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## ***Carpet 101***

### *What clients need to know about the flooring*

As a real estate professional, you get asked many questions about the listed property: How old is the roof? When was the pool pump serviced last? Are there HOA fees? One question that is asked frequently is “Will the carpet need to be replaced soon?”

Often carpeting looks amazing during a cursory tour of a home for sale, but once the new owners take possession they discover that the durability wasn't what they thought. A freshly shampooed carpet that's been fluffed up with a good vacuum may look nearly brand new for several weeks, and then those old stains seem to magically reappear. Understanding a few key terms about carpeting may help you to help your clients when making an offer for a home that may need the carpeting replaced right away.

For buyers that have children and pets, the type of pile is a very important consideration. Carpet is either cut or looped, and carpet that has cut piles will withstand a busy family that includes children and pets. Looped carpet may actually be irresistible to feline pets that have a need to scratch and claw because of the resistance offered by the looped pile, which get caught up in the cat's nails. A busy cat can fray looped pile in just days and will choose, unfortunately, only the most conspicuous places, like the entry way to a bedroom, rather than in an obscure spot that no one will notice. Cats are extremely territorial and their scratching behavior is as much about marking their territory as it is in exercising their claws, so she'll want to mark very obvious spots in high traffic areas to take ownership over those areas that retain the smell of her owner.

Cut piles are preferred when there's a kitty in the house. The cut pile won't insure that the cat will find something else to scratch, but it will hold up to the scratching much better than looped pile and for some crazy reason, some cats and dogs are drawn to looped pile for chewing, which will never look good later. Children and looped piles may add up to snags from toys as they are moved across the carpet when the toys get caught in loops. Children and spills, well, that's just inevitable, so carpeting that is easier to clean is a good idea.

Since cleaning a carpet is another huge consideration, the parent or a pet owner should not only lean toward cut pile, but to fibers that are durable and will stand up to frequent cleaning well. Carpets are generally made from nylon or polyester, with polyester being more stain resistant. If

frequent shampooing is in the carpet's future, then polyester is the better choice. When walking your clients through a listing, know ahead of time if the carpet is made from nylon or polyester so that you may adequately answer your clients' questions.

Finally, another consideration is the material used for the carpet's backing. The sellers may not know what the backing consists of if the carpet was in place at the time of the last purchase, but ask anyway. Gel or waterproofed backing offers much more durability for cleaning over time, especially when the cleanup involves a liquid, whether from a pet or a spill.