
Judging the Quality of Oriental Rugs

Oriental carpets are works of art –unique and exquisite - worthy of collections. But when it comes to buying oriental rugs, most people shy away or hesitate. It's difficult to judge its quality and they can never know whether they are being ripped off or their purchase is really worth it.

There simply is not one single factor determining the value and quality of oriental rug. People often talk about the knot density but it does not completely define the quality of oriental rug. It is not even one of the most important factors appraisers consider in determining the value of an oriental rug. Below is a list of considerations for determining an oriental rug's quality and value.

Are Finely Knotted Rugs Better than Others?

Finely woven or knotted rugs are preferred for its softness and smoothness. The curved lines in a rug can be created more smoothly and gracefully with many knots in a square inch. Higher knot count per square inch means rug took a longer time to weave and so the rug piece is finer and better quality. Hence it would be more expensive. Also, rugs that are finely knotted reflect light better because their surface is so dense. Usually oriental rugs have higher knot count and so does floral and curvilinear patterns.

However, keep in mind that higher knot count is only one measure of a rug's quality. There are cases where finer knots are not used such as in tribal rugs and geometrical shapes with straight lines requiring less knots per square inch. A rug of different origin and different design may be more expensive, even though it has a lower knot count. Pattern type and desired design assigns the knot size. One quick way to tell some about the durability of an Oriental rug is to feel the handle of it. If it is very loosely woven it is going to feel very flimsy in your hand it is not going to wear as well as a rug with a sturdier but still supple handle.

Pile density

Pile density varies from one rug to the next. The thickness can affect the longevity of a carpet. Usually the tighter and denser pile is, the better the rug will wear. Though there are some exceptions, the large majority of Oriental rugs whose pile is on the longer side tend towards a lower quality. Longer piles are more apt to deliver fuzzy designs and are less durable than their shorter counterpart, often being compressed over time and making them susceptible to wear. Unless the rug is going to be hung or placed in a no-traffic area, be sure the pile will stand up to use.

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Take your fingers and try to wiggle them into the pile. Is it difficult to work them all the way to the bottom of the pile? If so the carpet is dense and tight, which means it will have greater resistance to wear and tear, and likely to wear well. Sparser pile is more likely to get worn out faster.

Material

The high quality materials involved in an oriental rug's crafting is what defines its illustrious composition. Better the material, better the rug's quality. These materials include neat wool and silk. And a rug made from high-grade, hand-spun wool or silk will give off a certain luster which a rug made from synthetic materials and machine made cannot duplicate.

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