

Tips and Tricks: Carpet Fitting Basics

How to fit a carpet into a room

1. Measuring the carpet

Start off by measuring your carpet giving yourself a bit more than needed roughly 10cm over the room length and width. Don't forget to also add some extra length to go into the doorways. One thing which you should always remember is that carpet does not normally come in at the width which it states on the bag. A carpet will usually arrive about 5cm short and this can obviously be a problem if your room is about 4.00 metres wide. So let's say your room is 4.80 long and 4.00 wide, then it would be safer getting a 4.00 X 5.00 carpet rather than a 4.80 X 4.00 carpet. If you are fitting out more than one room with the same carpet then you will be better off acquiring it in separate cut lengths. Although this may be a little more expensive it will be a lot easier to handle once you get it back to your home.

2. the fitting of the Carpet on underlay and gripper

Begin by getting as much of the furniture out of the room as possible (Empty is best) then give the room a good clean.

We will start by fitting the door strip. There are generally three different types, a Single (Carpet to vinyl or flat floor board finish), a Double (Carpet to Carpet) and a Zed bar (Carpet to laminate, Raised wood or ceramic tiles). Firstly measure the distance between the door jams and cut the strip to that length with a hacksaw. At either end of the strip on the same side cut out the corners about 10mm, this is so when you fit the strip it will fit around the door stops. Finally nail or screw to the floor.

3. Installation of the Gripperods

Gripper generally comes in 1.5 metre lengths, and it can be supplied with wood pin nails, concrete nails or duo pin nails. The choice is up to you although most carpet fitters generally opt for the duo pin.

Next you need to lay out enough lengths to go all the way round the room and you can cut gripper with gripper shears but if you do not have any of these you could instead use a small saw.

When nailing the gripper to the floor make sure that you set the gripper 5-6 mm away from the skirting, this is very important as the carpet needs this gap to sit in.

4. Fitting the Underlay

Cut the underlay into lengths and lay out usually in the short lengths with the name facing up. Set the first length of underlay off the back edge of the gripper on the straightest wall and continue laying the underlay off of each other until the floor is completely covered allowing it to overlap about 10cm all around.

Next fasten the underlay to the floor either with staples or a spray on adhesive. Finally trim the underlay all around the edge.

5. Now we move on to the carpet fitting

If you have ordered the carpet at the right length then you can bring it straight into the room, if not then you will need to cut the required length off of the roll. The area needed to cut a carpet will have to be large so something like a driveway or big garage would be the ideal space.

Once the carpet is in the room you will need to open it out (you may need some help here). The pile direction is normally going to point towards the main source of light, but if you are having the same carpet fitted throughout then the pile direction is determined by the stairs with the pile facing down ward over the steps. Once you have determined this and have opened out the carpet you can now begin your fitting.

If you have one straight wall that you can start from then it can be a great help, if not then you must make sure that the carpet runs parallel with the room. This is particularly important if you have a patterned carpet.

Now it is time to fix the carpet to the gripper. Begin at one end of the room and cut the carpet to the line of the wall, there is a gadget you can get for this but they are not easy to come by in the DIY stores. As an alternative you can use scissors but I don't recommend this and the best option is to use a hooked knife (Stanley).

Let's have a trial run on the straight wall this is where an extra bit of carpet comes in handy. Allow the carpet to go slightly up the wall let's say roughly 10-15mm and if you gave yourself a bit extra like I suggested earlier then you should have about 7cm left at the other end. The reason for giving yourself this little extra is so that if you don't get it right the first time then you will have another chance.

Next you need to go to each of the corners, work out where the corner is and cut out a V shape into the carpet. The reason for the V shape is so when the carpet is placed back down it lies flat to the floor and you can easily see where the corner is.

Now this is the tricky bit, cutting the carpet the same shape as the wall. Start off by going to one side or the other, whichever is best for you and in the corner of the carpet push the knife in making sure the end of the blade is right down into the corner between the skirting and the floor. Pull the knife towards you about 30cm

then check that your cut carpet is touching or just off of the wall. Just make sure that you are not cutting into the skirting, if you are then just adjust your cut and try again. After two or three short cuts you should have perfected this technique and you can now cut all the way across the room.

You should then get your stretcher and stair tool which is a bolster type tool, both of which can be hired from most good tool hire stores. Start to tuck the carpet into the gripperrods starting at the middle of the wall. To do this get your stretcher and place it on the carpet about 10cm away from the wall giving it a gentle stretch first and little harder if required. The carpet needs to go up the wall by about 5mm then using your stair tool tuck the carpet into the gripper.

Gradually fan out both ways and continue to do the same all the way along the wall and when finished go to the other end and do exactly the same. Note that when you cut the carpet at the other end it does not matter if the carpet is slightly off of the wall as most carpets will have a bit of give in them. Carpets will need to be a bit short so that they can be stretched to fit (when I say short I only mean about 2 or 3mm).

Now you need to repeat this process on both sides of the room, once complete the carpet can now be fitted into the strip. To fit into the door you will need to cut the carpet and fold it back on itself then pull the door back over it (Note if the door is too tight then you will have to take it off and get it cut).

Let the carpet lie over the door strip and cut it so that there is a 3-4mm overlap across the strip then tuck it into the gap and give it a stretch.

If everything looks good, then congratulations you have just fitted your first carpet.

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