

Consumer Corner

Smart Shopping, Right Under Your Feet

(NAPSA)—A growing number of people are getting in on the ground floor of a delightful and affordable opportunity—redecorating their homes from the ground up with fashionable floor coverings.

The key for most people is making the most impact in their homes while avoiding costly mistakes. In many cases, they're looking down for a change. To help, the World Floor Covering Association (WFCA) offers a variety of free, money-saving tips, along with general information about decorating from the bottom up. These include:

- Always have flooring installed professionally. No matter how good the flooring you choose, incorrect installation will result in an uneven surface that will wear badly.

- Make sure you look at total costs. For instance, laminate and wood can often go right on top of existing flooring, essentially eliminating prep costs.

- Plush carpet floor coverings consisting of loops and tonal patterns bring softness and comfort to the home when combined with chenille and velvet fabrics. However, carpet may not be practical in all areas of the house.

- Plain-colored flooring shows marks sooner than floors with a patterned surface. Texture and pattern are desirable in carpet because they minimize soil and vacuum marks. Carpet with texture or soft patterns also offers more fashion appeal and distinctive styling.

- Today's berbers have evolved into highly textured and patterned choices. The textures allow for height variation and sculptured effects formerly asso-



Photo courtesy of Masland Carpets and Rugs

This may floor you: Fashionable floor coverings are available to fit just about any budget.

ciated only with plush or velvet carpet.

- Hardwood floors are a natural, non-allergenic product. While all wood floors can be scratched, they are fairly easy to repair and can add real value to a home.

“Our goal...is to educate consumers on the wide variety of fashionable floor coverings available,” says Chris Davis, Chief Executive Officer of WFCA. “Our Web site provides home decorators of all skill levels and budgets with resources to help them select the best flooring options for their home, office or apartment.”

The wide assortment—from carpet to vinyl, from natural fiber to cork—gives homeowners an incredible number of options for matching décor or creating just the right feel for a room. For information on flooring retailers in your area, contact the WFCA by calling 800-624-6880 or visit the Web site at www.wfca.org for additional money-saving tips.

Note to Editors: April is National Floor Covering Month.