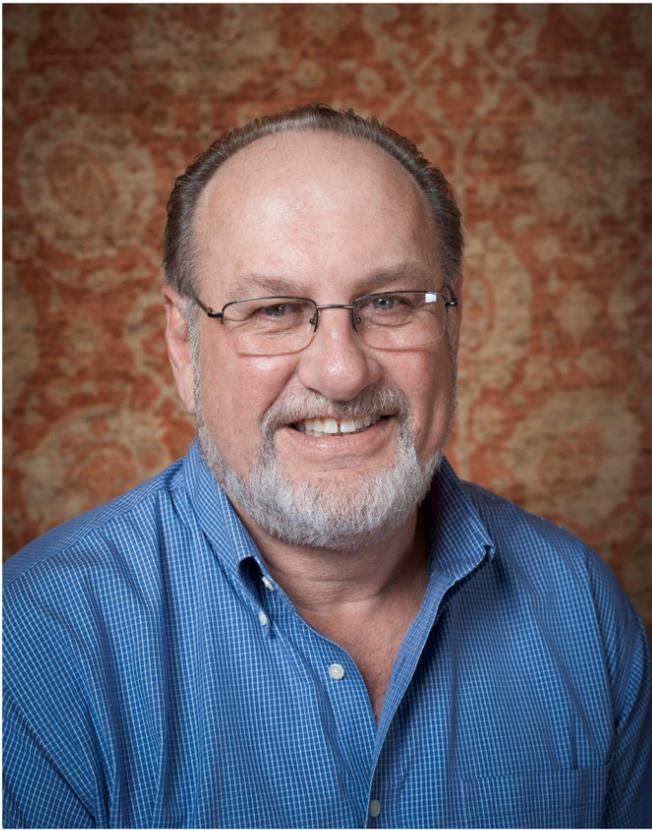


GUIDE TO
SELECTING & BUYING

AN
ORIENTAL
RUG

SAM PRESNELL

From the Desk of Sam Presnell of The Rug Gallery:



Thank you downloading this book and allowing me to share with you the secrets behind selecting the right oriental rug. Choosing the best oriental rug for your home, determining a rug's quality and value, and buying the right size rug for your room can all be challenging. This eBook will help you learn more about oriental rugs, how to choose them, and how to best incorporate a rug you really love into your home.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share my passion for rugs with you and it is my hope that you enjoy

reading about how to make the most of your oriental rug as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Sincerely,

Sam

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Introduction

Oriental rugs are a timeless way to bring together any room in your home, be it the dining room, the living room, a den, or a bedroom. However, finding an oriental rug of a good quality with a lot of value, that is also the right size and colors for the room you wish to put it in, can seem like an insurmountable challenge.

There are many factors to consider when selecting an oriental rug for your home, including how much you have to spend, what type of rug quality you're looking for, what trends you want to follow, and where you will be putting it in your home. This eBook will go over the essentials of how to choose the right oriental rug, from size to color to quality, and more. Read on to find out more about what you need to be looking at when you begin shopping for a new oriental rug.

How to Choose a Rug

Choosing a rug can seem overwhelming, but taking it step by step will ensure that you find exactly the rug you're looking for in no time at all.

How to Choose a Rug – Step 1 – Determining Your Own Personal Style

First, ask yourself some questions about your style and how you will use the rug. What is the function of the room and how are you going to use the rug? What kind of room you have and how you're going to use the rug is an excellent place to start when looking for a great oriental rug. Does the room have more of a relaxed feel, or an informal look? Are you in an old house where you're trying to do period?

The most common space to put a rug is probably going to be the family room, or the living room, depending on your house. The dining room is also a big area as well. Surprisingly, there are lots of uses for a nice oriental rug in the kitchen too.

Finding Your Style

A lot of people know what they like, but they don't know what exactly their style is, or how to put it into words when they come into a store or they're looking. A great website to go to when figuring out your personal style is a site called "Houzz," where you can just type in your room, such as the living room or bedroom, and literally tens-of-thousands of photos populate on the site. You'll be able to go through them, save the ones that you like, and then at the end, review them.

From there you'll kind of get a feeling of what you like and what you don't like, and whether it's more modern or traditional, or another style.

How to Choose a Rug – Step 2 – Determining Your Budget

The amount of money you spend on a rug is important, because it's a situation where you're going to get what you pay for. However, you don't necessarily want to expand your budget too much in order to get a rug that will appreciate in value, because generally, they won't. The best rule of thumb when determining a budget is to think about size -- don't get a smaller rug because your budget is too slim, but you don't have to spend thousands on a rug to get a great one.

How to Choose a Rug – Step 3 – Determining Rug Brand & Materials

In the rug business, it's more about the rug materials than it is the brand. Rugs are so varied across the board, and it's not like buying an Apple product or a Sony product where everyone is getting essentially the same thing.

Shag Rugs

Take a shag rug, for example. There are lots of different fibers that are used in shags. There are ways of twisting those fibers or mixing different materials in with those fibers. Performance and the way it's going to behave over the long haul can vary greatly.

Hand Knotted Rugs

Other rug types would include hand knotted, which means something that truly has every

single knot tied one at a time and it's like building a brick house, brick-by-brick, which is generally the most expensive type of oriental rug.

Hand Tufted Rugs

Hand-tufted often looks a lot like hand knotted and sometimes it's marketed as handmade, but it doesn't mean that it's hand-knotted. When you look at the back of a hand tufted rug, you'll see a cloth on the back of the rug, covering the back. That's usually a sign that, while it may be called handmade, it's really hand tufted. In a hand tufted rug, the design is laid out on a grid-like cloth, and a special gun is used to punch in the colored yarn. Then a cloth backing is glued onto that to hold the yarn in place. Whereas with a hand knotted rug, when you look at the back of the rug it pretty much looks like an exactly copy of the pattern on the face of the rug.

Hand Hooked

A hand hooked rug involves another gun that leaves the loops, sometimes in different sizes, intact, instead of cutting them. This is a "Pottery Barn" type of look that's very popular today.

Machine Loomed

There's also machine loomed, or power loomed rugs, which basically means that it's all done by machine. You have big runs and high quantities, and you can make it all different qualities, such as wool or synthetic, and create many different types of designs.

How to Choose a Rug – Step 4 – Pick One You Fall In Love With

The cardinal rule of thumb when choosing an oriental rug would have to be that you love it. It seems simple, but if you don't have to match anything or have to work with anything, and you can start with the rug first, it's great to just get one that you absolutely love.

It's almost like buying art. You'd have the ability to just pick what you like and design the room around it. All of your fabrics and everything goes with the rug. In most cases, it's usually the opposite. You've got to work with your current home design and you're restricted to buying a rug that looks good with it.

Instead, have an open mind. If you're going to start from scratch, start with what you want. If you can't, then be a little more open minded. You're going to have to pull this room together with the rug, and if it's the last thing you bought, it's got to do a lot of different things. A lot of times it may not have the exact designer color maybe you were thinking about to begin with, and that's okay. Keep your mind and eyes open for a rug that really pops and one that you fall in love with, even if it doesn't fit with what you had anticipated in the beginning of the rug buying process.

What Oriental Rug Styles Are Available?

There are many different styles of oriental rugs available today, and what you choose really depends on your own personal tastes and the decor of your home.

Transitional Rugs

A transitional rug is where you would take a traditional rug, like a Persian rug and sort of "erase" part of the design. If you looked at a picture of a transitional rug, you'd swear that it's got worn out spaces in it.

Or, you'll see designs that used to have a border to it, but no longer do. Most Oriental rugs always had borders in the old days, however, now there are lots of rugs where the pattern just bleeds right out to the edge of the rug and there are no borders anymore. You can embellish a traditional rug or take an element away from it and make an entire rug out of that.

Organic Style Rugs

An organic style rug is a rug that really has no definite design. It's splotchy. For example, say you took a piece of metal out in the field and you left it out there for 20 years. When you came back, you would see the rust growing on it in different proportions and colors, such as green from the algae growing on it. It seems like it makes no sense, but it really looks cool.

It's kind of like looking at the sky, almost. If you look at the sky, you see all those clouds forming in different directions. That's what an organic style rug looks like, it just has flow. There's no set rhyme or reason to it, but it looks great anyway.

Geometric Rugs

Moroccan rugs are very popular. They're more like a shag, but they have a design to them and they're very primitive, but very cool looking. Anything geometric is very popular today.

Oushak Rugs

Oushak is a Turkish weave back from turn of the century. They used very modern, contemporary colors back then. They weren't just red and blue like most of the other rug dealers were buying. Their designs were more simple and open, like we talked about in transitional. Oushak is a very popular rug. It's a fuzzy rug, not very high-quality, but a popular type of traditional rug.

Oriental Rug Colors & Color Trends

Oriental rugs come in a variety of colors, and many people choose their rugs based on the hottest colors today.

Grey is the New Black

The most popular color in rugs today is grey. There's no doubt about it. It's dominating the scene in just about everything. You're going to see grey incorporated into any design that's been done recently, including both commercially and residentially.

Grey is something that's easier to work with and goes with a lot of other colors. If you think about how the economy has been in turmoil in the last six to eight years, since the recession in 2009, grey seems like more of a nice, comforting, calming color that feels safe. You can't go wrong with that.

Timeless Rug Colors

Traditionally, the tried and true color of oriental rugs is red. People feel comfortable with buying traditionally colored rugs, because they know that they can use it forever. It'll never go out of style.

A lot of colors that are becoming popular go well with grey. The big color today, on top of gray, is blue. It can either be a light, soft blue, or all the way down to deep navys or cobalt blues. Teals are very popular and they go well with gray. You might also see more orange influence in the future, since it also complements grey. You'll start to see brighter, more cheery colors in oriental rugs in the future.

Important Factors in Choosing an Oriental Rug

When it comes to rugs, "color is king." A lot of people don't understand what that means, but it is the most important thing to picking a rug or carpet. Color is what is emotional. If you put the wrong color in a room, you will know it immediately. If you put the right color in there, you'll also know it immediately, it'll snap. I would say it's not so much the design. A lot of people think it's all about design. It really isn't, it's really about color.

Rug Colors to Stay Away From

There are always colors that date you. You can look at some of the old bathrooms in houses that were made in the 60's and 70's. I could go into a house and almost tell you the year it was built because of the colors used for the tub and tile. There are some things that will date you and not carry through with time.

Again, color is always evolving. It's constantly changing. Colors do come and go. Right now, there is not a no-no, it's more about buying really what you like. Today, rugs and carpet are a little more of a throwaway thing as opposed to long term like it had been in the past. As long as you're willing not to invest in something and expect it to last an eternity as far as color and design, you'll be fine.

Matching Rug Colors to Your Surroundings

Most of the time, furniture or art are the two things that come into play when selecting a rug. Walls can be changed fairly easily and inexpensively compared to other things. You can match to the color or whatever you want with the rug for painting. With furniture, you're probably not going to go out to buy a new sofa or new loveseat, or get rid of the art you absolutely love. These are the kind of centerpieces to a room. You're going to have to coordinate your rug with that. In that case, it's always about color.

Color looks good with color. A lot of times, it's not always the same color, it's a color that looks good with that color. It's the opposite end of the color scale that usually works. For example, you may not want to choose a red rug if you also have a red couch. Instead, you'll want to choose a rug color that is complementary to your couch, such as a blue or a neutral color like black or grey.

Oriental Rug Materials

Rugs are made of many different types of materials, and what material is used plays a significant role in the quality and longevity of the rug. There's more to choosing rug materials than what meets the eye!

Rug Materials for Stain Resistance

Today, there are lots of fibers and there are a lot of claims about stain resistance. Usually, the two best fibers for stain resistance are fibers called nylon and polypropylene. Nylon really is coated with a sealant, like a 3M product, which would be a stain guard.

The other is polypropylene, which is basically a material that cannot absorb. It's an inert material, which means it's almost stain proof. Those are both very popular fibers, but you'll see more of these fibers in carpets today than in rugs.

Viscose & Silks

Viscose, silks, and bamboo fibers are getting a lot of attention in rugs. When people use the word bamboo, people think of something very strong and hard. They think it's going

to perform beautifully and be like a rock or piece of wood. That's certainly not true with viscose, bamboo, or art silk. A lot of people call them silk and they're not really silk.

They are basically a cellulose or a pulp made from plant materials, like you would make paper and things like that from. They extrude into very fine filaments, and when you put it into a rug it looks fantastic. It looks better than silk. The problem is that it's a product that is assumed to be something that isn't.

It should not be used in high traffic. It's a very difficult product to clean. It tends to bleed in washing and it water stains or marks if you spill anything on it. It's very absorbent and not a good rug material choice for certain situations or for people that are expecting more than they're going to get.

Polypropylene Rugs

Polypropylene is basically an oil byproduct that is fibered, like a plastic in so many ways. One thing nice about polypropylene is that it's un-stainable. It's a great product, and they use a lot of it commercially and in machine-made rugs.

Most of your outdoor products are made from polypropylene. Because it's an oil-based or a synthetic fiber, it's inert. It doesn't absorb, so it's not going to be able to get any moisture in it. If you spill something on it, you just wipe it off. It's really fantastic for that. The problem with polypropylene is long-term how it looks with wear. Eventually, you'll get a look to it similar to if you took a piece of sandpaper to a clear piece of glass and you start rubbing on it. Eventually, you would dull that clear piece of glass. You wouldn't be able to see through it. It would become what they call "low peg," where you just see shadows. That's what happens with synthetic rugs from polypropylene.

Polyester Rugs

Polyester is a lot like polypropylene. It is, again, an oil-based product. You get a lot of the same characteristics, like good stain resistance. Certain colors it just doesn't take to, red being one of them. You won't see as many color choices in polyester.

Polyester is all over the board, too, as far as quality goes. It depends on how they spin it or how tightly they weave it. Some of it will flatten very quickly if it's not spun tightly with a

good density applied to it. You might call it matting or crushing.

Are Wool Rugs the Best?

Many people consider wool to be the best fiber for oriental rugs, but not everything is that simple especially in the fiber and carpet business. There are lots of things that can change that.

Wool is the tried and true material for making a rug. It's been around since the beginning of man and rugs have been made from wool for at least five or six thousand years. However, not all wools are the same. There are very short strands, or short fibers, which means that they're very small pieces. You can imagine you're trying to spin small pieces of hair or fiber together.

They're not going to lock down. Then, you can get really long pieces. Let's say you got a foot, foot and a half long piece of wool or hair. You start spinning it together. It gets really tight. It's like a cable wire. The higher the staple, or the longer the strands are, usually the better it can twist and the more it's going to perform.

It's going to take all the air out of it and it's going to wear a lot better as well as be something that's going to look good long term. It's not going to shed as much either.

Does Wool Stain?

Wool would be the perfect fiber if it wasn't so stainable and that's something that's inherited. You just can't change it. Wool will absorb approximately 30% of its weight in moisture or water. However, if the rug is woven very tight, the moisture can stay on the surface for a period of time before it actually absorbs.

Wool has a natural scale composition or cell composition that repels wetness and staining, but if it sits there long enough it will soak in. The real key is to act quickly and usually just soap and water or just some club soda will bring it to the top and you just mop it up.

There are other things you can buy, such as Scotch Guard or a fiber seal, which will help prevent moisture from absorbing, but this generally only protects the tips of the rug. It's not like putting a piece of glass on it, but it does help as far as stain resistance. The big thing is

cleaning quickly, be prepared to clean, and know what to do.

Rug Quality vs. Value

Deciding between rug quality and value can be challenging. Fortunately, you don't have to pick one or the other.

Differences in Rug Pricing

The difference in the price of a rug can be as simple as just the materials used. There's lots of different types of fibers you can use in a rug or carpet.

Depending on how the manufacturer twisted the fibers together or what they blended the fibers with can make a big difference in the quality and performance of a fiber. Of course, the tighter the fibers, the denser the product, the more there is to wear, and the better it's going to perform normally. That means it may be a more expensive rug, but will also be a higher quality rug.

Are Handmade Rugs "The Best?"

Something that everyone believes is that handmade rugs are the best type of rugs on the market. It is a myth and it has changed a lot. Handmade can mean several things. Is it hand tufted, or is it hand knotted? When you look at those two products, people probably won't know the difference.

Everybody thinks that all wool is wool. That's the farthest thing from the truth. There's good wool and there's bad wool and there are all kinds of things out there that make a good quality wool, or a lesser quality wool. Often, the problem is when you see a less expensive rug, in most cases, the manufacturer is doing things to make it less expensive. It seems like a deal, it looks great from a picture or when you see it, but it's not going to perform.

They'll be cutting corners. They're going to be cutting the latex that holds the backing together. They're going to use lesser quality wools. They're going to use less quality dye stuffs. They're not going to put as many colors into it. There's lots of things that make up the quality of a rug.

How to Spot Rug Quality

In today's world, finding a rug you know is good quality is difficult because of online shopping. This has become a commodity and it causes everybody to think that every rug's the same and that every wool is the same. It's very tough to determine how something's going to perform when shopping online.

Usually, the information online is very limited, and the website might not tell you it's a rug that is not made for performance. They're just going to tell you it's made of wool. It's left up to you to figure out if it's good or bad. The price sometimes reflects that, but sometimes it does not.

It's very challenging for somebody. When you go to a specialty store like The Rug Gallery or many stores across the world, you have somebody there who is experienced and who knows the differences in rug quality.

In most cases, they've seen rugs go bad. They've had rugs come back. They've cleaned rugs or repaired rugs. They know what happens in performance.

Rug Quality & Stitch Count

If a manufacturer uses a poor quality wool or something that's not going to perform fiber-wise, it doesn't matter if you rug is 1,000 knots per square inch. It's not going to perform, just because the fiber is not really designed to perform.

Manufacturers can do different things with stitch counts or knot counts. It's not an end-all-be-all. It's not like a 600-count, the Egyptian cotton sheets or something you may buy, because there are all different kind of qualities, as well. You may think they're all the same, but they're not.

Sizing Your Oriental Rug

Choosing the best size rug for a particular space can seem overwhelming, and there are many misconceptions about how big the rug actually needs to. You might need a bigger rug than you think, or you might need a smaller one.

Do Sizing Rules Exist?

There's no hard and fast rule when it comes to sizing a rug for a particular space. Most people who have never bought a rug before aren't sure what size to get. Most of the time, they buy too small of a rug for the room.

Also, people who are used to wall-to-wall rugs might want the rug to be within an inch of the wall, and feel more like carpeting. This also might not look as good as a correctly sized rug. There are some definite mistakes out there.

What Size Rug for a Dining Room

One of the easiest rooms to fit a rug to is the dining room. Wherever you leave the table at 99% of the time, not just those few holidays a year, but where you leave it at all year long, that is the size of your tabletop. Measure that tabletop.

Then, add six feet to that tabletop measurement. It'd be three feet on each side, width and length. That would be the optimal rug size for that particular set of table and chairs. You'll have plenty of room to slide the chairs back on it without coming off the rug. Anything below that and your chairs are going to be half on half off the rug. When you go to scoot it into the table, you're going to start hitting those edges and ripping or tearing those edges eventually. Ideally, you want to have the chair legs that are next to the table always be staying on the carpet.

What Size Rug for a Family Room

Everybody tends to do this differently. It's one of the most popular spaces to put a rug in today, because a lot of people will be looking at it. I think a lot of people look at it.

Generally, there are three ways of thinking about it. One, where you can just put the rug in the middle of the room. Put a coffee table on it if you have a coffee table. If none of the furniture is on the rug, there's a bit of border exposed of the flooring below it, which may not look as good. You really need to cover that entire space. You can put at least the front legs of a furniture piece on the rug to anchor it. It keeps it from moving when you sit down on it. Also, it feels more natural. The third way of thinking would be is to get one big rug and put all the furniture on top of it. It's a great look if you've got the space, but it's also a tremendous waste of money, carpet, rug, and design if you've got a pattern hiding underneath all the furniture.

What Size Rug for a Bedroom

There are generally two choices when it comes to sizing a rug for a bedroom. You can frame the bed by going from 18 inches to two feet of wood or carpeting around the outside perimeter of the rug.

However, it depends on the size of your room. You may have two seating spaces in your bedroom, if it's large enough and you are fortunate enough to have that much space. Don't try to make it fill the room like carpeting.

Most of the furniture will sit off of the rug in the bedroom, except for the bed, or maybe a little bench at the end of the bed, depending on how you have your room arranged. The other way to do it, which makes also perfect sense, would be to do three rugs. One at the foot of the bed to define that space, and then two smaller scatters or runners on each side of the bed, so you would have three rugs in that situation. When you do that, it is a little more challenging because you have to consider pattern colors. But when done well, it can look very nice.

How to Place Multiple Rugs in a Single Room

Using two or more rugs in a room is popular, but it's also very challenging. Rugs are meant to design the space, so it makes it more cozy and inviting. What you really want in a space is for people to feel comfortable. A rug really defines space. If you have a little seating area in front of a fireplace or in front of a bay window, that is a perfect way to use a rug.

Conclusion

Selecting a gorgeous oriental rug doesn't have to be a challenge when you remember the cardinal rule -- just choose something you love! Make sure you're getting a high quality rug material that can be cleaned easily, and size your rug appropriately for your room. After that, the rug speaks for itself and becomes a great conversation piece in your home. A high quality rug with great colors and design is something you can enjoy for years to come.



Sam Presnell, Owner of The Rug Gallery, speaks to the diversity of their product and pride they take in delivering outstanding customer service, cleaning and repair. He believes their high expectations of product and service is a major reason why they are number one in the industry. The Rug Gallery promise is the best customer service, unbeatable selection, high quality and the best price. We fulfill that promise with every rug or carpet we sell.

Our expertise in color and design, our ability to locate and purchase only the finest rugs in all price ranges, and our eagerness to cater to our client's every need set us apart from other oriental rug and carpet dealers. These attributes are directly responsible for our growth and our stellar reputation not only in the Cincinnati area, but worldwide within the rug industry.

It's no wonder The Rug Gallery has been named "The Best Specialty Rug Retailer in America" by the Atlanta Floor Covering Market.

THE RUG GALLERY

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