed, vacuum the subfloor.

To read the blog entry, click [here](#)



## ARE THERE SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CARPET IN BASEMENTS?

### *Carpet Works in Basements*

Is using carpet in a basement a good idea or not? I asked independent carpet expert and technical consultant [Lew Migliore](#) for his views on the subject.

**CRI:** For some people, using carpet in a basement is a real concern, because they are afraid that the carpet will encourage the growth of mold and mildew. Are they right?

**LM:** It's understandable that people might be wary of using a textile floor covering in an area like a basement, but the truth is that all carpets manufactured with synthetic fibers - nylon, polyester or polypropylene, for example - are inherently immune from mold and mildew.

**CRI:** How is that?

**LM:** To support mold growth, certain specific conditions must exist: humidity consistently above 60%, temperatures between 50 and 90°F, continued darkness, a pH of 3 to 8, and a food source. As a form of thermal plastic, carpet cannot, in and of itself, be a food source for supporting the growth of mold and mildew. Things like dirt and food that get trapped in the carpet fibers can become a food source, but the carpet alone cannot.

**CRI:** What about installation?

**LM:** Carpet installed in a basement directly over concrete can be laid using either the direct glue-down method or a stretch-in over cushion. Virtually all adhesives used in the industry today do not support mold growth.

**CRI:** Synthetic carpet is a good choice in a basement.

**LM:** With the right cushion, carpet is actually the best flooring material to use as it adds comfort to the space, provides thermal insulation, and helps thwart sound and noise. Carpet is also safer for young children to play on, as a fall on carpet is much less threatening than a fall on hard surface flooring.

To read the entire entry on selecting carpet cushion, click [here](#)



## HOW WILL MY CARPET INVESTMENT HOLD UP OVER TIME?

### *Clean Your Carpet and You've Got Savings Covered*

It's a simple idea: Take care of your carpet and it will take care of you. Not only does it look great and offer health and safety benefits, properly maintained carpet offers a host of savings opportunities. Research proves that over time, no other flooring option offers you as much chance to clean up.

#### **What You Should Know about Carpet Cleaning and Maintenance**

- Carpet is cost effective. In fact, long term, it can be 65 percent less expensive to maintain than hard surface flooring.
- Hard surface floors require 2 1/2 times more cleaning than carpet annually, increasing maintenance time and impacting limited human resources. Hard surface cleaning supplies are also nearly seven times more expensive than carpet cleaning supplies.
- To preserve the life of your carpet, clean it with supplies that have the [CRI Seal of Approval](#). CRI created the Seal of Approval program to help customers identify carpet cleaning products that clean effectively without harming the carpet. For a list of these products, click on Seal of Approval at [carpet-rug.org](http://carpet-rug.org).
- Vacuuming is the single most effective means of keeping carpet clean; 90 to 95% of all dry soil by weight can be removed from carpet by following a routine schedule. Choose vacuums that bear the CRI Seal of Approval for assurance of effective soil removal and good air quality.
- Carpet also requires periodic deep extraction cleaning. Seal of Approval deep cleaning extractors and systems (equipment and solutions) effectively remove soil and also recover most of the water or solution from the carpet.



## IN THE END, DOES MY FLOORING CHOICE REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

### *Once Folks Have Carpet, It's Hard To Go Without It*

An episode of the National Geographic Channel's Emmy-winning documentary series, [Explorer](#) focused on the lives and experiences of Marines based in Southern Afghanistan. In one segment, a group gathered to discuss the things they missed from home. The comment from Master Sergeant Adam Muncy took me by surprise.

"I miss carpet," he says. "Walking through the house on carpet. Seven months of boots on your feet – nothing but dirt (the others nod and laugh in agreement). I'm looking forward to that."

### **In the world of social media, that sentiment was echoed by a broad range of people.**

From [Bicycling.com](#), an interesting question - does carpet help prevent heel spurs? [link](#)

"I miss carpet worse than rug burns... hardwood floors.. yep, burns deep and leaves scars..."

"No carpet here, but both wife and I developed heel spurs since getting rid of it and walking barefoot on hardwood. Coincidence?" (Georgia-based [Podiatrist Spence Misner](#) weighs in: "**For any kind of foot ailment, carpet is better.** It can help prevent pain, or lessen the exacerbation; for example, it can take pain from a level eight or nine down to a three or four.")

From a community forum on [Thebump.com](#), a website for new and expectant moms.

"Brand new squishy carpet, sounds really nice. Then maybe (baby) would have less bruises from falling on the hardwood floors."

"Me too! Our current house has all tile and wood floors. We move end of March and I told (husband) we NEED carpet."

To read all the comments, click [here](#)



**BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE.**

We hope you've found this eBook helpful and informative. But we've got a whole lot more information, if you want it. The [CRI Blog](#) is frequently updated and filled with the latest carpet news and trends. Also, you're invited to join the [CRI LinkedIn group](#), for even more great carpet discussion.

The [CRI site](#) itself is a great resource for just about anything carpet-related. So don't be a stranger.

Stop by and take a look. When it comes to the #1 choice in flooring, we've got it covered.

