

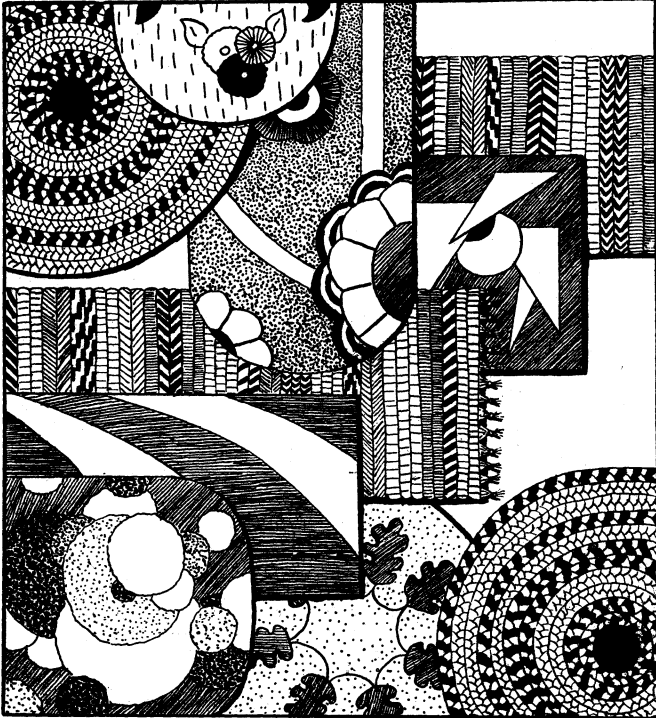
RUG MAKING

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RUG MAKING

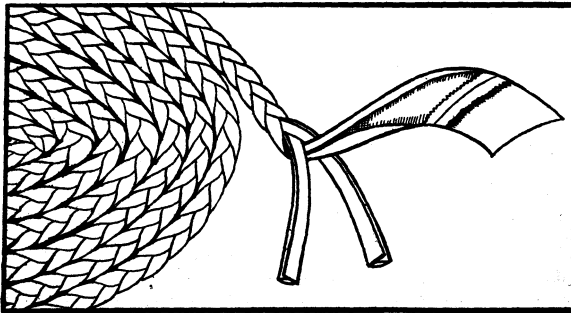
The growing popularity of artistic and well constructed homemade rugs is richly deserved. Their durability, ease of cleaning and beauty recommends them for use in any room of the home.

Homemade rugs possess quaint charm and individuality, and because they may be made in any size, shape or combination of colors, they fit definitely into color schemes and types of rooms. Perhaps no other furnishing in a room has such possibility of lending interest and color. It is not difficult to understand why the art of rug making has been handed down through several generations to the homemakers of today.

BRAIDED RUGS

Choice of Material—Braided rugs are made of new or used materials, cut or torn into strips of varying width. The same kind of material, all cotton, wool or silk should be used throughout the rug, and it should be of the same weight and strength if possible. Soft woolen rags, such as old blankets make excellent rugs. Cotton blankets, outing flannel, burlap and heavy domestic may also be used to good advantage. Old sheets, percale and gingham may be used if the material is firm. Cotton rugs soil more quickly than wool, but they are easily laundered. It is well to use cloth that is soft and pliable, even with the color slightly dulled and softened by use. However, care should be taken to avoid too badly worn materials and those which do not make firm braids. The wearing qualities of such rugs do not justify the work in making. Worn and new materials should not be used in the same rug, for a rug will wear unevenly. Old cretonne and printed linen make attractive rugs when combined with plain colored materials.

One should be sure that there are sufficient rags for the rug before starting work on it. For example, a rug 27"x36" will take from 15 to 18 yards of cotton cloth.



Joining, Turning, Braiding

Preparation of Materials.—The first step in the preparation of rug material is deciding on the colors to be used. Of course the colors chosen for any rug should harmonize with those of the room in which the rug is to be used, so with the aid of a few suitable dyes, just the right colors and tones may be given to the old materials. This process involves little trouble or expense and the result is well worth the effort.

The floor is the foundation of the room and should always have the appearance of stability, for that reason, fairly dark colors will be found most satisfactory for rugs. Aside from the artistic effect obtained, there are other advantages of dark tones in rugs,—they show soil less readily than light colors, and if materials are to be dyed, it is easier to obtain a desirable deep tone.

Rugs should not be dull or uninteresting in color or design, nor so bright in color or striking in design that they do not seem to be part of the background. It is a safe rule to say that at least two-thirds of the rags for a rug should be neutral or rather dark in color. Tans, browns, grays and dull blue ordinarily make the most suitable backgrounds. Additional interest may be secured by using several of the same color—for example, one-fourth of the cloth for the background may be dyed medium brown, one-fourth light tan and one-half a light golden brown.

Contrast and variety are secured by the vivid colors in small amount. Even the intense colors to be used in small areas should be sufficiently "grayed" in tone to make them blend in well with the background. In a rug of the various tones of brown, touches of orange, crimson or bright green may be used for accent.

The outside border edge of the rug should be of the darker colors. A few colors will combine better than many in a braided rug. Interesting patterns might be worked out in some of the following combinations:

Light gray, black, old rose, lavender	Brown, tan, burnt orange, green
Gray, blue, old rose	Sage green, dull rose, black
Brown, gold, delft blue	Gray, mulberry, dull yellow, black
Dull blue, beige, brown	Henna, gray blue, dark brown
Tan, dull green, black	Dark red, beige, black
Black, dark green, light green, violet	Rose, yellow green, dark green, tan

The design of a braided rug is obtained by stripes, therefore good proportion in spacing stripes and colors is important. First, there should be a center in good proportion with the rest of the rug—it will usually look better if made of an uneven number of braids, such as seven, nine or eleven braids wide. An odd number of rows makes the most interesting pattern. This principle should be adhered to in making the outside border also. Hit and miss rugs are very attractive when they are well made.

After the materials have been selected and the colors obtained, the next step in preparation is cutting or tearing the cloth into even strips which will braid into a strand a little less than an inch in width. It is well to braid a few strips together before deciding on the exact width to cut the strips. Avoid braids which are too small, for they are difficult to sew smoothly and the color effect is not so pleasing. When the braids are too broad, the rug is unattractive and less durable.

After cutting or tearing strips of the proper width, fold the raw edges to the center, then fold again. It is very important that no raw edges or ravelings show. Some material stays creased when pressed into fold, but if the cloth is wiry, the inexperienced rug maker will find it much less tedious to baste or blind stitch the folds together. The prepared strips may be wrapped around pieces of cardboard or piled loosely in a box or basket to keep the colors separate and in order.

Braiding and Sewing.—Three, four or five strand braids are most popular for rugs. Begin braiding with strips of different lengths, so that only one will be joined at one place. Strips about one and a half yards in length do not tangle readily and are best for braiding.

Five strand braids make an artistic combination. This makes a braid about 1½ inches wide. Braiding with more than three strands is only a process of weaving the strands together. Starting with the left-hand strand or No. 1, put over No. 2, under No. 3, over No. 4, and under No. 5. Commencing at the left each time following the above order the braider will soon acquire the ability to braid from both sides. Care should always be taken to keep the braid as even as possible and this is done by folding the outside strand back over to start a new weave instead of pulling it around.

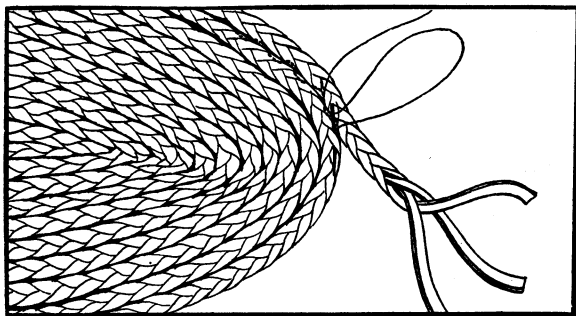
Sew the strips together and fasten firmly, hold the open end down, then braid with a straight, folding motion, turning the strips at about the same

angle each time, so that the edge will be even and easy to sew. Be sure that the braid is tight, firm and smooth. When the end of the strand is reached, open the fold, cut on the true bias where it will be crossed by another strand, and make a smooth, flat seam, lapping the edges about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, being careful that the braid does not buldge. Never have two joinings in the same place.

When several yards have been braided start sewing. Oval rugs, because of their straight lines, play a part in the structural appearance of a room, round rugs have a place especially in a colonial bedroom.

A good rule to follow in starting to sew the braid for the center, is to estimate the size of the finished rug, and have the first braid one-third as long as the rug will be when completed. For instance if the rug is to be 24"x36," the center braid should be 12" long. Another way to estimate the length of the center braid is to make it as long as the difference between the length and width of the finished rug. For example, in a rug 45"x30," the center braid should be 15" long.

A short darning needle and heavy cotton thread No. 8, 10, 20, or 24, or linen carpet thread are the best for sewing the rug. Do not whip the braids together. Use a blind or slip stitch, catching the strips first on one side then on the other. The stitching should be invisible, which makes the rug reversible and also increases the wearing qualities, as there will be no stitches in contact with the floor.



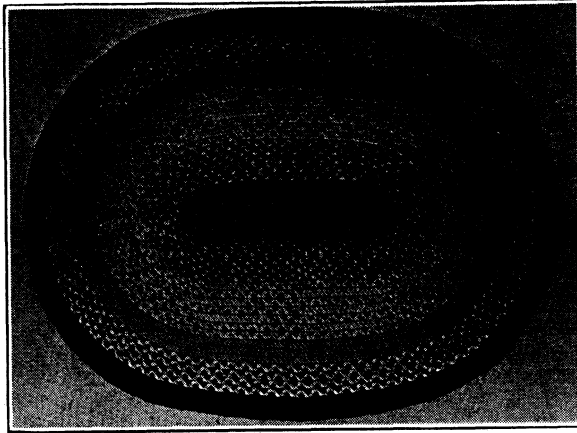
Sewing

By working on a table, the rug may be held flat, so that its weight will not pull it out of shape. Allow enough fullness for smooth curving at the turn of the coil in a round rug or at the end turn in an oval rug. In turning the row at the end of an oval rug, the inner strand of the braid may be pulled a little to avoid cupping.

When another strip is to be joined on, unbraid the ends of both the new and the old strips for a distance of an inch and a half and weave the ends together sewing them securely on the wrong side. If each section is to be finished completely and the new braid sewed on, it is best to finish off the last round by tapering the braid into the rest of the braids, making a smooth inconspicuous joining. If seams are to show, care should be taken to distribute them around the rug so there will be no rough places.

It is very important to sew a rug carefully and firmly, so there will be no open spaces. Braid and sew alternately, this method enables one to work out the desired pattern. When the rug is finished, it should be covered with a damp cloth and pressed into shape. Press from the center out, and allow to dry thoroughly on a flat surface before being placed on the floor for use.

The appearance of the rug is the final test. A good braided rug should have the following qualities: Simplicity, beauty and utility. It should lie flat on the floor, be well constructed and neatly finished.



A Well Made Braided Rug

HOOKED RUGS

Beautiful hooked rugs may be made at home with little expenditure of money. The first thought of the early American homemakers in making a hooked rug, was that of usefulness, to make a practical floor covering. But in time, this handiwork developed into an art, and the rug makers found real joy in converting otherwise useless materials into artistic rugs. Rug making is particularly fascinating since it affords the worker an opportunity in combining colors and creating designs of her own fancy.

There are three types of hooked rugs made in the home, the looped, the clipped and the tufted. The looped rug is most common made. In it the material is pulled through the foundation to make a loop on top the strip of material being held tightly under the foundation material, so the next loop will be the same height and firmly placed. The type of material used, determines the length of the loops. It is well to draw the loops through just far enough to produce a firm, even surface.

It is better to make a clipped rug of wool as it does not fray badly and the pile has more weight. In making a clipped rug, the loops or stitches are drawn through longer than in a looped type and are clipped off with sharp scissors as the work progresses, or the entire surface is clipped when the rug is completed.

A tufted rug has the material used in the design drawn through high enough to permit being clipped at an angle, so it will gradually taper into the background. Tufting is effective for some patterns such as leaves, scrolls and bow-knots, but for a rug which is made for hard service tufting should be used only in combination with loop stitches for the background.

Choice of Materials.—The same materials used in making braided rugs, work to very good advantage in hooked rugs. Each worker must decide for herself whether the rug shall be made of old or new materials.

But regardless of the type of materials, one should be sure that it will wear evenly and make a firm but pliable rug.

The width of the strips used in hooked rugs depends upon the weight of the material. Heavy, firm, material is cut not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in width while light weight materials should be cut wider so they may be folded at least twice to give weight.

Silk hose and underwear should be cut from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch in width and satisfactory results may be obtained by cutting them spirally or lengthwise. It is well for each rug maker to try using strips cut both ways so that she made decide for herself before cutting silk material for a whole rug.

Equipment.—Of equal importance with the materials for making the rug are the frame, burlap or heavy mesh materials for the foundation, and the hook.

There are a number of good commercial frames on the market but a homemade rug frame may be constructed much like a quilting frame. Four pieces of lumber that will not warp should be selected. Wrap the pieces with two inch strips of heavy domestic or other firm material. Make the joinings of the strips flat by sewing the ends securely together. If the corners of the frame are not mortised, it should be held together at the corners with metal clamps, which will hold the foundation very tight for working. This is important in having a well finished rug when completed.

The Design.—One should use burlap or heavy mesh material with sufficient dressing in it to insure easy adjustment in the frame, but pliable enough to give slightly when the stitches are pulled through.

A large variety of commercial stamped patterns may be purchased, but many rug makers prefer to make their own designs. Careful measurements are essential in working out a motif for a rug. The first step is determining the center of the foundation. Folding first the center lengthwise, then cross and mark the fold. The width and shape of border may then be indicated with a soft pencil or crayon. The design, either floral or geometric, should be worked out on paper before being transferred to the burlap. The design should be appropriate, balanced and adapted to the space in which it is to be used.

Hooking the Rug.—Neatness and accuracy are important factors in hooking a rug. Work from right to left and with a plain hook, holding the material between the finger and thumb of left hand beneath the frame and material. Insert the hook with the right hand and catch the strip of material pulling it through in a loop of the desired height. Set each stitch as close to the last one as possible, leaving perhaps one or two strands of burlap between stitches. The ends of each strip should always be pulled through to the top of the rug so they will be inconspicuous.

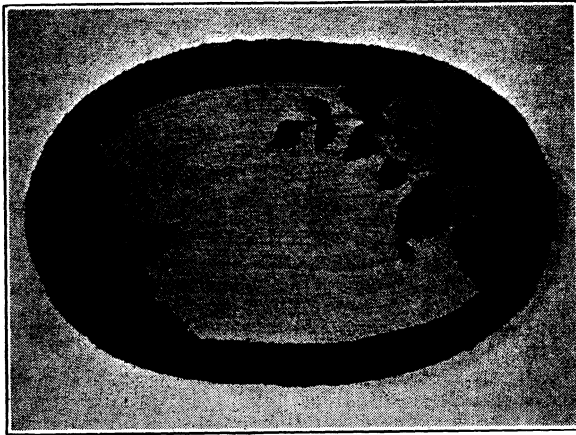
If a needle type of hoop is used, it should be threaded according to the directions and started flat side down from the wrong side of the rug, pushing the needle into the burlap as far as the gauge, then pulling out, thus forming loops on the under side. Lift the needle only to the level of the foundation material. In turning corners, turn while the needle is in the material, keeping the grooved side up.

It is well to start hooking in the center of a design and hook toward the outside. This method prevents cupping and insures a smoother surface.

When the rug is finished, it should be carefully examined and all ends pulled through to the right side so there will be no loose ends or threads of the material on the wrong side of the rug. If the loops are to be clipped, the rug should be held firmly while the clipping is being done with even strokes with sharp scissors.

Finish the rug by turning back the margin of the burlap (about two inches should be allowed) and shaping it to the border of the rug. All joinings and corners should be mitered to prevent a knotted appearance. Baste the margin or facing to the back of the rug and hem it down with a catch stitch or hemming stitch.

The back of the rug should then be dampened and pressed before being placed down on clean papers on the floor. If it is walked on this way first, the stitches flatten and remain in place nicely.



A Well Made Hooked Rug

CROCHETED RUGS

Cotton, silk, or linen materials are most suitable for making chocheted rugs. Hose and underwear may be used very satisfactorily. Strips should be torn in uniform width from one-half to one inch. They should be folded and pressed so the raw edges will be concealed. Sew them end to end and roll into balls.

A bone or wooden crochet hook is usually used, the size depending upon the materials for the rug. Firm, close stitches should be made. Crocheted rugs can be made more durable if the material is crocheted over strong twine.

A round rug is started by making a chain to be joined in a small central coil, around which the rows are made, widening by adding extra stitches on the circle to keep the rug flat.

An oval is started by making a chain one-third the length of the finished rug before turning into an oval. Continue crocheting around the center oval, winding as necessary.

When finished a crocheted rug should be covered with a damp cloth and pressed into shape from the center out.

WOVEN RUGS

The equipment necessary for making woven rugs without a loom consists of a frame made from a broom handle or other strong piece of board from one to two inches in diameter, or an oblong frame made from four boards, medium sized cord or strips of strong material for warp, and rags torn one and one-half inches wide.

The best results will be obtained in weaving if the frame is suspended from a strong hook or nail because it is necessary to pull on the warp cords while working.

If a frame is to be used, it should be "warped" in the following manner—drive shingle nails one-half inch apart at each end of the frame and one-half inch apart in a perfectly straight line along both sides.

Then tie the warp material (strong strips of muslin or cable cord) around the first nail on one end of the frame, carry the warp down the length of the frame and around the first nail at the opposite end, bring

the warp back to the first end and around the next nail. Continue this until all the nails at both ends of the frame have been covered, fastening the cord to the last nail on the same end on which the warp was started.

After the material is cut the desired width, it should be folded and pressed so that no raw edges will be seen on the surface of the rug. All joinings should be sewed on the bias and folded in to insure a good appearance in the finished rug.

Weaving is started by first making a selvage of plain, strong material or cable cord at one end. Allow a length of material about four and a half times the width of the rug for the selvage. Hold four or five inches of the end in the left hand and with the right hand weave the material over two and under two warp cords from left to right. When the right hand margin is reached, stop and weave the four-inch end in and out between the first row of weaving and the frame. Then push the woven strand up to the frame or stick and draw the warp cords tightly to insure an even, firm weave. The turn on each row should be caught around a nail. This keeps the margin straight and helps to shape the rug.

Start weaving the materials by passing the long strip of material around the first warp cord at the left, thus dividing the strip in two weavers. In weaving, one weaver is passed behind the warp and one in front, then they cross and are reversed in the next stitch. Continue until the rug is the desired length. When it is necessary to add another strip, it should be lapped and sewed as for a braided rug. Finish with a selvage like the one with which the rug was started. The rug may be taken off the frame and left plain or finished with the fringe of material or heavy cord.

CARE OF HOMEMADE RUGS

If not too heavy or large, rugs made of cotton fabrics may be laundered successfully at home. Rugs made of materials which have been repeatedly washed will not require special treatment to prevent fading but those made of new or re-dyed materials should be soaked in a solution to "set" the colors before laundering by the ordinary method. Soiled spots may be scrubbed lightly with a soaked brush. Rinse as many times as necessary, squeeze as dry as possible and hang straight on a line or dry on a clean flat surface. Press on the wrong side with a hot iron before the rug is entirely dry.

SCORE CARD FOR RUGS

1. Workmanship	50%
1. Type of materials combined	
2. Smoothness of surface	
3. Detail work of design and background	
4. Neatness of finish, joinings and seams	
2. Combination and spacing of colors	30%
Balance of design	
Utility	
3. General Appearance of Rug	20%
Size, weight, shape and proportion of rug	
Total - - - - -	100%