

{ HOME } DECORATING**MAKE IT LAST: CARE AND CLEANING TIPS**

"RUGS DON'T WEAR OUT; THEY UGLY OUT," SAYS GREEN CLEANING EXPERT STEPHEN ASHKIN. TO KEEP YOURS LOOKING LOVELY, HE SUGGESTS:

VACUUM REGULARLY. Sucking up grit before it becomes embedded is the true secret to a long-wearing rug. In active households with kids and pets, this might mean daily vacuuming. In rooms that get less use, count on once or twice a week.

USE A HIGH-QUALITY VACUUM. Look for a lightweight model with an air flow of 90 cubic feet per minute, suction or static lift of more than 80 inches, a filter that catches 99 percent of particles that are .3 microns or larger, and a warranty that lasts for four to five years.

DEAL WITH SPILLS IMMEDIATELY to alleviate the need for harsh chemicals later. Blot—don't rub—spills with a light-colored towel to wick up moisture. Treat any leftover stains with a hydrogen peroxide-based spot cleaner such as Seventh Generation's Carpet Cleaner.

DEEP-CLEAN RUGS when they start looking dingy. Rugs with backings can be cleaned at home with a steam cleaner, preferably by a pro. "If you must do it yourself, don't rent from the supermarket," says Ashkin. "Go to a janitorial supply house and rent a unit with strong suction." Rugs without backings should be sent out for cleaning. Make sure the firm has a conveyor (which cleans the top and bottom) and a heated drying room.



THIS PAGE: 9. THE FLORENT WOOL RUG in natural by Liora Manné looks and feels as if it were made for bare feet. 4'10" by 7'10", \$299; Trans-Ocean Inc., 914-949-5656, ext. 1 for stores. **10. CHRISTINE VAN DER HURD'S MULTICOLOR STRIPE DHURRIE** is woven of silk, which gives the rug a subtle sheen and super-soft hand, 6' by 9', \$1,782; Capellini Modern Age, 212-966-0669. **11. JUTE BOUCLE** gets a jolt of color in this unexpectedly bright citron rug. 8' by 10', \$159; West Elm, westelm.com or 866-428-6468. **12. JUDY ROSS'S WOOL PROCESSION RUNNER** in olive and beige marries traditional hand-embroidery and contemporary design. 2'6" by 6', \$850; Judy Ross, 212-842-1705. *