

Car/pet. A cloth or rug to cover a floor.

The use of rugs is of great antiquity in Egypt, India, and China; later, those of Persia and Turkey have been the more celebrated. They were anciently spread upon the ground or floor, in the tents or in apartments, and in the Orient are still small, used for sitting or reclining upon, or beneath the couches; as the Sardinian carpets, mentioned by a Grecian poet,—“Beneath the ivory feet of purple-cushioned couches.”

“Phoenicia sends us dates across the billows,
And Carthage, carpets rich, and well-stuffed pillows.”
HERMIPPUS, quoted by Athenæus (A. D. 220).

At the supper of Iphicrates, purple carpets were spread on the floor; and at the magnificent banquet of Ptolemy Philadelphus, an account of which is given by Callixenus of Rhodes, we learn that underneath 200 golden couches “were strewed purple carpets of the finest wool, with the carpet pattern on both sides; and there were handsomely embroidered rugs, very beautifully elaborated with figures. Besides this,” he adds, “thin Persian cloths covered all the center space where the guests walked, having the most accurate representations of animals embroidered on them.”

The Babylonians were very skillful in weaving cloths of divers colors; we read of “a goodly Babylonish garment” as long ago as the time of Joshua, B. C. 1451, as among the spoils of Ai. The Babylonish carpets had representations of human figures and composite animals, such as winged bulls with human heads, griffins and dragons. These were numbered among the luxuries of Heliogabalus. On the tomb of Cyrus was spread a purple Babylonian carpet, and another covered the bed whereon his body was placed. These carpets were exported in considerable quantities to Greece and Rome. Researches in Pompeii show that they were used in that city in the time of Imperial Rome.

Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson gives an account of one carpet rug of Egyptian manufacture. “It is made like many cloths of the present day, with woolen threads, on linen strings. In the center is the figure of a boy in white, with a goose above, the hieroglyphic of a ‘child,’ upon a green ground, around which is a border composed of red and blue lines.” He also mentions some fine specimens of worked worsted upon linen, now in the Turin Museum, in which the linen threads of the weft have been picked out and colored worsted sewed on the warp. These are specimens of tapestry-weaving, and resemble the present work of Persia and Turkey. The tapestry consists of woolen threads sewed on the strings of

the warp by means of small shuttle-needles. The Persian carpet is formed by knotting into the warp tuft after tuft of woolen yarn, over each row of which a woof-shot is passed, the fingers being here employed instead of the shuttle-needles, as the fabric is of a coarser description. Such carpets are formed in looms of very simple construction; the warp-threads are arranged in parallel order, whether upright or horizontal, and the fabric and pattern are produced by colored threads, hand-wrought upon the warp. This may be designated the hand-wrought or needlework method, which only makes one stitch or loop at a time, in contradistinction to the machine-wrought process, the result of mechanical appliances, whereby a thousand stitches are effected at once. Herein lies the essential difference between the ancient and modern, the simple and complex, carpet-manufacture.

In Persia there are entire tribes and families whose only occupation is that of carpet-weaving. These dispose of their productions at the bazars to native merchants, who remove them to Smyrna or Constantinople, where they meet with European purchasers. The trade in real Persian carpets is, however, very limited, owing to their small size. They are seldom larger than hearth-rugs, long and narrow. Felted carpets, or *nurmuds*, are also made in Persia, but are not considered worth exporting. One specimen of carpet from Persia had tufts of worsted inserted in a felt back.

Carpets are manufactured in many of the provinces of Asiatic Turkey. In none of these places, however, does any large manufactory exist; the carpets are the work of families and households. They are woven in one piece, and there is this notable peculiarity in their manufacture, that the same pattern is never again exactly reproduced; no two carpets are quite alike. The patterns are very remarkable, and their origin is unknown even to Mussulmans. The Turkey carpet pattern represents inlaid jeweled work, which accords with Eastern tales of jewels and diamonds.

In British India the carpet manufacture is carried on extensively. At Benares and Moorshedabad are produced velvet carpets with gold embroidery. A very elaborate carpet sent from Cashmere to the London exhibition by Maharajah Goolah Singh was composed entirely of silk, and excited great admiration. In every square foot of this carpet, we are informed, there were at least 10,000 ties or knots. Silk embroidered hookah carpets, cotton carpets, or *satrunjees*, printed cotton carpets, printed floorcloth, woolen carpets, are made in different districts of British India. Of late years, linen warp has been introduced instead of cotton, and the fabric is thereby much improved. The designs of the Indian carpets have more regularity than those of Turkey, and the colors are mostly warm negatives, enlivened with brilliant hues interspersed.

Carpets were introduced into England at the time of the Crusades.

In the times of Edward VI. and Elizabeth of England the floors of palaces were strewn *daily* with rushes. This frequent change of rushes was considered to betoken an effeminacy which augured but poorly for the stability of the dynasty and the ruling families.

The walls were hung with tapestry and cloths long before the floors were carpeted. In Hampton Court Palace, built by Cardinal Wolsey, the beautiful floors are yet bare and the walls covered with tapestry.

In the Middle Ages carpets were used before the high altar and in certain parts of the chapter.

Beside carpets are noticed in 1301, and carpets for the royal thrones in the fifteenth century.

Turkey carpets before the communion-table were used in the reigns of Edward VI., Elizabeth, and the Stuarts.

The manufacture of carpets was introduced into France from Persia, in the reign of Henry IV., about 1606; a manufactory being established at Chaillot, near Paris.

Workmen from France introduced carpet-making into England about 1750. A carpet-factory was established at Axminster, 1755, the year of the Lisbon earthquake.

There are several characteristic processes in the manufacture of carpets.

1. The web is formed of a warp and weft of flax, and the wool or worsted is inserted in tufts which are twisted around each of the warp-threads, the color of the tuft being determined by its position in the pattern. The tufts are locked in position by a shoot of the weft, the crossing of the warp, and the beating of the batten or lathe. The *Persian*, *Turkey*, and *Axminster* carpets are thus formed.

2. The web is formed of a warp and weft, as stated above, and the colored worsted yarns are laid along with the linen warp, and drawn into loops which project above the surface. Each yarn passes through an eyelet which depends from a cord, whereby it is drawn up to form a loop at the point where its color is required. This is the *Body-Brussels carpet*. They are usually 27 inches wide, with two threads of linen for the shoot, one above and the other below the worsted.

When the loops thus made are cut to form a nap, the carpet is known as a *pile* or *Wilton carpet*.

3. Tapestry Brussels differs from regular or body Brussels in being woven in a common loom and printed in the warp.

4. Tapestry velvet or patent velvet differs only from tapestry in being cut like Wilton.

5. The carpet is formed by an amplification of the ordinary weaving-processes; two or three webs being woven at the same time, the warps being interchangeable and being brought to the surface according to the color required, and forming two-ply carpet or three-ply carpet, respectively. The carpet is woven by a *figure-work* or ordinary loom, with some peculiarities, such as the exposure of the weft (*Ingrain*), the warp (*Venetian*), or a peculiar weft (*Chenille*).

6. The carpet is formed of a body of fibers felted together with a fabric without spinning or weaving. The product is generally printed, and forms *drugget*.

7. The carpet is woven in plain colors and afterwards printed.

8. The carpet is dyed in party-colors, nicely adjusted so as to fall into their right places when woven into a fabric.

9. A pile is cemented to a backing-fabric. See **CEMENTED-BACK CARPET.**

For the varieties of carpets see the following:—

Axminster carpet.	Ingrain carpet.
Brussels carpet.	Kidderminster carpet.
Cemented-back carpet.	Persian carpet.
Chenille carpet.	Pile carpet.
Damask carpet.	Printed carpet.
Drugget.	Rag carpet.
Felt carpet.	Rug.

Scotch carpet.
Tapestry carpet.
Three-ply carpet.
Triple-ingrain carpet.
Turkey carpet.

Two-ply carpet.
Velvet-pile carpet.
Venetian carpet.
Wilton carpet.