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PLUS PATTERNED CARPET IS BACK \* FREE ENTRY TO ANTIQUES FAIRS \* NEWS FROM THE ANTIQUES ROADSHOW



## TONAL PATTERN

Carpets using linear designs and contrasting weaves create subtle and usable patterns that deliver eye-catching detail without having to commit to a dominant colour scheme. Michael Wailes, sales and design director of Wool Classics explains: 'Collections by companies such as Zoffany and Kelly Hoppen feature a wide range of neutral colourways, which lend versatility and longevity to interior schemes and are perfect for use in sitting rooms and bedrooms. Stronger tones in these designs, such as dark grey and rich berry shades, work particularly well on heavy-traffic areas in the home and make a sophisticated design statement for stairways and corridors.'

## TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Breaking free of the neutral carpet comfort zone can be daunting, so take your time and look at all the options to ensure the best result.

**1** Consider how much wear and tear a certain area will see. Hallways will need a more robust carpet, so opt for a heavy domestic make with an 80 per cent wool content or a natural fibre carpet that offers good grip. Patterned and boldly coloured carpets come into their own in these areas because they not only make a lasting first impression, but they also hide a multitude of sins.

**2** Ask to take carpet samples home and consider them alongside your other furnishings. It's important to test carpets in different types of light because showroom lighting can be deceiving.

**3** If possible, select your carpet, wall colour and curtains at the same time so that you can piece together a workable, coherent look throughout the room.

**4** Once you're happy with your choice and are ready to take the plunge, don't be tempted to cut corners – get your room measured by an expert and factor into your budget the cost of having your carpet professionally fitted.

**R**ather than simply being the safe option for the hotel lobby, carpet is once again the choice of interior designers nationwide. Even though roughly 75 per cent of carpets purchased are plain or neutral, there is a wonderful array of patterned carpets on offer and, having shed their brash image, they're now associated with style and luxury. Interior designer Danielle Proud is a keen advocate: 'Carpet has always been a material that I use – it adds a style and warmth that goes beyond aesthetics. Many of this season's designs have a handmade feel, which reinforces the trend for individuality as the new luxury.'

And there are plenty of stylish designs out there. New striped patterns come in a range of colours and are ideal for creating the illusion of space, whereas delicate florals are just the thing to achieve a vintage look. 'Pattern can work in any size room. A bold design can make a small room come alive, while a larger space can carry a stronger pattern,' explains Kelly Butler, design manager of Brintons.



“Carpet costs from just £4 per square metre and can help reduce energy bills by up to 40 per cent, which is great news if you're looking for ways to beat the credit crunch”

David Carmack, *Fun on the Floor*  
([funonthefloor.com](http://funonthefloor.com))

Top 'Wool Blackstripe', 'Wool Pinstripe' and 'Wool Cord' in 'Sable/Bone', £44.50 per sq m, Alternative Flooring Bottom 'Renaissance 5', £58 per sq m, Brintons