

THE VALUE OF CARPET IS UNBEATABLE!

"Carpeting is one of those intangibles in life," says Winnipeg-based architect and interior designer Ed Calnitsky. "How do you put a price on comfort and warmth?" he asks. On the other hand, he points out that carpeting provides good value for your floor covering dollar, in a number of other ways as well, including noise absorption. There are a lot of intangibles that go into the value of carpet - it's not just price.

Another value of carpeting these days is indoor air quality. At one time it was thought that hard surfaces were better for indoor air quality than carpet. However, scientific studies have shown that particles that land on hard surfaces get continually stirred up by people and animals walking on the floor, as well as by forced air and radiant heating systems that keep particles moving around.

Scientists have concluded that carpet is beneficial to indoor air quality because it traps and immobilizes potential allergy causing particles, preventing them from re-entering the indoor air system. A recent world wide study conducted by the European Community Respiratory Health Service that questioned 19,218 people in 28 centres in 18 countries showed that people who have carpet in their home, especially in the bedroom, have significantly less incidence of asthma.

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Apart from all the intangible benefits of carpet, there is still nothing in the world that can beat the warm, fuzzy feeling of a carpet underfoot when you first get up in the morning and start walking about, or laying on a carpet reading a book. "We don't live in southern California," says Jim Larson of McMahan Canada, a distributor of all types of flooring. "If you live in southern California, you can put ceramic tile throughout your place. It feels cool underfoot... but on the West Coast of British Columbia, where I live, people don't want a cool flooring underfoot and they unfortunately find that out after they put it in."

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Warmth and comfort are the reasons Steve and Becky Strome give for installing carpeting in the bedrooms and rec-room of their new house on Big Island, south of Picton, Ontario. "We were just more comfortable with carpeting in those rooms," he says. Steve also notes that carpet is a little more affordable than hardwood floors.

Another benefit to be put into the mix is durability and ease of maintenance. As Jean Claude Carisse, Executive Director of the Canadian Carpet Institute, observes: "Carpets are made to last. Buying a carpet for your flooring needs is money well spent. Given the high quality of carpets today, you are getting excellent value for your floor covering dollar."

Craig Best installed carpeting in his Victoria beach cottage bedrooms last spring. "Durability and easy maintenance were concerns," Best says. "At the beach, you want a floor covering that can withstand some punishment. You don't want to have to worry about all the sand that is tracked in."

Adding up all the intangibles: indoor air quality, comfort, design, warmth, sound absorption, durability and of course price - the value of carpet is unbeatable!