

Direct-stick carpet

Read through these instructions carefully a couple of times before you begin so as to familiarise yourself with the installation procedure.

You will need:

- dust pan and brush
- broom
- notched trowel or old cement trowel
- angle grinder with thin metal grinding wheel
- paintbrush and roller
- tape measure
- straightedge
- Stanley knife and blades
- pen or pencil
- toolbox
- carpet adhesive
- contact adhesive
- old soft-drink bottle
- pliers
- cigarette lighter
- plastic nozzle used with caulking cartridges
- a big old book
- clean cloth
- mineral turpentine
- a pair of scissors
- brickie's bolster (cold chisel).

When installing carpet by “direct-stick” or “double-stick” methods, always make sure that your sub-floor is clean, dust free and free from loose materials.

The adhesive can be applied with a steel trowel with approximately 1.6mm deep notches in it. If you don't wish to purchase a notched trowel, just get hold of an old cement trowel and make appropriate grooves in it using an angle grinder with a thin metal-grinding wheel in it.

Tip: If you decide to make your own notched trowel it is easier to make regular, consistent grooves if you hold the angle grinder in a

secure stationary position with one hand and then move the trowel as you notch with the other.

Adhesive can also be applied with a paintbrush and roller. This method uses less glue per square metre, especially if your sub-floor is rough or has coarse, old adhesive already on it.

Tip: *If you decide to use a brush and roller, you may want to water the adhesive down so that will be easier to apply, but not too much or it will lose its stick. One part water to 10 parts adhesive is a good general rule.*

Once your sub-floor is ready and all tools are on hand, correctly measure the length of the piece that you will need to cut from the roll, making sure that you allow for doorways and recesses in the wall etc. Allow at least 5cm extra as many buildings are not very square. If you are not too good at cutting a straight line, then allow 10cm extra.

You will need a clean, dry space for cutting your roll. Always mark the measurement on both sides of your carpet length so as to ensure a square cut. If your straightedge is less than 3.7m long, then mark the measurement in the middle of the carpet as well.

Cut the carpet with a sharp Stanley knife blade, following the straight edge as you go.

As you roll up your "cut" carpet, brush off any sticks, leaves, stones etc that might have been picked up if your cleanest space happened to be the road or front lawn.

Lay your carpet in place in the room where it is to be installed. Check that it is running square, especially if the carpet has a pattern.

Allow at least 2 - 3 cm extra up the side walls. If your room is significantly under 366cm wide, then you should cut off any excess. Cut the carpet from the back as it folds over, it is best to push the material down flat and into the corner before you do this.

If your room is over 366cm wide, then you will need to cut for a join. Almost all carpets have a rib. A rib exists because the pile is manufactured in rows, usually running down the length of the carpet. Choose a nice straight rib 2 - 3 cm away from the edge.

Tip: *Use a ballpoint pen or a blunt pencil and part one rib from the next, and then run the pencil all the way down the length of the carpet. This should open up a little gap between one rib and the next, leaving a line for your eye to follow.*

Use your Stanley knife and neatly cut the edge away leaving one straight rib. If you falter, try to leave extra bits on rather than cutting too much away. You can always trim excess off with a pair of scissors.

If you have a patterned carpet or sisal, make sure you take this into consideration when deciding exactly which rib to cut.

Once your carpet piece or pieces are in position, fold back about one third of the length. Use a weight such as a toolbox to make sure that it won't move.

Open your bucket of glue. If you use a trowel, then pour a suitable amount on to the floor. If not, then dip your brush/roller into the bucket.

It's best to get all your edges covered first and then spread the middle.

Leave the adhesive uncovered for at least 10 minutes, longer if it's cold. Good ventilation helps the glue to tack off more quickly.

Fold the carpet back over and into the adhesive, if you have more than one piece then you will need to apply seam sealer.

Tip: *Seam sealer is just a fancy term for contact adhesive (available at any hard-ware store). You'll need a seam sealer applicator bottle. A 600mm coke bottle or equivalent is most suitable. Take the cap off and remove the little latex insert. Hold the cap with a pair of pliers and heat it up to almost melting with a cigarette lighter, then thrust a plastic nozzle (used with caulking cartridges) through from the inside. Push it through until a tight seal is achieved. Let it cool*

off then remove the base of the nozzle with a Stanley knife. Screw the cap back on to the bottle and, voila! You have a seam seal applicator bottle.

Apply seam seal adhesive with your bottle by running the nozzle down the edge of the carpet so as to leave a small, round, consistent bead of glue.

A big old book (or any thing else with a bit of weight and a smooth flat surface) is great for pressing the carpet down into the adhesive. If you have a join, push both pieces of carpet towards each other and press them down into the glue until the join is almost invisible. Wipe any excess glue off immediately with a clean cloth and some mineral turpentine. Be sure to press the entire area down into the glue. Don't worry if the carpet doesn't immediately stick to the floor – the adhesive may take up to two hours to fully stick.

Use your bolster to push the carpet into the right angle corner between the floor and the wall and then let the wall guide your Stanley knife blade as it cuts the carpet. If your blade cuts through the carpet while it is almost vertical as you press it down and against the wall, then you will cut the carpet at the very point at which it does a 90 degree turn from horizontal (floor) to vertical (wall). This will actually cut the carpet at a neat 45 degree angle so as to leave the pile against the wall while the backing is just shy of it. Press the carpet down with your bolster and you'll have a nice flush finish.

Tip: *If this sounds difficult practice somewhere where it doesn't matter too much until you're confident.*

You are now all set and ready to go, enjoy your installation. And enjoy your new carpet. If you get into any trouble, give me a call – 0412 269 495.

Kind regards,
David Fisher