



AIYARA TEXTILE

Specifying Carpet for Hospitality

A short guide for designers, architects
and hotel procurement teams

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Why hospitality is different

A hotel carpet is judged by guests on the first day and by the owner over the next eight to twelve years. It has to look right in the renderings, survive luggage trolleys and spilled drinks, meet fire rules, be cleaned without closing the building, and still match when a damaged section is replaced years later.

This guide sets out the questions we work through with designers and procurement teams on hotel, resort and majlis projects. It is not a substitute for the project specification or local building regulations, but it covers the points that most often cause problems when they are left too late.

The specification in six questions

Question	What it decides	Section
Where is the carpet going, and how busy is it?	Construction, fibre, density	1
What fire and safety rules apply?	Testing, fibre, backing, installation method	2
How will it be cleaned and maintained?	Fibre, colour and pattern	3
What should the pattern and colour do?	Soil hiding, scale, seams	4
How will it be made, delivered and installed?	Lead time, packing, layout plans	5
How will it be kept matching in future?	Attic stock, records	6

When to involve us

As early as concept design. Construction and fibre affect cost by a factor of several times, and lead times for custom carpet are counted in weeks. Bringing the manufacturer in at concept stage means the design that the client approves can actually be made, on budget and on programme.

1. Matching the carpet to the space

Traffic is the starting point. A suite might see a few dozen footsteps a day; a lift lobby on a busy floor sees thousands, many of them pivoting and turning, plus trolleys and luggage wheels.

Area	Traffic	Typical construction	Points to watch
Guest rooms	Light to moderate	Machine-woven or hand-tufted wall-to-wall; hand-tufted rugs on hard floors	Comfort underfoot; easy spot cleaning; pattern that hides luggage marks.
Suites and villas	Light	Hand-tufted or hand-knotted rugs	Design detail and feel matter most. Silk and viscose accents can be used here.
Corridors	Heavy, directional	Machine-woven, glued down	Wear concentrates in the centre line and at doors. Choose dense pile and mid-tone, patterned designs.
Lift lobbies	Very heavy, pivoting	Machine-woven, glued down	Turning traffic crushes pile fastest. Consider inset hard flooring at the lift doors.
Ballrooms and function rooms	Heavy, with furniture moves	Machine-woven, glued down	Large-scale patterns; carpet must take stacked chair trolleys and staging.
Lobbies and lounges	Heavy around routes; light in seating	Hand-tufted or hand-knotted rugs on stone	Rugs define seating areas; keep main walking routes on hard floor.
Restaurants and bars	Heavy, spills	Machine-woven; rugs only in seating zones	Spills and food soil. Dark, busy patterns; check chair glides.
Majlis	Moderate, people seated on the floor	Hand-knotted, hand-tufted or machine-woven	Softness and appearance at close range; often wall-to-wall with a border.

Use classes

In Europe and many export markets, carpet wear performance is described with the use classes of EN 1307. Ask for the class to be confirmed by test for the exact construction you specify.

Class	Meaning	Typical hotel areas
21, 22, 23	Domestic: moderate, general, heavy	Suites, rugs in rooms (23 preferred)
31	Commercial, moderate	Guest rooms
32	Commercial, general	Meeting rooms, guest corridors with low occupancy
33	Commercial, heavy	Main corridors, lift lobbies, ballrooms, restaurants

Fibre choice

Wool and wool-rich blends (for example 80% wool, 20% nylon) are the traditional hotel choice: they resist soil, recover from crushing, are naturally slow to ignite and age well. Solution-dyed nylon and polyester cost less and are easier to clean with aggressive products, but flatten sooner and do not age as gracefully. Silk and viscose are for low-traffic, high-impact areas only.

2. Fire and safety

Fire requirements are set by the country and the building authority, and often by the hotel operator's brand standards too. They must be known before production, because testing takes time and some requirements affect the fibre, backing and installation method.

Market	Common standard	What it measures
Europe and many export markets	EN 13501-1, using EN ISO 9239-1 and EN ISO 11925-2	Reaction to fire, classed A1fl to Ffl, with a smoke rating s1 or s2. Escape routes typically need Cfl-s1 or better.
United States	ASTM E648 / NFPA 253 (radiant panel); 16 CFR 1630 (pill test)	Critical radiant flux: Class I at 0.45 W/cm ² or more, Class II at 0.22 W/cm ² or more. All carpet sold must pass the pill test.
United Kingdom	BS EN 13501-1; BS 4790 for some uses	As Europe.
Gulf states	Local civil defence requirements, often referencing EN or ASTM/NFPA tests	Check with the project fire consultant and local authority.

- Fire class depends on the whole system: carpet, underlay, adhesive and subfloor. A carpet tested glued to a fibre-cement board may not hold the same class when stretched over a foam underlay.
- Ask for test reports to be issued for the exact construction you are buying, not a similar one.
- Allow time in the programme for testing if a new report is needed.

Slips, trips and accessibility

- Rugs on hard floors need a non-slip underlay, and edges in walkways should be bound flat.
- Changes between carpet and hard flooring need a suitable transition strip so that there is no trip edge.
- For wheelchair routes, low, dense pile glued down is easiest to move across. Avoid thick underlay on accessible routes.
- Strong contrast patterns at the top of stairs can confuse people with poor eyesight. Mark stair nosings clearly.

Acoustics

Carpet with underlay is one of the most effective ways to reduce footfall noise between floors and along corridors. If the project has acoustic targets for impact sound, ask for the impact sound reduction (L_w , ISO 10140 and ISO 717-2) of the carpet and underlay together.

3. Cleaning and maintenance

The housekeeping team will live with the carpet much longer than the design team. Ask early how the hotel cleans, and specify a carpet that suits it.

- **Daily:** vacuum all public areas; vacuum guest rooms on each service. Commercial uprights with brush roll for woven carpet; suction only for silk and viscose rugs.
- **Spot cleaning:** every floor station should have a kit with white cloths, a pH-neutral spotter, a solvent spotter and clear instructions. Most permanent stains start as spills that were rubbed.
- **Interim cleaning:** low-moisture encapsulation every one to three months in corridors and lobbies keeps appearance up without closing areas for long.
- **Deep cleaning:** hot water extraction by a trained contractor, typically every six to twelve months in heavy areas.

Ask the operator

Question	Why it matters
Which cleaning chemicals do you use?	High-pH and bleach-based cleaners damage wool and fade some dyes.
Do you clean in-house or with a contractor?	Decides how much training and documentation to provide.
How long can areas be closed for cleaning?	Affects whether wet extraction is practical.
Are there brand standards for carpet?	Many groups set minimum construction, fire and colourfastness requirements.

Colourfastness

Hotel carpet is cleaned often and sits near large windows. Ask for colourfastness to light (ISO 105-B02) and to rubbing (ISO 105-X12) for the dyed yarns. Higher blue wool ratings mean less fading in sunlit areas.

4. Pattern and colour

Good hospitality design uses pattern and colour to work for the building as well as to look good.

Hiding soil and wear

- Mid-tones hide soil best. Very pale carpet shows dirt; very dark carpet shows lint, dust and light-coloured spills.
- Multi-coloured, small and medium-scale patterns hide stains, wear paths and repairs far better than plain colours.
- Avoid large areas of a single strong colour in corridors. Wear lanes show clearly in plain grounds.

Scale and direction

- Match pattern scale to the room. Large ballroom patterns look busy in a small room; small repeats look like texture in a big space.
- In corridors, patterns that run lengthways lead guests along; borders can mark door positions.
- Directional designs must be planned for every room shape and door position. Ask for a layout plan before production.
- Allow for pattern loss at seams. Woven patterned carpet can bow or skew slightly across its width, and installers need room to correct it.

Developing colour

For our carpets, yarn colours are specified with the ARS 1400 Wool colour system, which gives every shade a code such as 2C14. Approving colours by ARS code and physical yarn submissions, rather than from screens or prints, avoids the most common colour disputes. See our Colour Reference Chart for the process.

Strike-offs and mock-ups

For any custom design, approve a strike-off sample before production. On larger projects, a mock-up room with the real carpet, lighting and furniture is the best way to judge colour and scale together.

5. Production, delivery and installation

Stage	What happens	Typical inputs from the project team
Design development	Artwork prepared or adapted; construction and fibre confirmed	Design intent, area schedule, budget
Colour approval	Yarn colours dyed and submitted	ARS codes or physical references; approval in writing
Strike-off	Sample section produced	Approval of colour, texture and construction
Layout plans	Room-by-room plans showing pattern, seams and pile direction	Final measured drawings from site
Production	Carpet made from approved standards	Inspection visit if required
Packing and shipping	Rolls labelled by room or area; packing lists	Delivery address, site access, phasing
Installation	By the appointed installer, to the layout plans	Prepared, dry subfloors; secure storage on site

Programme tips

- Measure on site for production. Drawings are not accurate enough for wall-to-wall patterned carpet.
- Phase deliveries to match the fit-out sequence floor by floor. Carpet delivered too early is often damaged by other trades.
- Label every roll and rug with the room or area number shown on the layout plan.
- Install carpet last, after painting and joinery, and protect it with breathable covers until handover.

6. Planning for the future

- **Attic stock.** Order 2 to 5% extra carpet from the same dye lot and store it on site, rolled, for future repairs. A replacement piece from a later lot will almost never match exactly.
- **Records.** Keep the layout plans, ARS colour codes, design references and roll labels. They allow us to remake a matching carpet years later.
- **Refurbishment cycle.** Corridors and public areas are typically refurbished after 5 to 8 years, guest rooms after 7 to 10 years, and good hand-knotted rugs can far outlast both.

Contact

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