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THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1996

D16

Carpet may be decor's centerpiece

(AP) - Because it provides a unifying focus that ties together walls, window treatments and furnishings, carpet may be the single most important element used in interior decoration.

The most common carpet construction is called tufting. The tufting machine pierces the carpet backing material with loops of yarn which form the carpet pile. If the loops of yarn are uniform in size and height, the carpet is a level-loop pile. Berber styles are level-loop carpets that have tight loops and maximum fiber density. Carpet with loops of uneven height is called multilevel loop. If some of the loops are cut and the carpet height is even, it's called cut loop. If some of the loops are intact and some are cut, but the pile height is uneven, the pile is called random shear.

If all carpet pile loops are cut and form a uniform one-half-inch high pile, the carpet is called Saxony. A Saxony pile that's more than one-half-inch high and less dense may be called velvet, plush or textured plush. A carpet that has a mixture of straight tufts with twisted or curled tufts is called random frieze. Friezes or twists, with their curled tufts, form a resilient textured pile that resists matting, doesn't show footprints and is sometimes referred to as trackless. The most durable carpets are the loop-pile styles — a good choice for high traffic areas.

Density and weight also help determine carpet durability. Density refers to the number of fibers found in 1 square inch of carpet, and is referred to as either stitches per inch (spi) or

stitches per 3 inches. The minimum spi for residential carpeting should be 9 to 10. Berbers should have a minimum of 5 to 6 spi and level-loop or commercial carpets should have 10-12 spi.

When selecting carpet, check for tightness of fibers. Bend the carpet sample so it forms a 90 angle and check how much backing material you can see. The less visible the backing, the tighter the fibers and the more durable the carpet.

Also check the carpet's pile yarn weight. Select a carpet that has no less than a 40-ounce pile weight (higher pile weight is better) for Saxonys, plushes or berbers. Note that pile weight refers to the weight of the carpet pile only. The total weight of the carpet, which includes the pile plus the backing, will also be listed.

The carpet specifications will also list the type of fiber used in the carpet construction. This may be shown as pile content, pile yarn or simply as pile. The pile content is also an important guide to carpet durability and maintenance.

Carpet yarn may be nylon, olefin, polyester, polypropylene or natural fibers such as wool or cotton. The most durable carpets are made with olefin fibers. Carpets made with pure olefin may feel rough to the touch, however. Berber carpets are also available in olefin/nylon blends or in 100 percent nylon construction. The olefin blends or pure nylon fibers feel softer than pure olefin. Nylon fibers are also durable, easy to clean and they resist matting.

By Popular Mechanics for AP Special Features

Visit historic area

The 1996 Historic Indian Village Home and Garden Tour will take place 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, June 1, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, June 2.

Historic Indian Village entered the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and is also a Detroit and Michigan historic district. It represents an unusual combination of Detroit's social and architectural history.

Tickets per person are \$12 on tour day, \$10 in advance (before May 25) and an additional \$3 for guided tour (available for purchase on tour day). Advance tickets will be mailed to those sending a check or money order payable to Historic Indian Village Home and Garden Tour, 1466 Seminole, Detroit 48214 by no later than May 25. Call the tour hotline at (313) 922-0911 for information.

On tour day, tickets and refreshments can be bought at Iroquois Avenue Christ Lutheran Church, Iroquois at Vernor; Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, East Jefferson at Burns; and Detroit's Waldorf School, Burns at Charlevoix.

the automobile's centennial. It includes a tour of more than a dozen elegant, historic homes and picturesque gardens, each with a colorful automotive past, in the urban residential neighborhood of about 350 fine homes. Period entertainment, collector car displays, an Art Lot of art works appropriate to the era, concerts, costume displays and the neighborhood's Victorian Centennial Garden will also be featured.

Historic Indian Village is three miles east of downtown Detroit and is bounded by East Jefferson Avenue on the south and Mack Avenue a mile to the north. It consists of Seminole Avenue on the west, Iroquois Avenue in the middle and Burns on the east.

Indian Village's homes, built mostly between 1895 and 1928, were designed by the period's outstanding architects, including Albert Kahn, C. Howard Crane and Louis Kamper, for Detroit's then most prominent automotive citizens, among them Edsel Ford, Alvan Macaulay, Ernest Kanzler, Warren Booth, Winifred Dodge Seyburn and Frances Dodge Van Lennep.

The event is a special celebration of