Oriental, Handmade and Area Rug Terms

**Accent rug**
A small rug used in areas where no furniture grouping is anchored around it. Sometimes called a throw rug, examples of accent rugs include in front of sinks or bathtubs, by doors, or next to a bed.

**All-over**
A rug pattern in which the field has no central medallion.

**Arabesque**
A rug with an ornate linear design of intertwined floral and geometrical figures.

**Area rug**
A rug used to define a specific area, such as an area for conversation. An area rug may fill one of three categories: *Room sized rugs* come within a few inches of the wall, exposing a strip of hard flooring or carpeting. *Area rugs* anchor a seating, conversation, dining or other area where furniture needs to be connected visually, or where a large area of floor needs softening. *Accent rugs* used in small areas such as near plumbing fixtures or doors.

**Accent**
A room’s color palette and/or set the tone or mood for an entire room.

**Berber**
A rug that is woven or tufted wool and is left in its natural color (white, beige, brown, or charcoal).

**Binding**
An edge-finishing treatment, non-woven binding is sewn along the edge of a rug to protect it from unraveling.

**Border**
The frame for the field of a rug. Generally, it is the widest of the framing elements and is located next to the guard bands or stripes.

**Braided rug**
A type of rug constructed by braiding yarns in a continuous tube around a soft fiber core. Braided rugs are usually shaped in ovals or circles.

**Density**
Referring to the closeness of the tufts or knots, the denser the pile, the better your rug will wear.
**Dhurrie rug**
A rug that is usually wool or cotton, has a flat weave, and is reversible. Most are imported from India.

**Domestic or Machine-made Oriental**
Rug constructed by a machine that is typically controlled by a computer.

**Embroidery**
Ornamental design sewn into fabric with a needle and thread.

**Field**
in rugs, the area in the center surrounded by a border, which may contain a central medallion or motif.

**Flat weave**
No knots are used in this rug making process. Weft strands are passed through warp strands.

**Flokati**
A rug that is woven or knitted with tufts of sheared goat’s hair is usually left in its natural color (cream or brown).

**Fringe**
The excess warp threads extending from the end of the rug, which add a decorative trim. In machine-made rugs, fringe is attached and is not part of the rug’s construction.

**Guard**
Decorated bands, which surround and enhance the main border of a rug.

**Guard stripe**
A thin stripe used to highlight guards and to separate them from the beginning of the field.

**Handmade**
Constructed by hand, rather than machine made. Rugs that are hand-knotted, hand-tufted, hand-hooked, hand-loomed, etc.

**Hand-hooked**
Rug making process by which the pattern is stenciled onto backing material. Then, yarn (typically wool) is pulled from the back of the rug toward the front to form a pile of loops using a hand-held hook. When the hooking is complete, backing is attached to anchor the stitches.

**Hand-knotted or hand-tied**
Rug making process by which weavers knot pile yarns around warp fibers. More valuable rugs tend to have a higher number of knots per square inch.
**Hand-loomed**  
Rug making process by which a person, rather than a machine, operates the loom.

**Hand-tufted**  
Rug making process by which the pattern is stenciled onto backing material. Then, yarn is inserted into the backing using a hand-held tufting tool. When the tufting is finished, a backing is attached to anchor the stitches. The pile of a hand-tufted rug has a cut pile surface.

**Hooked rug**  
See hand-hooked.

**Jute**  
Coarse, rope like natural fiber occasionally used in rugs and carpet backings.

**Kilim**  
A tapestry-like flat weave rug that originated in Romania and now produced through many parts of the Orient.

**Knot density**  
The number of knots per square inch. The higher the number, the stronger and more durable the rug.

**Loom**  
Frame or machine used for interlacing two or more sets of threads/yarns to create a rug.

**Loop construction**  
A rug that is formed with uncut loops of yarn.

**Medallion**  
A large design found in the center in some rugs.

**Motif**  
A theme in a single or repeated design or color that can be found throughout the rug.

**Oriental rug**  
Hand-knotted and hand-woven pile rug woven in complex floral or geometric pattern. Types include Persian, Turkish, Tibetan, Chinese, for example.

**Pattern**  
An element of design. The arrangement of shapes, lightness/darkness, or relief that make a design.
**Pile**
Cut or looped yarns that form the top surface of a rug. Rounded loops are called uncut pile. Cut loops are called cut pile.

**Pile density**
The closeness of the weave or tufts of a rug. The greater the density, the more durable the rug.

**Pile weave**
Refers to the structure of knotted carpets and rugs. Usually, wool, silk, or cotton is knotted around the warp.

**Rag rug**
Plain weave rug that is woven with wide strips of fabric.

**Ramie**
Natural fiber characterized by its strength and dyeability. Also known as grass cloth.

**Rosette**
A motif resembling an open rose.

**Rug**
A floor covering that varies in size, shape, and construction. Rugs are used for various purposes and may be used purely for decoration.

**Rug pad**
Padding placed under a rug to reduce wear, tear, and slippage.

**Runner**
A long, narrow strip of rug, designed for use in stairways and hallways.

**Selvage**
The edge of a woven rug or carpet, finished with a narrow tape-like weave to prevent unraveling.

**Serging**
An edge-finishing treatment, yarn is sewn along the edge of a rug to protect it from unraveling.

**Sisal**
Natural, coarse, rope-like fiber, used in woven rugs. Produced by the agave plant in Yucatan.
**Sprouting**
Refers to the loose ends that will pull up on a rug, particularly a braided one. They should be cut with sharp scissors rather than pulled.

**Tapestry**
A thick rug, hand or machine woven, often reversible. Made by weaving colored threads on a warp. Usually depicts a picture or design. Examples include dhurrie, kilim, rollikan and Aubusson.

**Tea wash**
Procedure used to give a rug the appearance of age and soften its color.

**Throw rug**
See accent rug.

**Tubular braids/tubular core**
In braided rugs, yarns are woven around a soft inner core for full, cushioned comfort.

**Warp**
Yarns running lengthwise in fabric, parallel to the selvage. The rug weaver ties the knots onto the warp, and after a few rows, the filling, or weft, yarns inserted in a plain weave to hold the rug together.

**Weave**
To construct a fabric or rug by interlacing strips or strands of material. Folk rugs are flat weaves. Oriental rugs are also knotted by tying the yarn around warp yarns, then inserting a weft yarn after two rows of knots. Hence, Oriental rugs are both knotted and woven.

**Weft or filling yarns**
Threads of yarn that run across the width of a rug between the warp threads to hold the knots in place in pile Oriental rugs. In folk rugs, the weft creates the design and is woven in a plain or tapestry weave and variations.