



The Natural Carpet Company

NATURAL FIBERS ABACA & RAFFIA AREA RUGS

FIBER CHARACTERISTICS, MAINTENANCE & CLEANING

Abaca: A Philippine tree related to the banana. Abaca's golden brown and white hemp-like fiber is nature's strongest fiber, and used in making currency paper, bible paper, tea bags, industrial & marine rope, handmade paper, wall coverings, floor coverings and a variety of handicrafts. Abaca hemp is very soft to the touch yet strong enough to hold ocean liners to docks. Abaca is friendly to salt water as it does not easily deteriorate. As a floorcovering, abaca fiber is ideal because it gets softer and softer the more it is walked on.

Raffia: An African tree related to the palm. Raffia's pale colored leaf fibers are supple and smooth yet very durable. Exquisite international designs of raffia hats, bags, shades, mats and accessories are traditional uses for raffia.

WEARABILITY

Our weaves will wear very well in most residential and many commercial applications. However, The Natural Carpet Co. does not offer any performance guarantees on our natural fiber hand woven abaca & raffia area rugs. Unless limited life is acceptable, our rugs are not recommended for use in any location where heavy commercial traffic is anticipated (i.e.: busy retail shops - particularly around cash registers, entries, stairs, elevators etc..). We strongly recommend against rolling of chairs or carts over our rugs.

VARIATIONS IN WEAVE, COLOR & SIZE

Our 100% natural abaca & raffia area rugs are 100% hand made. All of the fibers and twines used in weaving are hand spun from natural vegetable fibers harvested throughout various seasons. Variations in fiber size, weave, fiber color, fiber shade and overall rug size are all characteristics of our hand woven abaca & raffia area rugs. Area Rug Sizes May Vary Up To 2% (slight shrinkage can occasionally occur, while expansion rarely occurs).

CUSTOM SIZES

All of our abaca & raffia area rugs are custom woven to order. Allow 14-16 weeks for delivery of custom sized rugs (inquire for delivery date per order). All of our loom woven designs can be made in widths up to 20'. Our medieval matting paneled designs can be made up to any width. Length weaving capabilities are indefinite. Our abaca & raffia area rugs are not offered as, or implied to be wall to wall products. No instructions or recommendations are available for cutting or installing our hand woven rugs.

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IRREGULARITIES

Natural fibers, by definition,, may not be entirely regular and small knots or lumps may occasionally occur. Areas where fiber lengths are joined can occasionally fray. These frayed fibers can usually be trimmed with a sharp pair of scissors, but it is critical not to sever a weft or warp yarn as this may harm the overall strength of the weave. Knots are often used to end warps and must not be cut. On many of our designs, warp knots can be tucked away and made near invisible, however, customer must specifically request this at an extra charge and prolonged delivery time.

FADING

Consistent exposure to direct sunlight will naturally and subtly change the shade of the natural abaca & raffia. Many find this a very elegant natural look. Dyed abaca & raffia fibers fade slowly in direct sunlight, and very slowly in non-direct sunlight.

REVERSIBLE

Most of our rugs are used as reversible products. However, it must be noted that the weavers always consider the top to be the best side, making any necessary mends and joints on the underside. Patterns and weaves often vary from top to underside. Preferences in top sides may be requested (i.e.: if the underside pattern is to be woven as the top).

HUMID CLIMATES

Abaca & raffia are tropical fibers and acclimate very well in humid climates. Do not store rugs rolled up in plastic, as mold can form (this can usually be brushed off). Excessive dampness can cause slight expansion of the rug.

ARID CLIMATES

Abaca & raffia contain natural levels of moisture, however, in excessively dry climates or near heating outlets the fibers can tend to become dryer than normal. This can be successfully cured by lightly and evenly spraying a fine mist of water from a plant spray misting bottle on to clean freshly vacuumed rugs. Do Not Saturate The Rugs At All! A fine even mist applied weekly or as needed can work wonders. Extreme dryness can cause slight shrinkage of the rug.

CURLING RUG CORNERS & CURL MARKS

It is not unusual for a new abaca or raffia rug to curl a little in the corners or for our paneled matting weaves to have curl marks upon immediate unwrapping and unrolling. This is usually relaxed within several days of acclimation to the rug's new environment. Books, heavy objects or double-faced tape will hold the corners down while it is relaxing. Or, turn the rug on to the opposite side against the curl, and leave it on that side for a few days or a week.

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MAINTENANCE & CLEANING

Our abaca & raffia hand woven area rugs are quite easy to take care of. Common fine dirt and sand does not build up on our rugs because there is no backing. Fine dirt sifts through the hand weave to the floor. Regular proper vacuuming and immediate attention to spot cleaning are all the maintenance our rugs need (*no warranty is expressed or implied*). Abaca & raffia contain a natural level of moisture far greater than sisal, coir or jute. Abaca & raffia fibers remain naturally shiny and moist indefinitely. **UNLIKE PLAITED MATS MADE OF RUSH FIBERS, WATERING CANS ARE NOT PROVIDED OR RECOMMENDED WITH OUR HAND WOVEN ABACA & RAFFIA AREA RUGS.**

VACUUMING

Your hand woven abaca & raffia area rugs will really appreciate regular, frequent vacuuming. This is the best and easiest way to prolong the life and elegance of our unique, heirloom products. Choosing only the proper vacuum applied with special vacuuming methods are the solutions to successful maintenance. The vacuum should be strong, with heavy suction. Industrial brush rollers or metal rollers (beater bars) should not be used as they can agitate the fibers. If fibers begin to get agitated or fray, immediately stop use of current vacuum and contact your dealer where you purchased the rugs from for guidance in finding the appropriate vacuuming equipment. Vacuum each area several times in all directions. The heavy textures of our unique weaves allow for soil removal from all angles, so please vacuum in all directions (North, South, East West) before completing each vacuuming session. Vacuum frequently even though dirt may not be visible. This will ensure prevention of soil build up. Equally important is that you occasionally also vacuum the underside of the rug and the floor.

SPOT CLEANING

Immediate treatment to stains is the most important thing to remove spots from all floor coverings, including our natural fiber abaca & raffia rugs. The spilled substances should be removed immediately by blotting (not rubbing) up with clean, un-dyed paper towels or cloths, or scraped up with a dull knife or spatula. Area rug should be separated from its underlay padding immediately, and pad should be cleaned separately. Four different methods have been known to be helpful in spot removal:

- Method 1. (For beer, blood, butter, chocolate, coffee, cola, cream, general dirt, eggs, excreta, fruit, greasy food, ice cream, juice, lipstick, liquor, water-based paint, urinate and vomit):
- A) Mop up the spill immediately with an un-dyed paper towel or clean un-dyed cloth.
 - B) Sponge the discolored area with small amounts of lukewarm water mixed with a small amount of liquid detergent or carpet shampoo.

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B) The cleaner should have a neutral pH factor. Do not saturate the rug. Blot up all moisture with un-dyed paper or cloth. Beer & wine stains have been removed with wood alcohol applied with a clean un-dyed absorbent cloth. Repeat, if necessary.

D) Dry the rug quickly, as with a hair dryer, but be sure to hold the dryer at least 6" from the rug.

Method 2. (For asphalt, colored chalk, cosmetics, fresh oil, oil-based paint, shoe polish & soot):

A) Carefully scrape up as much of the stain as possible, using a dull knife or spatula. Soot, ashes or loose dirt should be immediately vacuumed up before attempting to use any towels or cloths.

B) Dampen a clean, un-dyed white cloth with a small amount of dry cleaning fluid. Tetra and petroleum solvents have been known to be used effectively. Blot up the stain. Check to see if solvent is dissolving the foreign substance, being careful that the solvent is not discoloring the fiber (always test a small area before attempting to clean the entire stain). Solvents may take color out of a dyed fiber. Use only small amounts of solvent to avoid spreading the stain. Small amounts of turpentine may be experimented with slowly for oil-based paints. Repeat, if necessary.

C) Dry the rug quickly, as with a hair dryer, but be sure to hold the dryer at least 6" away from the rug to avoid burning or weakening the fibers.

Method 3. (For water & water-based spills):

A) Immediately blot up all water with paper or cloth towels.

B) Dry quickly with hair dryer.

C) Cover stain with a thick layer of potato flour overnight.

D) Vacuum the next day.

Method 4. (Greasy & oily spots)

These types of spots have been successfully removed with aerosol can spot removers such as K2R and Goddards. Follow the directions on the container. These contain both a cleaning solvent and an absorbing powder.

The above recommendations are suggestions only. No warranty is expressed or implied. These suggestions are made strictly for spot cleaning. Responsibility lies with those

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performing the cleaning work. Overall cleaning and after spot removal cleaning should be done by a professional cleaner. Do not saturate the rugs with any kind of liquid!

OVERALL CLEANING

Do not clean our abaca & raffia area rugs with Hot-water extraction, steam-cleaning, wet-shampooing, rotary spin pad cleaning or any other method that involves water saturation of the rugs! A safe, effective cleaning process is the HOST Dry Extraction Carpet Cleaning System. For the name of a local HOST Professional Cleaner, call (800) 558-9439.

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