

SYRIE MAUGHAM

Dynamic stripes make a mostly white space feel just as glamorous today as it did in the 1930s.



MAGIC CARPETS

LONG A DECORATOR'S SECRET, WHITE RUGS GROUND AND UNIFY ALL KINDS OF ROOMS, NO MATTER THE STYLE OR ERA.

This glowing, soigné bedroom, put together in the 1930s by design legend Syrie Maugham, sets the kind of scene you might expect someone like Fred Astaire or Myrna Loy to waltz right into. It has all the prerequisites for a classic Golden Age caper: romance, luxury, and plenty of

suave lines. It also boasts a dramatic, chevron-striped rug that could have stolen the show—were it not for the fact that it's tinted in the same barely-there shade as much of the rest of the urbane room.

It's a notable decorating lesson that merits bearing out. In a recent survey of work by our all-time

MARK HAMPTON

With the addition of a simple, cushy carpet, a sharp c.1970 scene is suddenly soft enough for bare feet.



favorite designers—which included everyone from Billy Baldwin to David Hicks—we were struck again and again by the genius of the textured white rug. There's seemingly nothing it can't do: harmonize elements from wildly disparate eras and cultures; make a suite of proper 18th-century armchairs feel refreshingly up-to-date; bring a soulful warmth to a cool grouping of modernist tables and chairs.

The best examples contribute a weightless sense of dimension from quiet patterns worked into the weave of the rug itself, creating a blank canvas that nevertheless speaks volumes. It's a timeless trick that everyone should have in their arsenal—along with a bottle of Scotchgard! □

WRITTEN BY MARIO LÓPEZ-CORDERO
PRODUCED BY VICTORIA JONES

BILLY BALDWIN

Where a faded Aubusson is expected in a room created for Deeda Blair in the 1960s, elegance meets effortlessness in a nubby white rug.



DAVID HICKS

In a c.1965 space, a plushly textured version pulls together classic upholstery, molded plastic, and a serene stone Buddha.



WHITE RUGS WE LOVE NOW

A model from **Stark's** Tibetan 100 Knot collection (CM6 CPT K947) features an elegant geometric motif; to the trade, 212-752-9000. The Monroe Chevron by **Ralph Lauren Home** reinterprets Art Deco lines; from \$1,900, 888-475-7674. Linen fibers form a diamond scheme on Ibiza from **J.D. Staron**; to the trade, 203-351-1130.



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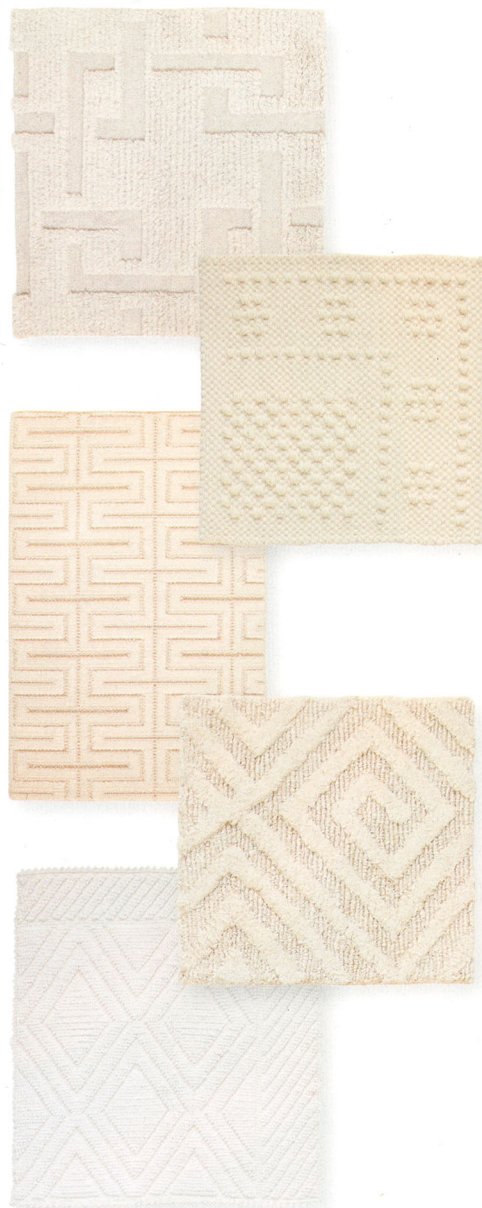
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history lesson



MORE WHITE RUGS

Mashi takes cues from traditional Moroccan designs; from **Marc Phillips**, price upon request, 212-752-4275. Dots form the pattern in **Stark's** Woolen Trends collection (CW-15230); to the trade, 212-752-9000. Annadale Integration by **Rosecore** evokes a labyrinth; from \$190 per square yard, 706-624-9385. A version from **Patterson, Flynn & Martin's** North Seashore collection (6470) riffs on the Greek key; price upon request, 212-688-7700. IF#3 Su Mustazzolu from **F.J. Hakimian** is handwoven in Sardinia; price upon request, 212-371-6900.