

# How To Take Care of Hand knotted Rugs

You are now the proud owner of a genuine hand woven rug which will give you a great deal of pleasure. If you want to preserve it and enjoy it for many years YOU HAVE TO KEEP IT CLEAN. How frequently you should clean your rug very much depends on how much it is exposed to wear and dirt.

## VACUUM CLEANING

You can vacuum clean your rug once or a few times a week depending on your circumstances. Before you start, CAUTION – DO NOT VACUUM CLEAN THE FRINGES and do not use any revolving brush attachment on a hand knotted rug, it will actually pull the fibres apart and break them. Use the smooth carpet attachment. Lay the rug face up on a flat floor. Vacuum clean it well.

## REGULAR CLEANING

Every 4 or 6 months your rug should be taken out and hung face down on a balcony or any solid ledge. (Never hang rugs on a rope).

Beat the rug with an old-fashioned carpet beater. This will remove any grit, sand or dust that has become lodged in the base of the rug. Never beat rugs violently and never beat an antique or silk rug.

## WIPING RUGS

Take a bucket of COLD water. Pour 1 teaspoon of dishwashing liquid into the bucket of water e.g. Sunlight liquid. Stir to mix. Soak a lint free cotton cloth into this mixture and twist the cloth well to remove most of the liquid until the cloth is only damp. Wipe the face of the rug with this cloth. The first stroke should be against the pile and the last stroke with the pile. Do this several times until you have wiped all of the pile.

Then place the rug flat and face up somewhere in the house so that nobody will walk on it for a few hours until it is completely dry.

If you repeat this cleaning process regularly your valuable rug will be clean and attain a much longer life. It should require less frequent full washing as described below.

## WASHING OF HAND KNOTTED RUGS

A rug that has been cleaned regularly as described above may not need washing for two to ten years depending on where it is located and the use it is subjected to. The cleaning of antique, silk or non-colour fast rugs should not be attempted by you. This is a job for a professional rug cleaner (not commercial carpet cleaners). The Eastern Rug Gallery provides a hand washing service for all rugs. However sometimes colour runs cannot be totally avoided.

This brochure has been prepared to help Eastern Rug Gallery's clients preserve their treasured hand knotted rugs in a practical manner. All information is based the many years of experience of the founders of the business. The Eastern Rug Gallery accept no responsibility for any damage to your rug that may arise from you following these instructions. We recommend that you use our expert rug washing service.

Before you start you must test the colour fastness of the dyes by rubbing a damp white cloth on all different coloured areas one by one. Each time inspect the cloth – if it stays white then you can with some accuracy assume that the dye is fast.

Before washing non-antique, non-silk, colourfast rugs the rug should be beaten and vacuum cleaned as described previously. Place the rug on a flat concrete surface face up. A bar of Sunlight Soap, a clean broom with soft bristles and a cold water hose is all you need.

Wet the rug well with a hose. Rub the bar of soap all over the piled surface to create a good lather. From time to time introduce more water as you rub the soap in. Brush the rug lengthwise with up and down strokes until you have covered all of the surface of the rug. Hose the excess lather away with the pressure of the water.

Using the back of the broom like a squeegee push the excess water away from the face of the rug. Be firm and use a lengthwise movement with the pile NOT AGAINST THE PILE.

Rinse the rug with a lot of water and squeegee the excess out. Repeat this process at least four times. Before the last wash hose the back of the rug and the floor to get rid of any remaining suds. Try to remove as much moisture as possible after the final rinse.

Move the rug carefully with the help of another person lifting it on the other side to a dry flat area in the sun. A wet rug becomes very fragile so handle it carefully. Leave it to dry for two to three hours. Then you should turn the rug face down to dry for the rest of the day. Do not place the rug on a grass lawn or on earth. If you wash your rug in the morning on a warm day and place it to dry in an airy and sunny place it should be about dry before the evening.

## VERY IMPORTANT POINTS IN THE CARE OF RUGS

- 1. All rugs whether chemical or vegetal dyed will eventually fade when exposed to sunlight particularly in New Zealand's high UV southern hemisphere sun. Therefore keep your rugs away from sunlight.**
- 2. Never leave rugs wet for a long period of time. This may rot the foundation of the rug and cause colour runs. If an area in the rug gets wet try to dry both sides with a hair dryer as soon as possible.**
- 3. Do not vacuum clean the fringes – they will fray.**
- 4. Never hang a rug or a kilim on a rope. Always hang it on a balcony railing or similar.**



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