

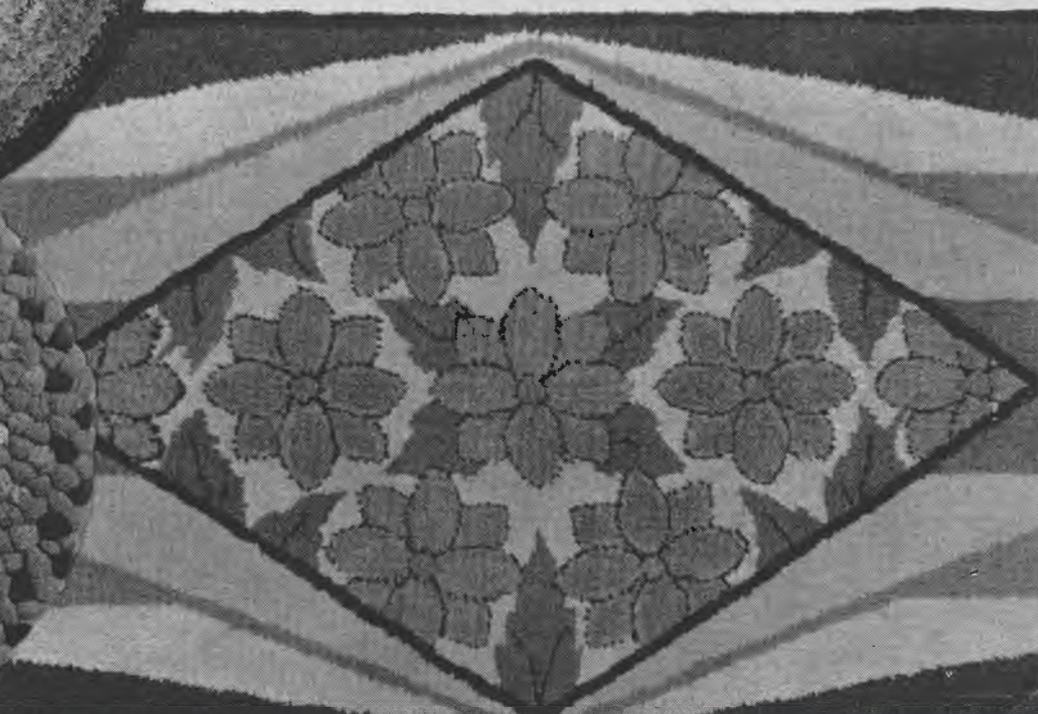
Making

HANDMADE RUGS

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HE-P64



EIGHT KINDS OF RUGS that require only simple equipment to make are described in this leaflet. They include:

Braided rugs	French-knot rugs
Crocheted rugs	Oriental-stitch rugs
Cross-stitched rugs	Tufted (shag) rugs
Hooked rugs	Raffia-stitch rugs

Making rugs is a kind of handwork that many women enjoy and many more would undertake if they knew how to go at it. This leaflet gives detailed directions that a beginner can follow without too much difficulty.

Designing and making rugs is an old art and an interesting hobby. To make a rug that is both useful and beautiful requires three things:

- Artistic combining of colors
- Choice of right shape and good design
- Careful workmanship

If you want to make a rug, the first step is to start collecting appropriate materials. See next page.

The author is indebted to several very skilful rug makers who permitted their rugs to be photographed for use in this leaflet.

DIRECTIONS THAT APPLY TO ALL RUGS

Plan colors with great care

Think how the colors will blend with the room furnishings. Also remember that a rug is more interesting when the colors are repeated. When a color is used only once, the rug is likely to look spotty. This does not mean that the exact tones must be repeated — lighter or darker tones from the same family of colors may be used. You may, for example, use different colors of blue that harmonize.

Be sure to have plenty of material

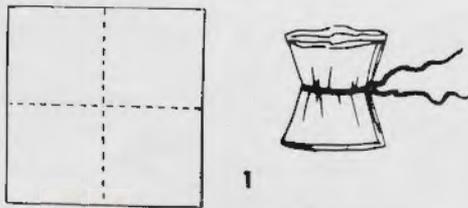
It is hard to estimate the exact amount of material you will need. Collect fabrics that are similar in texture and weight so that they will wear equally well and so that the rug will look flat and lie flat. If you have to buy wool material, you can often get it at low cost from a woolen or carpet mill or at a home sale.

Be sure all materials are clean

Wash and press all old material before cutting it into strips. If you buy wool pieces at a home sale, it is advisable to wash them before bringing them into the house, for they may be infested with moths. To get enough of a certain color you may have to dye some fabrics.

When dyeing a piece of cloth

Follow carefully the directions given by the manufacturer of the dye. Be sure to dye enough material at one time, for it is almost impossible to get the same color from different dye baths. Of course, when you are dyeing cloth for leaves and flowers to be used in a hooked rug, some variation in color does not matter — in fact it is desirable. Fabrics for these rugs may therefore be dyed in small lots.

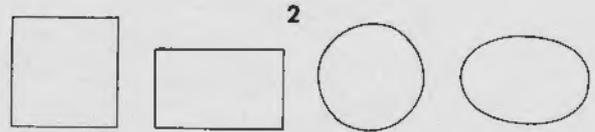


Fabric for hooked rug folded and rolled for dye bath

Before dipping a piece of cloth in the dye bath, fold it into a small square, then roll it and tie with a string (1). Leave ends of string long enough so that you can hold the string comfortably while you dip the cloth into the dye bath.

Choose shape to fit space

A rug may be square, rectangular, round, or oblong (2). If possible, make your rug for a given space so it will look as tho planned for that space.



Rugs may be square, rectangular, round, or oblong

If it is not practicable to plan your rug for a given space, then make it so that it will be 3 measurements long by 2 measurements wide. To explain this a little further: if a rug is to be 36 inches long (3 times 12), it should be 24 inches wide (2 times 12). If you want to start with a certain width (say 24 inches), you divide that width by 2 (getting 12 inches); and then you make the length 3 times the resulting number of inches (3 times 12, or 36 inches).

Work out design before you start

Designs for rugs are chosen according to the type of rug to be made and the materials to be used.

Well-designed borders add interest. Make borders wide enough to give the appearance of weight and strength. If you are using several borders on the rug, make the outside one widest and each successive border narrower.

A paper pattern the size of the rug is helpful. Color the spaces so that you can better visualize the finished rug. Mark the design with crayons or paint; or pin small pieces of colored cloth to the surface.

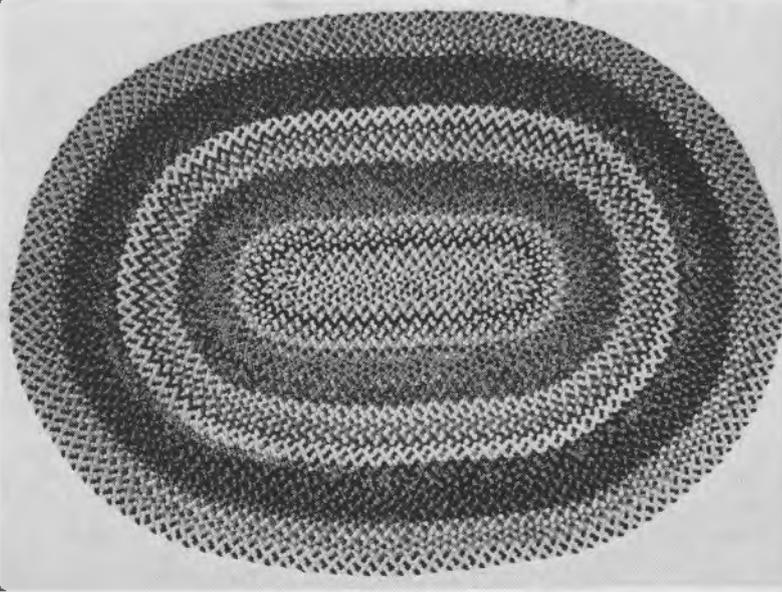
Choose type suited to materials and use

The way a rug is to be used and the kind of materials you have on hand will determine the best type of rug to make.

*Worsted*s or wools are better than cottons since they are more resilient (that is, they have a natural spring), and they soil less easily. You may cut wool strips from yard goods, or you can use wool selvages or wool yarn in the skein.

Cotton materials are a good choice if the rug is to be laundered many times. Cotton strips are made into braided rugs and crocheted rugs. Cotton yarns are used for tufted rugs and may be used for crocheted rugs.

Rayons are better for table and chair mats than for floor rugs.

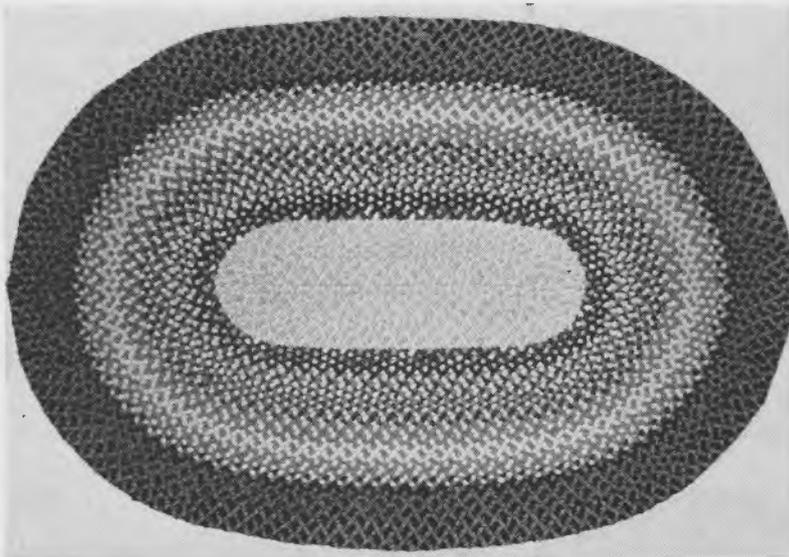
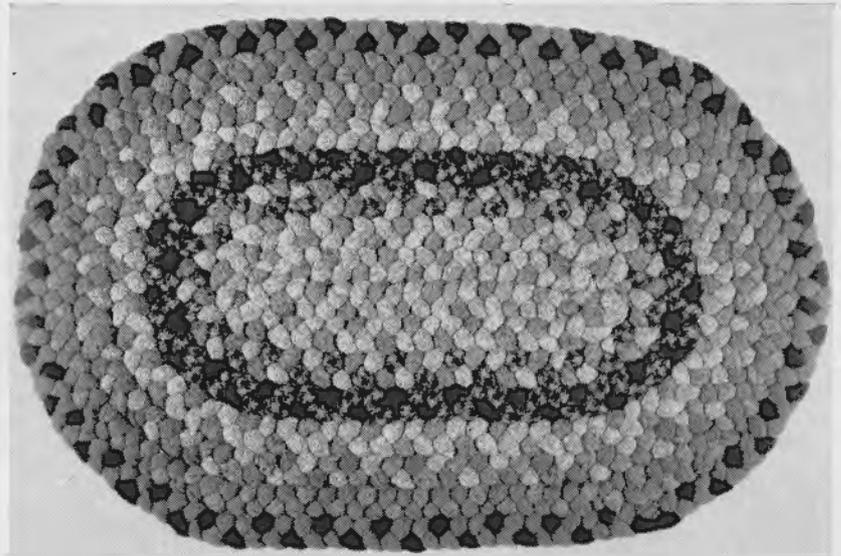


3

Skilful use of light and dark spacings of varying width and the interesting placing of adjoining braids have resulted in this very pleasing design. Rug lies flat because lacing is not too tight.

4

This small mat, made of wool of same weight and texture as the rugs, gives a closer view of the details of good workmanship. It is in three shades of blue with an accent of deep red.



5

Made for a definite spot, this rug measures 52 by 37 inches. Note light center, then blending of dark and light areas outward to the dark border. Another example of excellent workmanship.

BRAIDED RUG

Plan the design

The attractiveness of a braided rug is obtained by a pleasing arrangement of color areas and by good workmanship (3, 4, and 5 show different color gradations). For this type of rug you may work out a definite pattern by using a number of rows of different colored braids. Or you may make the braiding continuous, but such braiding does not develop a definite pattern.

Joinings should show as little as possible, and it is best to distribute them. Having them all in the same general area makes the rug look botchy.

Prepare your materials carefully

Cut your materials into strips the desired width (cottons may be torn). The best width depends on the size of braid desired and the weight and texture of the materials. Most strands range from $\frac{3}{8}$ inch to 1 inch in width after the edges have been turned in.

Cut up and down lengthwise, or round and round, depending on amount of elasticity desired in the rug.

Choose fabrics that do not fray easily: for instance, avoid mohair and serge. If you do use such materials, cut them on the true bias to reduce raveling.

Use materials of equal weight when you can. If you have to use materials of different weight, pad the strands of the lighter material; but remember that it is not advisable to do this if the rug is to be laundered.



Strip folded for braiding

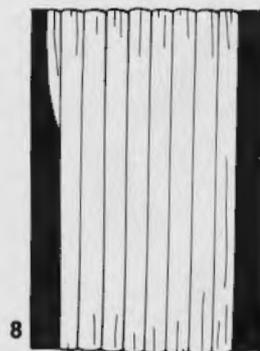
Fold the raw edges to the center; then fold the outside edges together so that no raw edges are visible (6).

If you are using heavy materials, you need not turn edges in.

You may press strands to hold the edges together, but do not flatten them too much, as this makes the braids uninteresting. It is best to use a pressing cloth when pressing woolens. Place the folded strands of like color and weight in a flat roll and pin in place with common pins (7) or wrap them on a piece of cardboard (8). Do not roll braided strands into a ball.

Plan the braids

Braids of the same width and same number of strands make a better looking rug. It is better, for example,



Strips of one color in flat roll (7) and wrapped on card (8)

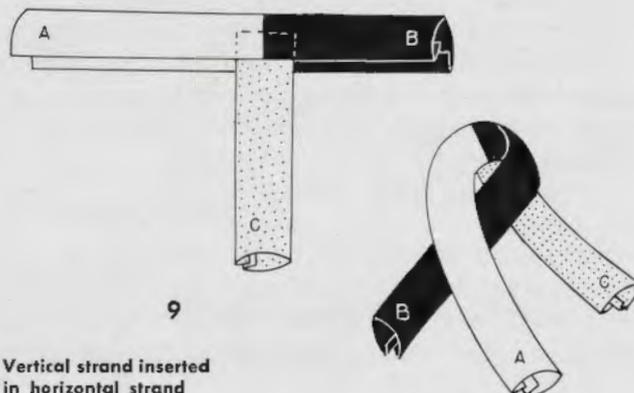
to use braids of 3 strands thruout the rug than to use 3 strands in one part of the rug and five strands in another part.

Make a few sample braids to be sure you will be happy with the width you choose. Cut the strands uneven in length so that the joinings will not all come at the same place. Have longest strand not more than 2 yards long; longer strands are likely to get tangled.

Fasten the strands

Fasten strands before starting to braid. Start with 2 folded strands of different lengths (9), or tack strands to a flat surface, such as a table top (10, 11, 12).

Place the longest strand in a horizontal position with the open edges facing downward. About $\frac{1}{8}$ of the way from the end of this strand, insert the second strand between the open edges at a right angle. Sew firmly. If you want three colors in the braid, make the horizontal strand by sewing together two strips of different colors; then use a different color for the vertical strand. If you want more than a 3-strand braid, attach more vertical strands between the folds of the horizontal strand, placing them close together.



Vertical strand inserted in horizontal strand



Three strands loosely braided to show method

Start braiding (10, 11, 12)

Directions apply for both odd and even numbers of strands. Turn right-hand outside strand to left so that it lies flat over strand next to it. Then take it under the next strand and over the next one, working across to the left side. Continue braiding by taking right-hand strand each time and working it over and under the other strands. When possible, keep folded edge of strand on outside edge of braid.

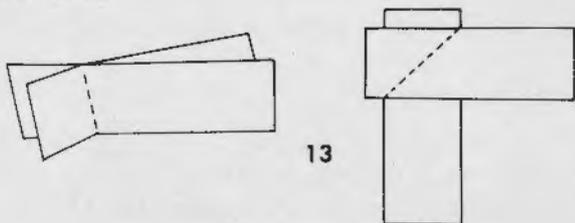
If you prefer, you may start with the left-hand outside strand. Then work from

the left side to the right until the braid is finished.

Be sure the braiding is even and firm. A loosely braided rug is a safety hazard. A tightly braided one is too harsh.



Four and five strands loosely braided to show method



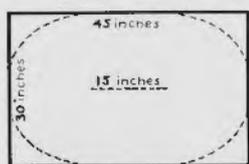
Join new strip with a plain or a bias seam

Whenever you need to add material, sew the new strip to the braiding strand. Use a straight or bias seam, whichever will show the joining the least (13). Press seam open so that the joining is flat.

Connecting the braids

If your rug is to be oblong or rectangular, consider the size you want it to be and decide the length of the center braid by subtracting the width of the rug from the length. For example, if you want your rug to be 45 inches by 30 inches (14), make the center braid 15 inches. You may use two connected braids for the center strip. Be sure to place the same number of strands on each side of the center braid.

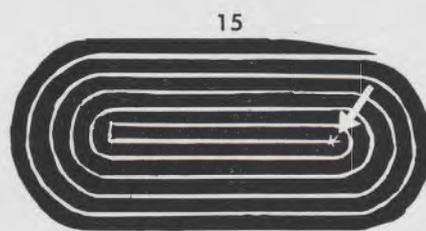
If you are making a rug that does not form a definite pattern, you will probably want to braid awhile and then sew. Start sewing at the turned end and continue connecting to form the shape (15).



14

If the rug is to form a definite pattern, finish the center braid (see page 4) before you start to sew. Then finish the next braid and connect it to the body of the rug before you start the third braid; continue in this way with each subsequent braid. If your rug is to be reversible (that is, either side up), connect the braids so that the stitching or lacing does not show on either side.

To keep the rug from puckering, work on a flat surface, such as a table. Ease the connecting braid in. Do not draw it tight, especially on curves. Sew, lace, or interlace the braids together.



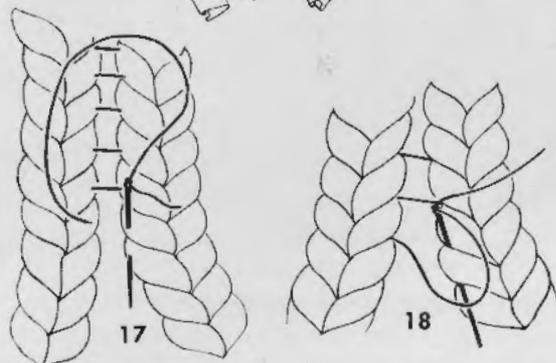
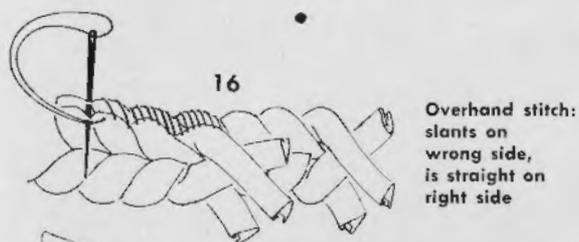
Start connecting the braids at the turned end

Sewing

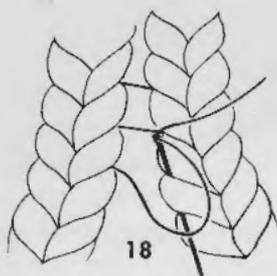
Use a large needle with a long eye, linen thread No. 8, cotton thread No. 20, or saddle thread. It is best to wax cotton thread, as it will then pull thru the material more easily.

You may sew the braids together with either an overhand stitch (16) or a slip stitch (17). The overhand stitch is a slanting stitch on the wrong side and a straight stitch on the right side.

The slip stitch shows less than the overhand stitch. To make a slip stitch, knot the thread, slip the needle and thread thru one edge of the strand of a braid so that the knot does not show, and pull the thread directly across to the opposite strand of another braid. Insert the needle and continue connecting the braids with thread. Make the stitches close.



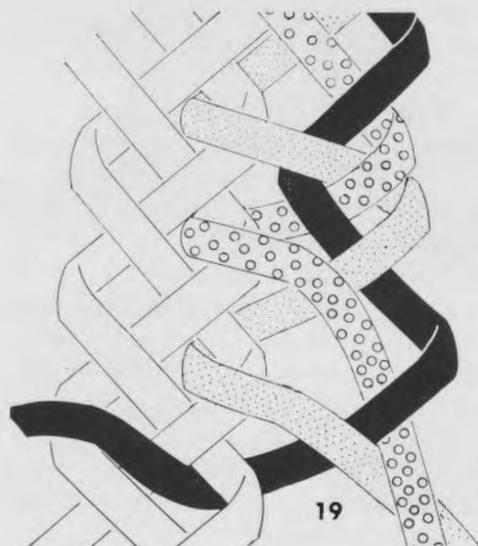
Using a slip stitch



Lacing with heavy cord

Lacing

Lace the braids together by using a bodkin or safety pin and heavy thread or cord (18). Pull the thread toward you thru a strand of one braid and then thru a strand of the opposite braid. Continue weaving in and out until the rug is finished. A second lacing from the opposite direction may be made if desired.



Interlacing the braids

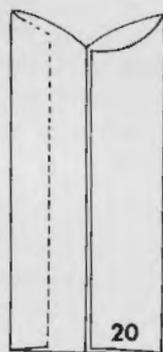
Interlacing

Interlaced strands are held together without any sewing (19). Braid strands as usual to form a center the desired size. Pin a safety pin on the end of each strand. Then as you continue braiding, take the outside strand and pull it thru the outside strand of the braid of the previous row. In order to shape the rug properly and keep it flat, you may need to carry the outside strand thru the same place several times.

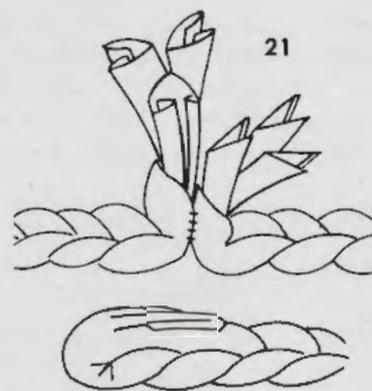
Ending the braid

There are three ways to end the braid.

1. Finish braiding the strands. Then cut each strand to a point on the diagonal (20). Cut away some of the under part of each fold so the end will lie flat; fold the cut ends back under a loop of the braid, and sew firmly.

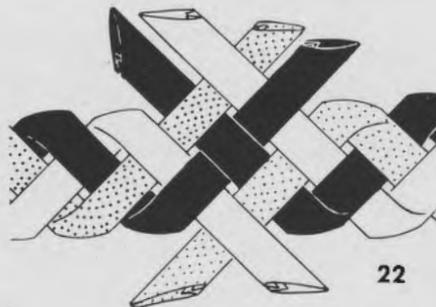


Dots show one fold trimmed; cut right fold in same way



Another way to end braid

2. Turn up vertically several inches of the two braided ends and sew them together firmly at the meeting point (21). Then clip out the under strands, fold top strands over, and sew firmly to the body of the rug.



A woven ending is strong and smooth but is harder to do

3. Unbraid several inches of the ends of both the new and the starting strands. Weave these ends together and sew them securely (22). This is a harder way to end a braid than either of the other ways.

CROCHETED RUG

Plan the design

Beauty and interest in a crocheted rug are obtained mainly thru a pleasing arrangement of color areas (see **23** and **24**).

Choose materials and equipment

You can make your rug of carpet warp or of strips of fabric. You may use each material separately or you may combine the two by crocheting the warp over the fabric.

Cut the strips $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to 1 inch wide. The width will depend on the weight and the elasticity of the material. If the fabric, like hosiery, has considerable stretch in it, you will not need to turn the edges in, for they will turn in as you crochet. If you are using firmer materials, turn the raw edges toward the center as for braided rugs (see **6**, page 5).

Choose a crochet hook which will pick up easily the strips or thread you are using.

Directions for crocheting

Use single crochet for all materials and for all shapes of rugs.

Oblong rug. Crochet a chain one-third as long as you want the finished rug to be. Turn. Single-crochet in each loop around both sides of the chain. Continue

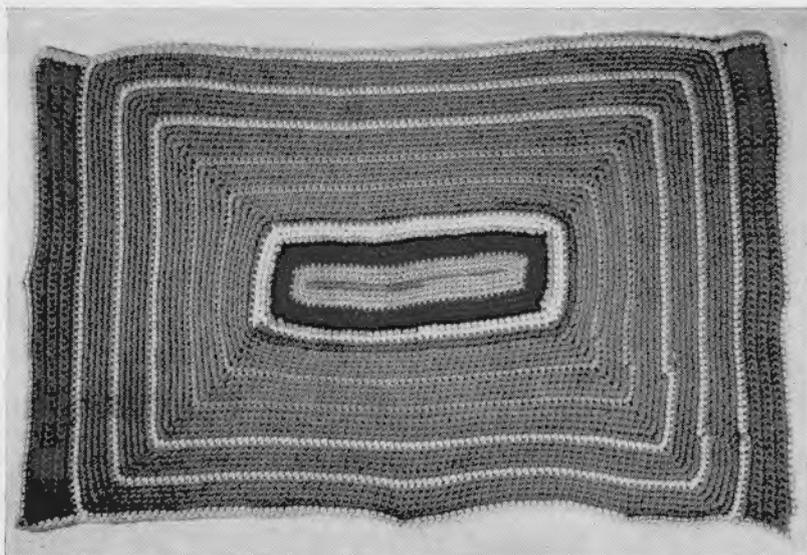


23 This rug was made of firmly crocheted cotton strips

around with single crochet until the rug is finished. Widen the rug as you work, especially at the ends, by doubling the stitches at intervals each time around; that is, by making two single crochets in the same place. Add the new stitches at different places each time, so that the rug will lie flat.

Rectangular rug. Use strips of material about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide. Crochet a chain as long as the desired width of the rug. Turn. Single-crochet in each chain stitch. Chain 1 and turn. Continue to single-crochet back and forth until the rug is the desired length. Chain 1 each time before you turn.

Round rug. Crochet a chain long enough to hold 12 single crochets and join in a ring, or make a loop of the fabric to serve as the center ring. Make 12 single crochets in the ring. Continue around, making single crochets in the single crochets of the previous row until the rug is as large as you want it to be. Double the stitches occasionally to keep the center from cupping. As the rug becomes wider, double the stitches at regular intervals; for example, in every fourth stitch.

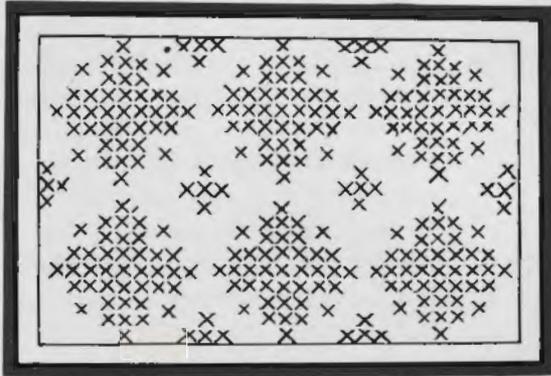


24 Yarn, wool, or cotton may be used for the crocheted rug

CROSS-STITCHED RUG

Choose a design

If you wish to make a cross-stitched rug, you can buy a design stamped on canvas, embroidery scrim, or monk's cloth (25). If you prefer to make your own



25 Design was developed by counting mesh of canvas

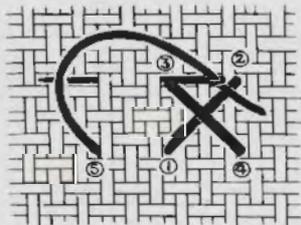
design, get a piece of material to use as a foundation. It should be similar to the material that can be bought already stamped. Draw the design first on wrapping paper, then transfer it to the foundation. Or develop the design by counting squares of the foundation material. Counting squares is somewhat tedious, however, and is not recommended for beginners.

Materials and equipment

You will need heavy skein yarn, preferably wool, and a tapestry needle.

Directions for cross-stitching

There are two ways to cross-stitch (26 and 27). You may work from left to right or from right to left. The second crossing is always on top of the first.

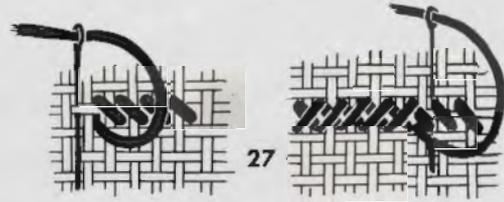


26

Each cross is completed as work progresses. Bring needle up at 1, in at 2, up at 3, in at 4, up at 5

The cross-stitching may be done on the rug-sized material or it may be done on squares and these joined when all are completed (28 shows one completed

square). To join squares, place them face to face and sew them together with an overhand stitch. Be sure to match the crosses as you sew.



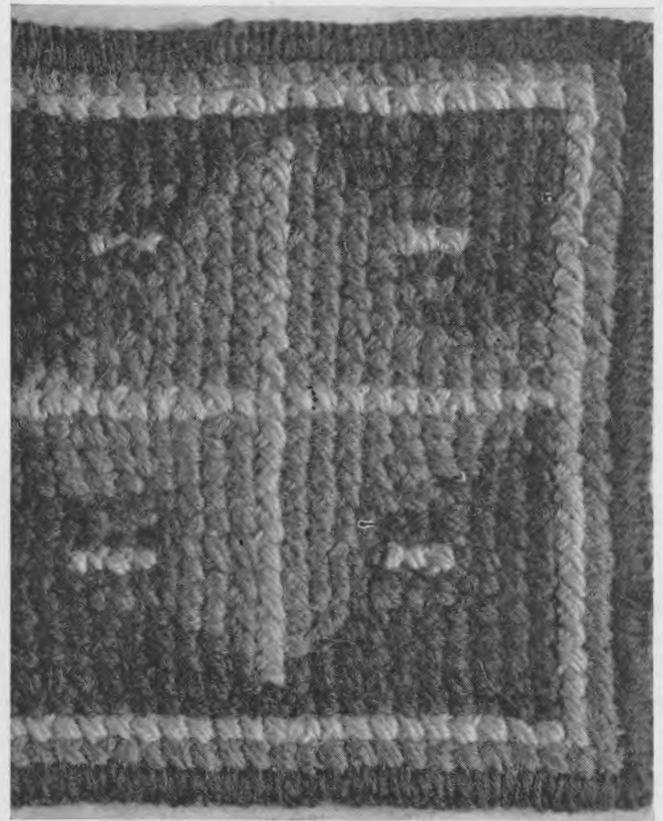
27

Stitches are slanted first in one direction, then in the other to complete the crosses

Finish the edge (see hooked rugs, page 11)

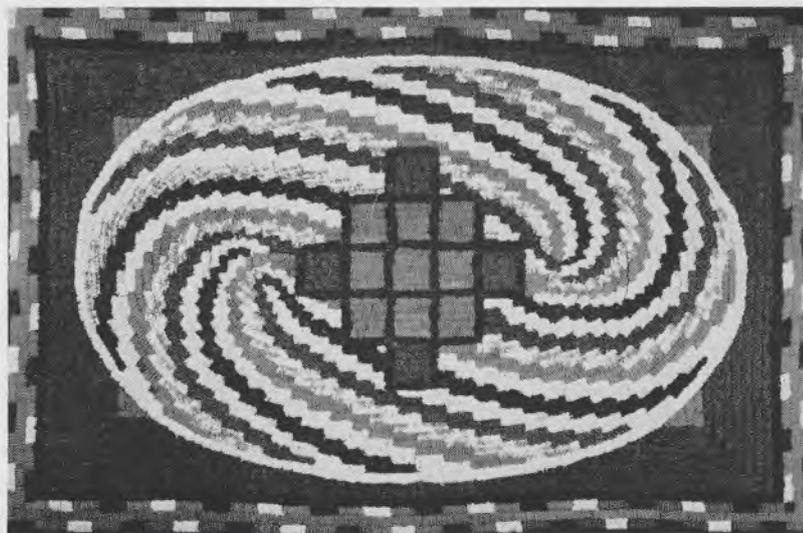
Pressing

Cross-stitched rugs may need pressing, especially if squares have been sewed together. Place the rug face down on a soft pad, cover with a damp cloth, and press with a hot iron.



28 This cross-stitched square will be sewed to other squares to form a rug

HOOKED RUG



29 A geometrical design developed in sharp contrasts

Plan the design

Interesting designs show a combination of bright colors against dull ones or of dark and light colors. Examples can be seen in **29** and **30**. You may buy a design stamped on firmly woven burlap or similar foundation material; or you may buy the material and draw your own design on it. It is a good idea to have the different areas of the design stamped with colors similar to those that will be used in the rug. If you draw your own design, you will find it very helpful to color the different areas (see page 3).

The designs shown on page 11 are floral (**31**), a conventionalized floral (**32**), and geometrical (**33**).

Materials and equipment

Strips of worsted or wool fabrics or wool yarns are preferred since they give natural spring to the surface. Fig. **29** is made from wool strips, Fig. **30** from wool yarn. Cut the fabrics the desired width (cut worsteds, such as blankets, about the width of a selvege). Sort them according to colors. Form them into a flat roll (see **4**), or wrap them on a large flat card or place them in sacks.

The hook may be either the plunger type or the shuttle type (**34**). You will need to buy or make a frame (**35**). You may even use a crochet hook. Tack or sew the foundation ma-

A hooked rug is beautiful when the pile is close and even and the color arrangement is pleasing.

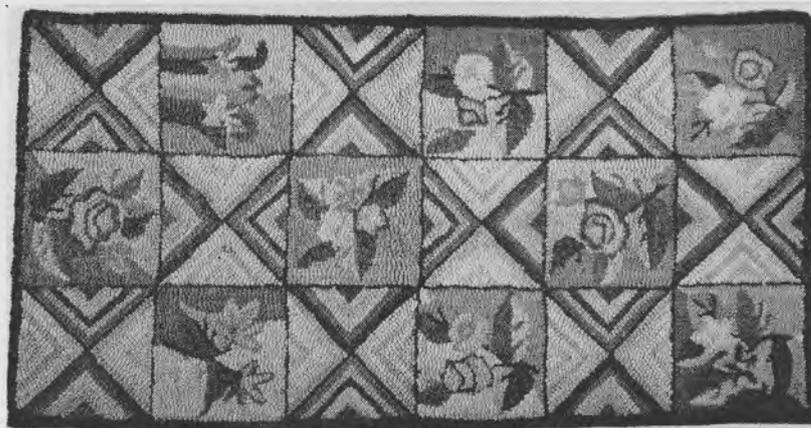
Hooked rugs may be looped, clipped, or sculptured. The *looped* rug has uncut surface loops about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch high. The *clipped* rug is made of a material that does not fray. The loops are made slightly longer than for looped rugs and are then sheared, or clipped. In the *sculptured* rug the design stands out in relief. This effect may be obtained either by shearing the background loops or by making the design loops longer than the background. The design loops may be sheared too if the background loops are sheared lower. The two rugs shown on this page are examples of the looped type.

terial to the frame. Keep it tight and straight while you are hooking the rug. If the rug is to be made larger than the frame, it is best to have an adjustable frame and roll the rug as the work progresses.

Directions for hooking

First outline the design, using the color you have chosen for that area. It is best not to outline the design in black unless the black is used to make geometrical divisions. Next fill in the design, working from the center of the design toward the edge. Then fill in the background.

If you are making a very large rug, you may wish to work straight across the rug so that you can roll up the finished part as you work.

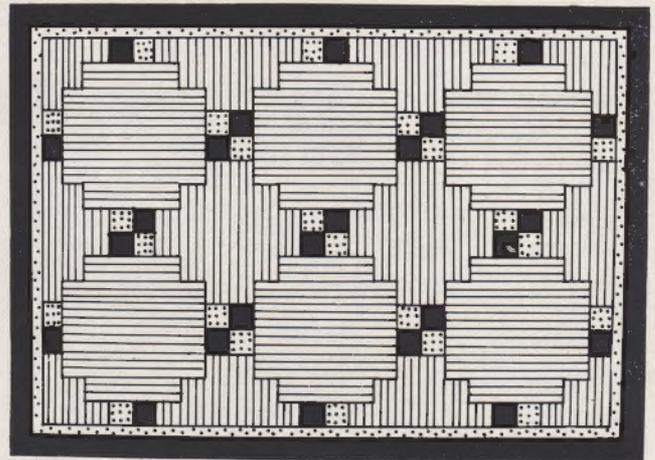


30 A combination of geometrical and floral designs



31 Floral design stamped on a coarse-mesh foundation

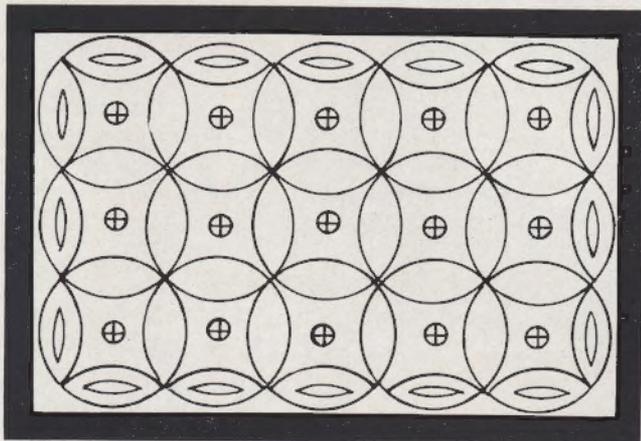
Always work from the pattern side of the foundation. If you are using the plunger type of hook or a heavy crochet hook, hold it in your right hand *above* the foundation. Hold the strip of yarn or material in your left hand *below* the foundation. Thrust the hook down thru the foundation, catch the strip, and draw a loop up thru the mesh. Insert the hook thru the next mesh and repeat. Continue pulling loops up thru the mesh, keeping them very close together. When you



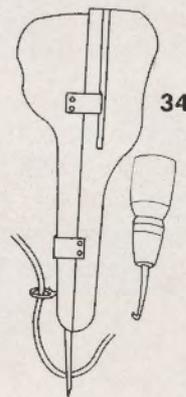
33 A geometrical design drawn on foundation material

have used up any one strip of fabric or yarn, pull loose end to the right side.

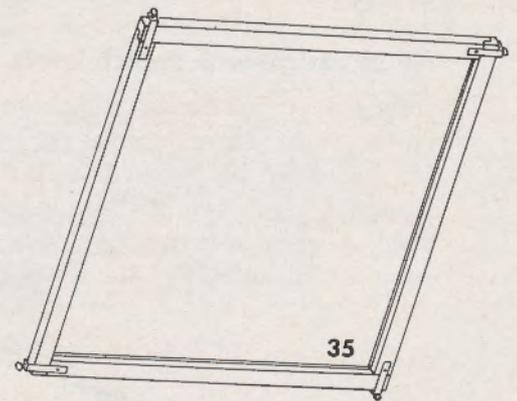
If you use a shuttle, thread it with a strip of fabric or yarn. Hold it in both hands and plunge it thru the mesh, thus making the loops. When each strip of fabric is used up, bring the end to the right side. Thread the shuttle again and continue.



32 A conventionalized floral design



Shuttle and plunger hooks



One type of frame

Finish the edge

When the hooking is finished, take the rug from the frame. Use one of the following edge finishes.

1. Baste a hem on the wrong side and then sew it with a slip stitch. Use waxed cotton, linen, or saddle thread.

2. Put a flat rug-tape over the hem. Slip-stitch both edges of the tape to the hem.

3. Lay rug-tape over the hem so that it extends beyond the edge of the hem. This protects the yarn. Sew the tape with a slip stitch. Or instead of using

rug-tape you may apply in the same way a strip of felt or several harmonizing strips of different widths.

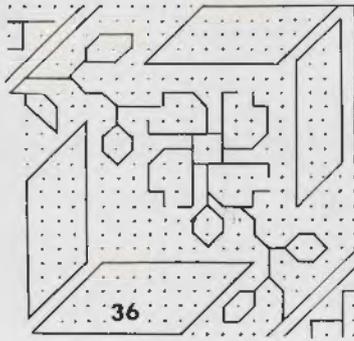
4. Baste the hem to the wrong side and hook the yarn or strips of fabric thru the double thickness. (This finish is pleasing but is hard to do because the hook does not go thru the double thickness easily.)

5. Leave an unworked border $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch wide all around the rug. Cover this border with a blanket stitch made with a darning needle and yarn. Make the stitches close together. You may go over the edge a second time, putting the second stitch thru the first, if you want a firmer edge.

FRENCH-KNOT RUG

Plan the design

For this rug you can buy a design (36) stamped on cotton crash or other foundation material; or you can buy a transfer pattern and stamp the design yourself. If you prefer, you may draw your own design.



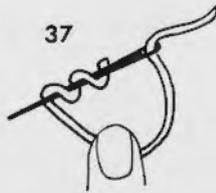
French-knot pattern stamped on fabric

Materials and equipment

You will need heavy yarn and a large-eyed, sharp-pointed needle that will carry the yarn easily.

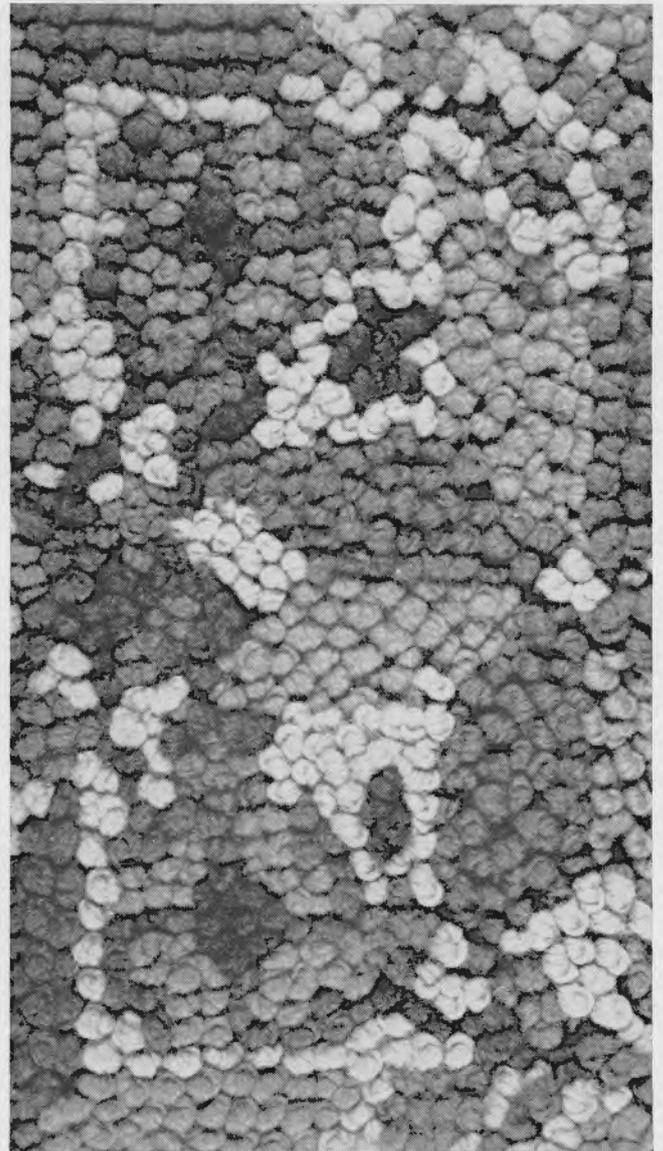
Fill in design with French knots

Instead of tying a knot when you start, take one stitch on the wrong side to hold the yarn. This starting end can be completely covered as the knots are made. Bring the needle up thru the fabric to the right side. Hold the yarn between the thumb and forefinger of your left hand (37). Wrap the yarn around the



Making a French knot

needle. The weight of the yarn and the size of knot desired determines the number of times to wrap the yarn around the needle. While you hold the yarn in place with the thumb on the right side and the forefinger on the wrong side, insert the needle and pull it thru to the wrong side. Be sure to hold the yarn in place till you have pulled the needle thru.



38 Interesting surface is obtained by care in placing knots

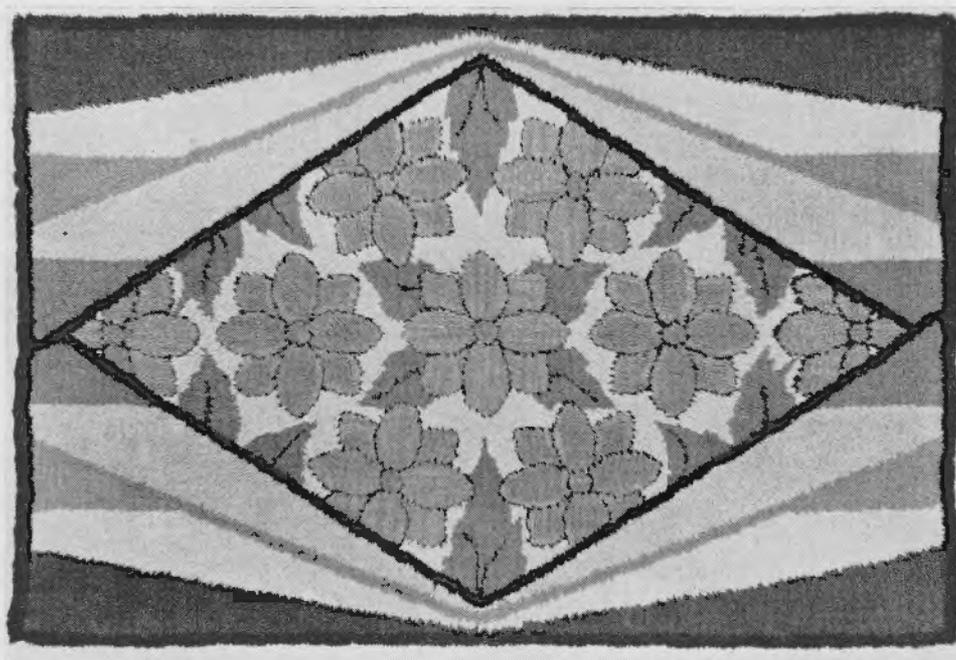
Keep on making knots till the design is filled in. Take care in placing the knots so that the surface will be interesting (see 38).

Often the French-knot rug is worked in squares. The completed squares are placed face to face and sewed together with an overhand stitch.

Finish the edge

The edge finishes explained under hooked rugs, page 11, may be used for the French-knot rug also.

ORIENTAL-STITCH RUG



39

The making of an oriental-stitch rug calls for fine, close workmanship. No bit of the burlap base should show on the right side.

Plan the design

Designs for hooked rugs may be used for rugs to be made with the oriental stitch (see finished rug, 39). Buy the foundation already stamped or get a transfer pattern and stamp the design on burlap or clean cotton cloth. You can even use a feed sack. If you do not want a definite design, use odds and ends of yarn.

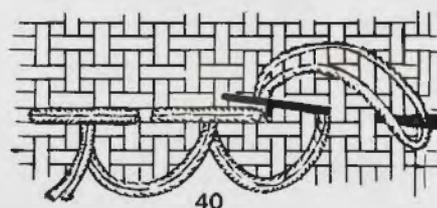
Materials and equipment

You will need either yarns or soft fabrics cut very fine, and a tapestry or darning needle with a large eye. Having a needle for each color saves time. You can work without a frame, but if you prefer to use one, use the kind recommended on page 11.

Directions for the oriental stitch

Start in the lower lefthand corner, working from left to right and from the bottom upward. Work with the right side of the rug up. If you use burlap, pick up 2 threads for each stitch. If you use cotton material, pick up the width of 2 burlap threads in each stitch. The following directions are for working on burlap; when working on other materials, decide how many threads to pick up to equal 2 burlap threads and pick up that number each time. For a coarser stitch, pick up 3 burlap threads or their equivalent.

Start 2 threads from the left. Insert the needle from the right side of the material. Point it to the left. Pull it thru, leaving a short end of yarn. Hold this end under your left thumb (40). Throw the yarn up. In the



Making the oriental stitch

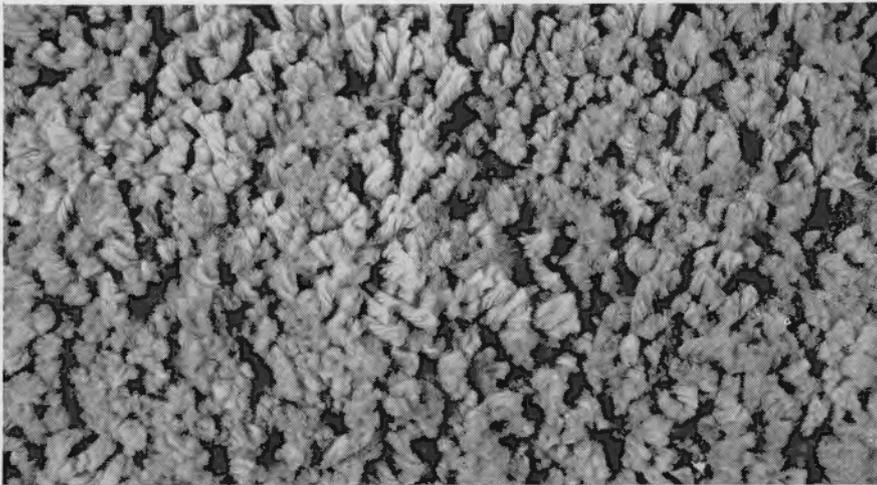
same row, pick up the next 2 threads and pull the yarn thru. This ties the first stitch. Now with your thumb hold a loop of the yarn below the needle. Pick up the next 2 threads and pull the yarn thru, leaving a loop. Still holding the loop, throw the thread up; pick up the next 2 threads and pull the yarn thru. This ties the loop. Continue making these loops across the row.

Repeat these stitches on the next row of burlap. Continue until the design is filled in, one row at a time. Then shear the loops to form the pile.

Finish the edge

Use one of the finishes suggested for hooked rugs.

TUFTED OR SHAG RUG



41

The beauty of a tufted rug is in the closeness of the pile. Keep tufts the same height and place them close together.

Plan the design

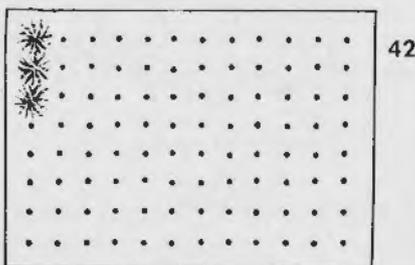
The rug illustrated here (41) is in plain color and without pattern, but a pattern can be developed by the arrangement of tufts and by the use of color.

With a soft pencil, mark dots at regular intervals on heavy muslin or lightweight canvas in whatever design you choose (42).

Prepare materials

Measure candle wicking according to the height of tuft desired. To keep all tufts the same size and thickness, use a regulator — a piece of cardboard or wood twice

you wrap. When you have enough for the desired size of tuft, slip it off. Lay it flat in bundles. Tie a short piece of candle wicking around the middle of each bundle (43); then cut thru the loops at each end of the bundle. Each bundle forms a tuft (44).



Dots on canvas form a design



A bundle of candle wicking forms a tuft

Next attach the tufts to the foundation. Thread a candle-wicking needle with candle wicking. Place a tuft on a dot on the rug foundation. Work from the right side of the foundation. Insert the needle at the edge of the knot of the tuft. Pull the thread thru, leaving an end. Bring the needle up from the opposite edge of the knot. Tie the ends of the needle thread across the tuft. Repeat until each dot in the design is covered with a tuft.

Finish the edge

The hem may be stitched by machine before the pile is applied or it may be turned under and slip-stitched after the rug is completed.

as long as the height of tuft desired. Wrap the candle wicking around the regulator. Keep it flat and even as

RAFFIA-STITCH RUG

The form of the raffia-stitch rug is somewhat like that of the braided rug (45). Strands of firm material are covered with strips of other fabric. Then the covered strands are connected to form a rug of any desired shape.

Plan the design

Decide what shape you want your rug to be. Make a sketch on wrapping paper so that you can visualize the finished rug and plan the color areas.

Materials

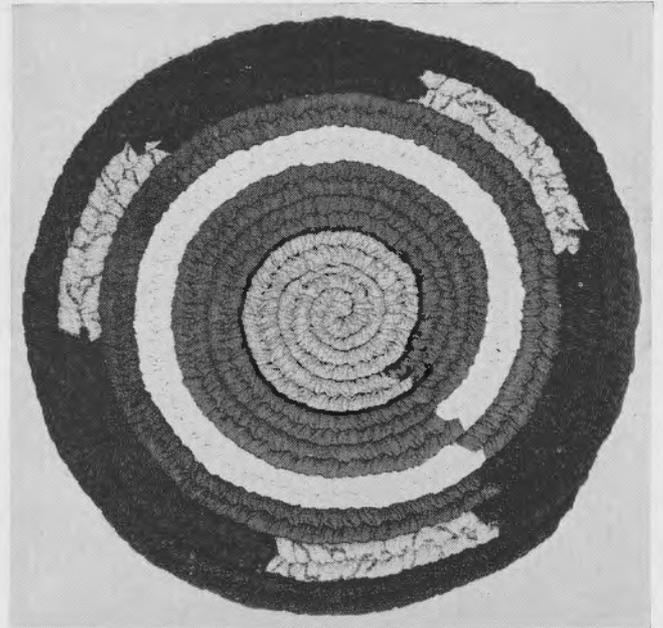
For the foundation strands use material that is firm but not stiff. For the covering strips use the same kinds of fabrics you would use in a braided rug. The width to cut the strips depends on the weight and texture of the material. It is a good plan to make samples before you cut all your strips. Turn the edges in so that no ravelings show.

Cover the strips

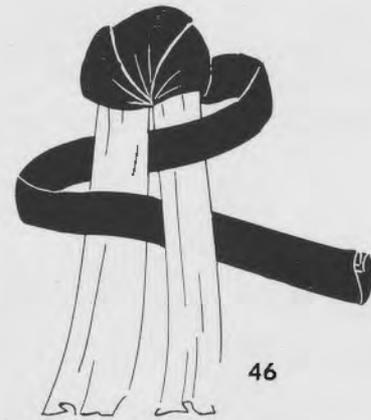
Determine the length of the center measurement by following the directions under braided rugs (page 6). To start the foundation strand, fold a strip of firm material several times to give it bulk. Double the strand (46). Fasten the end of the covering strip at the bend of the foundation. Work the covering strip back and forth over and under the foundation, covering it completely. Add strips as needed to both the foundation and the covering strip. Sew the new strip to the old with a straight or a bias seam.

Connect the covered strands

Sew the strands together with the slip stitch or the overhand stitch, or lace them together. You will not need to finish the edge as the raffia stitch forms its own edge.



45 Rug made with the raffia stitch



Raffia stitch — dark strip is the covering material

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