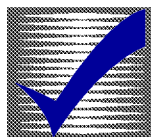




HOW-TO BOOKLET #3117

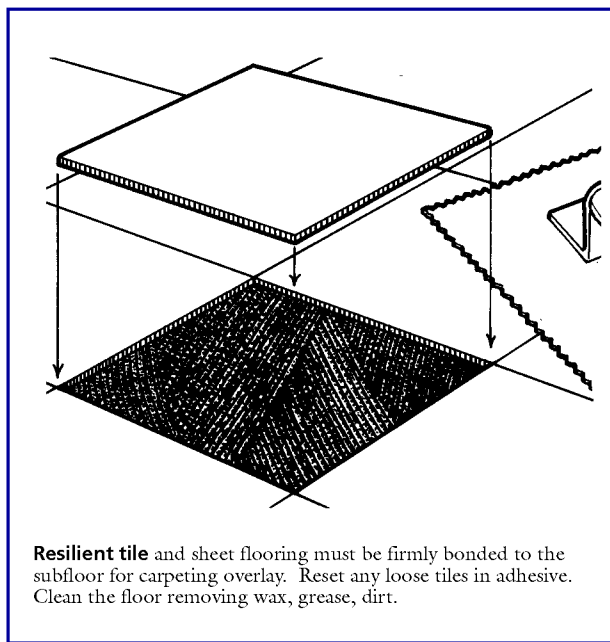
FOAM-BACK CARPETING



TOOL & MATERIAL CHECKLIST

- Foam-back Carpeting
- Adhesive or Double-Faced Tape
- Seam Adhesive
- Chalkline
- Utility Knife
- Notched Adhesive Trowel
- Binder Bars
- Floor Preparation Tools/Materials
- Wide Stiff Scraper

Read This Entire How-To Booklet for Specific Tools and Materials Not Noted in the Basics Listed Above.



Resilient tile and sheet flooring must be firmly bonded to the subfloor for carpeting overlay. Reset any loose tiles in adhesive. Clean the floor removing wax, grease, dirt.

Foam- or cushion-backed carpeting is a do-it-yourselfer's dream product. It's easy to measure, seam, and install over most any floor surface and provides beauty and durability at an affordable cost.

In comparison, foam-back carpeting is easier to put down than the more conventional carpeting products that require padding and special fastening techniques. Foam-backing carpeting is fastened to the floor with adhesive or double-faced tape, rather than with tackless strips, for example. The carpet padding is "built-into" the carpeting, a saving feature, and the carpeting doesn't have to be stretched at sidewalls and corners with a knee-kicker and power stretcher device.

MEASURE BEFORE YOU BUY

Before you go to the store to buy foam-back carpeting, carefully measure the room in which the product will be installed. Make a scale drawing of the area on graph paper, noting doorways, alcoves, and any other obstructions that the carpeting will have to be fitted around or under. Mark in exact measurements, and double-check all measurements. The floor plan drawing will be used for actual carpet layout as well as an accurate buying reference at the store. Go over your plan with the carpeting salesperson at the store. By working together, you may be able to work out sizes to match spaces and save both time and money.

If your room is less than 12 feet wide, you can put the carpet down in one sheet and avoid seaming. An example would be a 12x10- or a 12x12-foot room. However, installing carpeting in rooms larger than 12 feet wide will require joining—or seaming—the carpeting together so it will fit as a single carpet unit.

As you sketch out the plan on graph paper, note where these seams will fall on the floor. As a suggestion, the seams should be located away from heavy traffic areas in corners along walls, or in a spot where furniture pieces such as a sofa will hide and protect them.

If your carpeting will have a pattern and the carpeting will have to be seamed, you will have to buy additional carpeting so you can match the pattern when cutting the carpeting for seaming and fitting. The salesperson at the store will help you with these measurements.

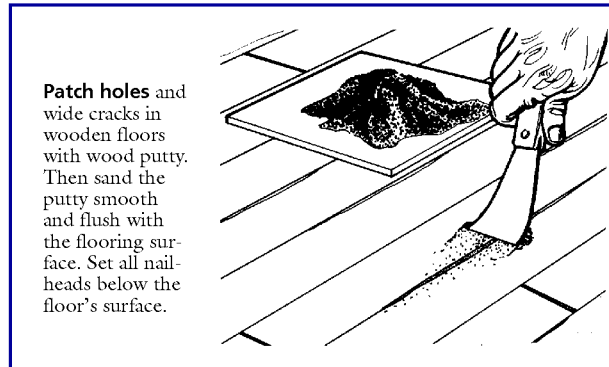
Carpeting stairs with foam-back carpeting is not recommended by manufacturers. Once the carpeting has been laid on the stairsteps, the results may not be satisfactory.

PREPARE THE FLOOR SURFACE

One big feature of foam-back carpet is that the flooring over which it will be installed doesn't have to be specially prepared. However, there are a couple of rules to follow for professional-looking results.

Wood floors. If you will carpet over strip wood floors or subflooring (such as plywood), drive any exposed nailheads below the surface of the floor with a hammer and nailset. If the flooring has cracks 1/8-inch or wider, fill the cracks with water putty, trowel the patch smooth, and then sand the patch when dry with medium grit sandpaper stretched over a sanding block. Smooth extra rough floors with a power sander.

Concrete floors. Foam-back carpeting may be installed over concrete floors, if the concrete is not



Patch holes and wide cracks in wooden floors with wood putty. Then sand the putty smooth and flush with the flooring surface. Set all nailheads below the floor's surface.

subject to dampness. If the floor is new, the concrete must cure for a period of time before carpeting (any type) is installed. When in doubt about moisture, you can test the slab this easy way:

Uprun a regular water glass on the concrete floor and seal its rim with a rope of putty. The joint between the glass and the concrete should be airtight. Let the glass set for 48 hours. If moisture condenses inside the glass during this period, the floor is too damp to lay carpeting. Could be that water is seeping in through the foundation wall at the joint between the foundation and the floor slab. Or, the gutters and downspouts on the house are not draining away the water properly. Look here for trouble and make any repairs necessary. Then give the floor the glass test once again.

Resilient-covered floors. If the floor is covered with resilient tile or sheet material, you can carpet over the material, if the material is firmly bonded to the floor. If the material is not firmly bonded, it will have to be removed. Also, if you will be gluing the carpet down, the resilient floor adhesive must be removed. It may not be compatible with the carpet adhesive.

You can remove the old covering with a flat tiling spade, ice scraper, regular stiff scraper, or sometimes, a sharp butt chisel. Remove old adhesive with a commercial solvent or by sanding and vacuuming.

Remove all wax, grease, and other debris from the resilient material before you put down the carpeting.

Ceramic and quarry tile. You can install carpeting over these surfaces. But the tiles must be firmly bonded to the floor and the grout lines should be filled with a good grade of latex-based flashing compound.

Terrazzo. Remove all sealers and wax before you spread adhesive or use double-faced tape.

FIRST, THE ROUGH CUTS

Unroll the carpeting in the room in which it will be installed. We recommend that you let the carpeting adjust to the room humidity for 8 hours or so.

Use the graph-paper sketch you made and a tape measure, and measure and mark the carpeting for cutting and fitting. As you make these marks, leave about 2 inches of overlap at the edges of the room. Also leave about 2 inches of overlap at the points where the carpeting will be seamed.

Double-check all of your measurements. Then, check the measurements one more time.

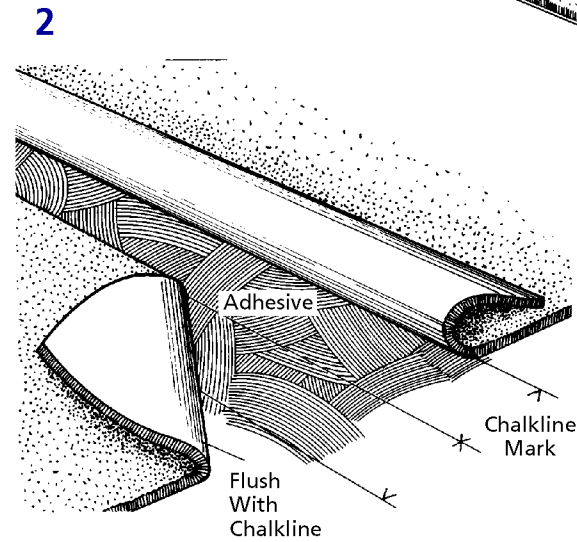
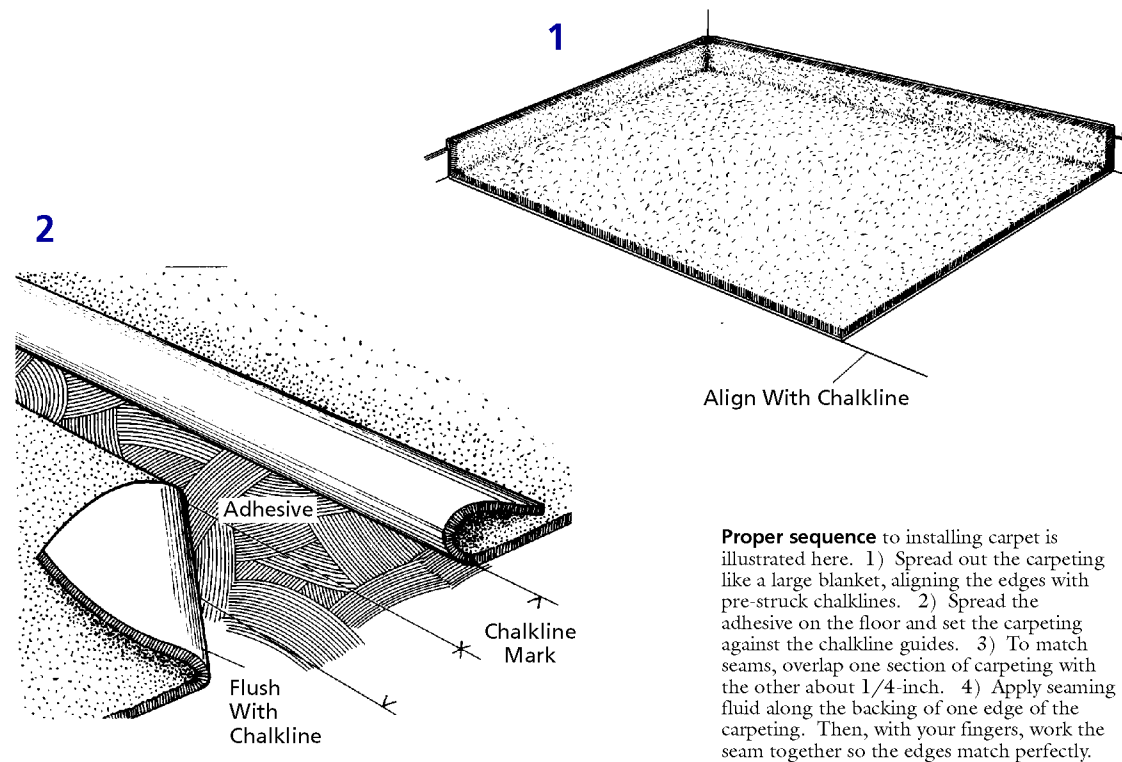
If the carpeting is patterned, you will have to arrange it for any matching cuts at this time.

Be sure that the pile of separate pieces of carpeting will run in the same direction.

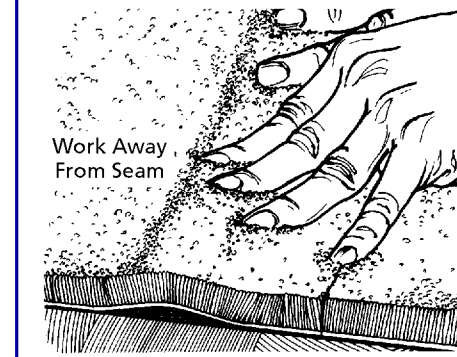
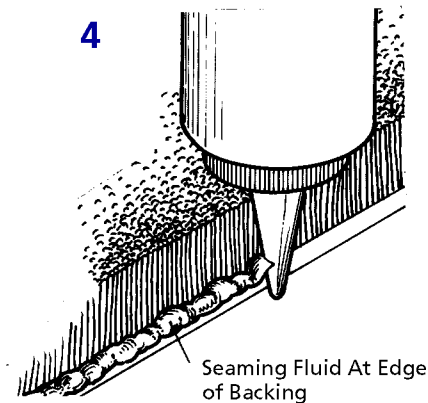
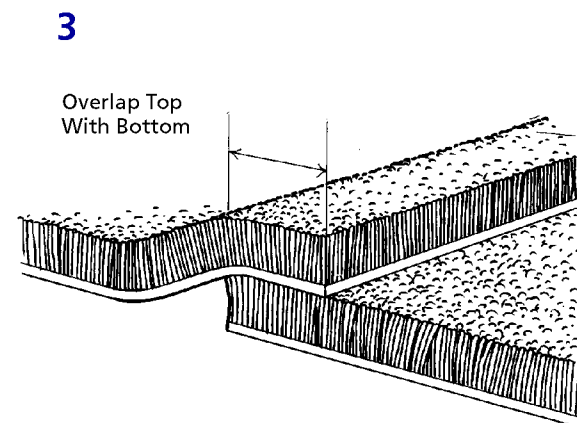
LAYING THE CARPETING

Using the sketch, position the carpeting on the floor where it will be fastened to the floor—either with adhesive or double-faced tape.

If the carpeting has to be seamed, snap a chalkline at the point on the floor where the seam will be located. All foam-back carpeting is cut from the face, not back. Match the edge of the carpeting with the chalkline. It must fit perfectly. Then, pull the adjoining piece of carpeting over the first piece set accurately against the chalkline. Work carefully so you don't jiggle the first piece of carpeting out of alignment.



Proper sequence to installing carpet is illustrated here. 1) Spread out the carpeting like a large blanket, aligning the edges with pre-struck chalklines. 2) Spread the adhesive on the floor and set the carpeting against the chalkline guides. 3) To match seams, overlap one section of carpeting with the other about 1/4-inch. 4) Apply seaming fluid along the backing of one edge of the carpeting. Then, with your fingers, work the seam together so the edges match perfectly.



Bulges are worked out at the seams with your fingers. Work from the seam outward, across carpeting, eliminating any air bubbles.

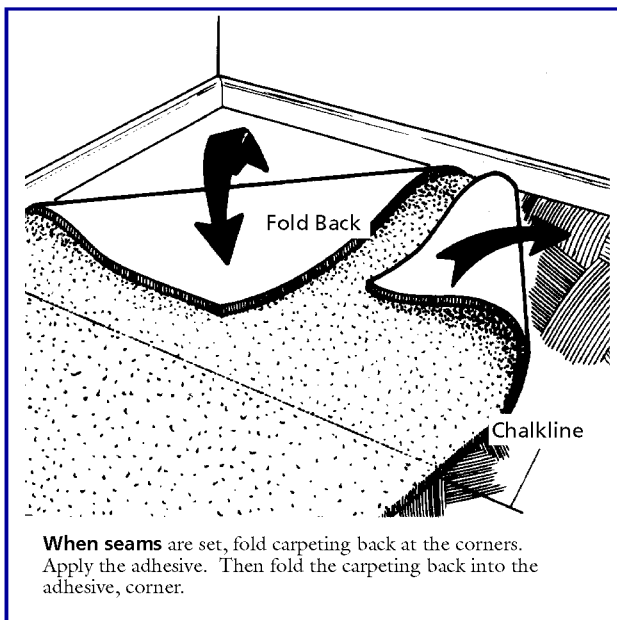
The adjoining piece of carpeting should overlap the first piece 1/4-inch. Be sure to match any pattern at this time.

Fold or roll back both pieces of carpeting. Then apply an even coat of foam-back adhesive to the floor along the chalkline. The adhesive should be smooth and even—not bunched or lumped. Now, roll one piece of carpeting into the adhesive so the edge of it matches the chalkline perfectly. Use your hands and fingers to work the carpet backing into the adhesive and to remove any air bubbles under the carpeting.

Do the same with the adjoining piece of carpeting. It will, of course, overlap the first piece by 1/4-inch.

Very carefully, apply the seaming fluid to the first piece of carpeting along the edge of the rubber-like foam backing. This is critical. Make sure that the adhesive bead is the same height of the backing. Do not get the adhesive on the pile. This adhesive comes in a tube with a nozzle. You can cut a V notch in the nozzle with a razor blade so you can squeeze out the adhesive. Match the height of the backing with the razor cut in the nozzle.

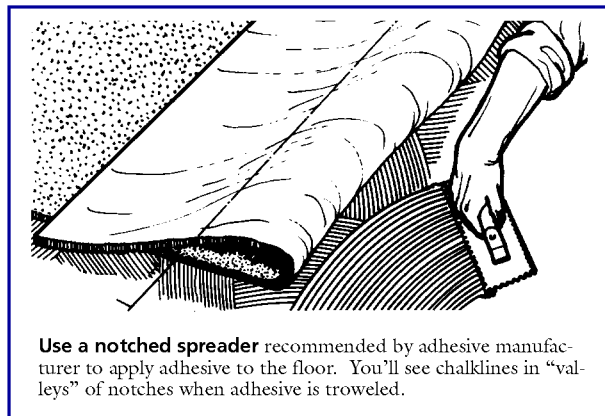
Once you have applied the seaming adhesive, pull the second piece of carpeting back slightly so it butts the carpeting already set on the floor. There will be a slight bulge at this joint. You can work it out with your fingers kneading the carpeting back away from the chalkline.



Be sure to match any pattern at this time.

At the side walls, after the seam adhesive has dried, turn back the corners of the carpeting like a bedspread, and fold the carpeting back. Then apply the adhesive with a notched trowel, working out the adhesive evenly. Roll the folded carpeting back into the adhesive working out any air bubbles as you go. If, when the carpeting is installed, you notice an air bubble, you can punch the backing with a sharp nail to release this air. However, try to work the carpeting into the adhesive so there is no air underneath the carpeting. Take your time and work slowly.

Once the carpeting is down, you can install binder bars at doorways and set the carpeting to them, and trim excess carpeting away from the walls with a utility knife. We recommend that you first seat the carpeting next to baseboards with the working edge



of a scraper, as the illustrations show. Finally, go over the carpeting with a hammer and wooden buffer block, such as a short length of 2x4. Tap the face of the carpeting so it is firmed into the adhesive.

DOUBLE-FACED TAPE

If you will use double-faced tape to install the carpeting, unroll the carpeting and fit it to the measurements in the room. Let the carpeting set in the room for a couple of days so it lays flat and adapts to the humidity.

Now go around the edges of the room with double-faced tape. Stick one side of the tape to the floor at the floor's edges, but leave on the top protective strip of the tape. Position the carpet over the tape. Then, in small strips, remove the protective strip and press the back of the carpeting to the tape.

Once the carpeting is down in place, you can trim the edges, if needed, with a utility knife. The double-faced tape technique is not recommended for seaming foam-back carpet. And, the tape technique shouldn't be used if the room in which the carpeting is installed receives lots of foot traffic.

