

The Complete Carpet Buying Guide

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Introduction

Thank you for ordering The Complete Carpet Buying Guide. It contains all the information you need to make wise and informed carpet choices. I decided to write this guide after seeing all the carpet scams that exist in the marketplace. I don't think it's fair that any consumer should spend their hard-earned money and end up with a poorly made carpet that doesn't last very long.

The main problem consumer's face is trying to get accurate carpet information. It starts with carpet manufacturers who allow retailers to use private labels, remove the carpet specifications, and changing the name of the styles and colors to prevent consumers from comparison shopping.

Carpet manufacturers carefully word their limited warranties in such a way that it is almost impossible to make or prove a valid claim. You must follow their warranty requirements to the letter or the warranty is voided. For example, you must be able to produce all the receipts for the periodically required carpet cleanings, or your warranty claim will not be honored.

Unscrupulous Carpet retailers compound the problem by not telling consumers the truth about carpet characteristics. They will allow you to buy any carpet without making sure it will be a good choice for you. For example, Looped Berber carpets are not a good choice for households with young children or pets because Berber carpets snag so easily and are difficult and expensive to repair. I get tons of emails from unsuspecting homeowners who ended up with ruined carpet because the carpet salesperson allowed them to buy the wrong carpet.

Buying the correct padding is another critical area where you must buy the right pad or you can lose as much as half of your carpet life-span.

Carpet installation is also a critical area you must get done properly if you want your carpet to last. Finding a qualified installer is not easy these days. There are a lot of untrained installers who will end up costing you hundreds in carpet damage and repairs.

The purpose of this book is to:

- Provide you with essential information needed to make wise and informed decisions in selecting carpet and padding.
- Educate you in ways to avoid common carpet scams.
- Help you find qualified professional carpet installation at a fair and competitive price.
- Show you how to care for your carpet, and how to keep your carpet warranty in force.
- Advise you what to do if you have a carpet problem or concern.
- Make shopping for carpet a fun and enjoyable experience.

To help you to save money on your next and subsequent carpet purchases, you will need to understand some important things about the carpet industry and all about carpet. For instance, you need a basic understanding about how carpet is made and learn what fibers are used to make them. It is also imperative that you use the correct type of padding and know how much it should cost. Most importantly you must be able to select the type of carpet is best for your specific situation and understand why.

Many other important facts that you need to know are detailed in this book. You may need to make phone calls, view carpet at several carpet stores to shop for the carpet quality, style and color that you want, and search for the best and most reasonable carpet installation services.

After reading this book, you should be able to determine what type of carpet and pad will meet your needs and lifestyle. You also should understand how to buy carpet and pad at a reasonable price, and how to find a reputable carpet installer that can install your carpet reasonably and properly. It just doesn't get any better than that.

I will repeat key issues many times throughout this book for the benefit of those who like to skim through or just read the chapters that interest them. I suggest you read the entire book to take advantage of all my carpet knowledge, experience and insight to save time, money and headaches. Thank you!!!

Alan J. Fletcher – author

The Carpet Industry

Consumers are never allowed to buy carpet directly from a **Carpet Manufacturer** so don't be fooled by banners or advertisements that say "wholesale to the public". The manufacturer will only sell carpet to a retail store that has a showroom open to the public. This is a strict policy that all carpet manufacturers adhere to. If the price sounds too good to be true, then you need to be wary.

Co-ops are large carpet distributors that buy carpet from manufacturers and resell it to retailers. Small retailers can save a lot on shipping costs buying from a distributor rather than the carpet manufacturer. Volume discounts are offered to carpet retailers who order larger quantities of the same brand and style of carpet.

Shipping costs are lower for retailers who are located closer to the carpet distributor. This can translate into lower prices for consumers who have the ability to buy from carpet retailers located closer to Dalton, Georgia.

Carpet Brokers - There are plenty of so-called "wholesale" carpet outlets that advertise in the media and on the internet. These companies often buy closeout, discontinued, defective or second-grade carpets in large quantities from carpet manufacturers. They often re-label the carpet with their own private-label brand name before they sell it to consumers.

Larger wholesale carpet outlets are located in Georgia and have a giant warehouse filled with rolls of carpet and other flooring. Most of their business is done through a toll free number or via the internet. A salesperson will answer all your questions and is always eager to mail you free carpet samples. These carpet brokers claim to offer wholesale prices to the public but consumers need to be very cautious. If you buy carpet from them and you end up with a carpet that is defective or damaged in some way, it might be very difficult for you to submit a claim and get a quick remedy.

It is for these reasons and many more that I strongly recommend you buy carpet from a local, family-owned carpet dealer near you. They will go the extra mile to earn your business and have a vested interest in your community. They survive and thrive by providing good service and having satisfied customers.

Buying Carpet "Seconds"

If you walk into a retail carpet store and see dozens of rolls of carpet for sale, some or all of those rolls of carpet might be defective. It is a common practice for carpet retailers to buy second-grade carpet. Carpet manufacturers always have hundreds if not thousands of defective rolls of carpet available for sale at all times. Dealers who buy "seconds" may not tell you what the defect is. They may not know what the defect is.

After the carpet manufacturer makes a roll of carpet it is sent to quality control. There, it is inspected by hand and "walked on" where inspectors walk along the carpet looking for defects or flaws. Once it has met their quality control standards it is then shipped to the retailer. If the carpet does not pass quality control, it is sold as "**seconds**" to carpet retailers who may buy it at a significant discount. If you buy carpet "seconds", it does have a defect of some kind. It also may have more than one type of defect.

Are you buying defective carpet?

Sometimes carpets are considered “**seconds**” because the color does not match the samples that are displayed in the retail stores. Sometimes the carpet has color fading problems from one end of the roll to the other or from side to side. Sometimes the carpet backing is just not made well enough to pass the quality tests. Retailers buy all types of “seconds” and may be selling them to you without telling you that they are seconds.

You can get a good deal buying seconds from a retail dealer if you know exactly why they were determined to be seconds, but beware! First, the retailer may not know exactly what is wrong with the carpet, and even if they do, they may not want to tell you, and second, you might not find out until it's too late. Sometimes only after the carpet is installed will you be able to see the color variances, or perhaps other problems may show up like missing tufts or the carpet backing is delaminating.

The carpet mill doesn't have to tell the retailer what makes a carpet deemed a second and the retailer doesn't have to tell you.

Because carpet is made by machines, and machines sometimes make mistakes, there is always a possibility that any carpet may have defects, but once the carpet mill sells a carpet labeled as “seconds” the mill will not warranty the carpet. For example, if you buy “seconds from a carpet retailer, and you find unacceptable defects in the carpet after it has been installed in your home, your only recourse may only be from the retail carpet store.

If you buy “first-grade” carpet selected and ordered directly from a manufacturer's carpet sample from a carpet dealer, (carpet samples are small “sample” pieces of carpet on display at a retail store for you to choose and order from) then the carpet manufacturer will almost always warranty the carpet against any defects.

My advice here is to be very careful when buying carpet “seconds” off the retail showroom floor. You should have them roll it out for you so you can inspect it. It could be difficult to get any guarantee to cover any undisclosed defects after it has been installed.

Let's say that you search and search and you finally find a roll of “in stock” carpet at a local retailer that you really like, and you buy it and have it installed in your home. Two months later, you discover that the carpet is falling apart or perhaps has some other problem, all due to a manufacturing defect. So what do you do? You might first call the store that sold you the carpet. The retailer, after coming over to look at the defective carpet, might say that they're very sorry but they offer no guarantees. They may tell you that they can only offer an “in-store” credit, and that you are responsible to pay to have the next carpet installed. The retailer may claim that it was the carpet installer's fault for not noticing the defect before he installed the carpet! In this case you may be tempted to call the carpet installer to try to get him to accept responsibility. Good luck with that.

If the retailer is fair and honest, they should offer to replace the carpet and have it again installed for you at no cost to you at all. One thing is certain, you will still have to select a different carpet for your home, you will have to move the furniture all out again, and it will be a real pain for you to go through!

All in all, if you can find a reputable dealer who is willing to stand behind their products, and treat you right before and after the sale, then buying “seconds” can save you a lot of money! Here is one more bit of advice: steer clear of carpet retailers who have stores located in a strip mall, or other high-rent locations. They tend to have much higher overhead and may need to mark up their carpets significantly higher than many other stores.

Even though I have a list of Preferred Carpet Dealers that I recommend you consider, you must decide for yourself which dealer to buy from. Your best bet is to visit several different retailers, and choose the one that you believe will give you the best service, best price, and best guarantee. Shopping for carpet will require that you do your homework!

Retailer Advertising

Because so much profit can be made by selling carpet, it's no wonder that retailers will do just about anything to earn your business. The most powerful weapon they use to lure you in is advertising. You need to know, however, that no matter what the ad in the newspaper says, what the banner on the building reads, or what the sign in the window promises, your best way to get a good deal on carpet comes from knowledge. Knowledge about carpet fibers, knowledge of different styles of carpet, and knowledge about pad and so on.

Don't believe carpet dealers that claim to sell carpet at wholesale prices. While they may sell carpet at a discount, they don't really sell you carpet without making a reasonable profit.

If a carpet retailer orders a roll of carpet from the manufacturer and pays \$10.00 per yard for it, they need to sell the carpet at \$16.99 per yard in order to make a 40% profit margin. This is the standard mark-up in the industry. In this example, selling just 100 yards of carpet would net retailer \$700 profit, not to mention what they stand to make on the pad and labor charges.

It is fair and reasonable for any business make a reasonable profit on the products they sell. My goal is help you choose your carpet wisely and to prevent you from being overcharged.

The Price of Free

The word 'free' is commonly used by carpet retailers to attract new customers. Free pad, free furniture moving, free installation are all common sales gimmicks used by carpet retailers. There is almost always a hidden catch to these offers.

My advice is to steer clear of carpet sellers that advertise in this way. When it's all said and done, you want to get a good price on a good product that will meet your needs and goals and one way or the other, the retailer that claims to offer you something for nothing is not telling you everything. In the end you will pay for the "free" things in the final cost or else the "free" things aren't worth having.

Free pad is not a good deal if they just charge you more for the carpet or installation.

Carpet layers are often asked to deal with difficult or awkward situations when it comes to special promotions or sales gimmicks offered by retailers. For example, the free pad that is offered may be more difficult to work with or the customer expects more than the installer is willing to provide without additional cost. For example: Some folks expect installers to move fragile knick knacks, pool tables and pianos or unbolt heavy metal bunk beds as part of their furniture moving duties. These items are all above and beyond the call of duty and require an extra fee for the service or at the very least a handsome cash bonus at the end of the day.

Carpet layers usually make \$50 to \$100 per hour to install carpet so if they do an extra hour of special services for you that is how much of a tip you should be prepared to offer.

End of the "Free Sample" ebook.

Enjoy the sample?

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