

Rug Making

Rug making has long been one of the most popular crafts and one which provided pleasure as well as a means of creative activity. It is just as fascinating now as it was in the olden times when our grandmothers made rugs. Well constructed rugs last a long time

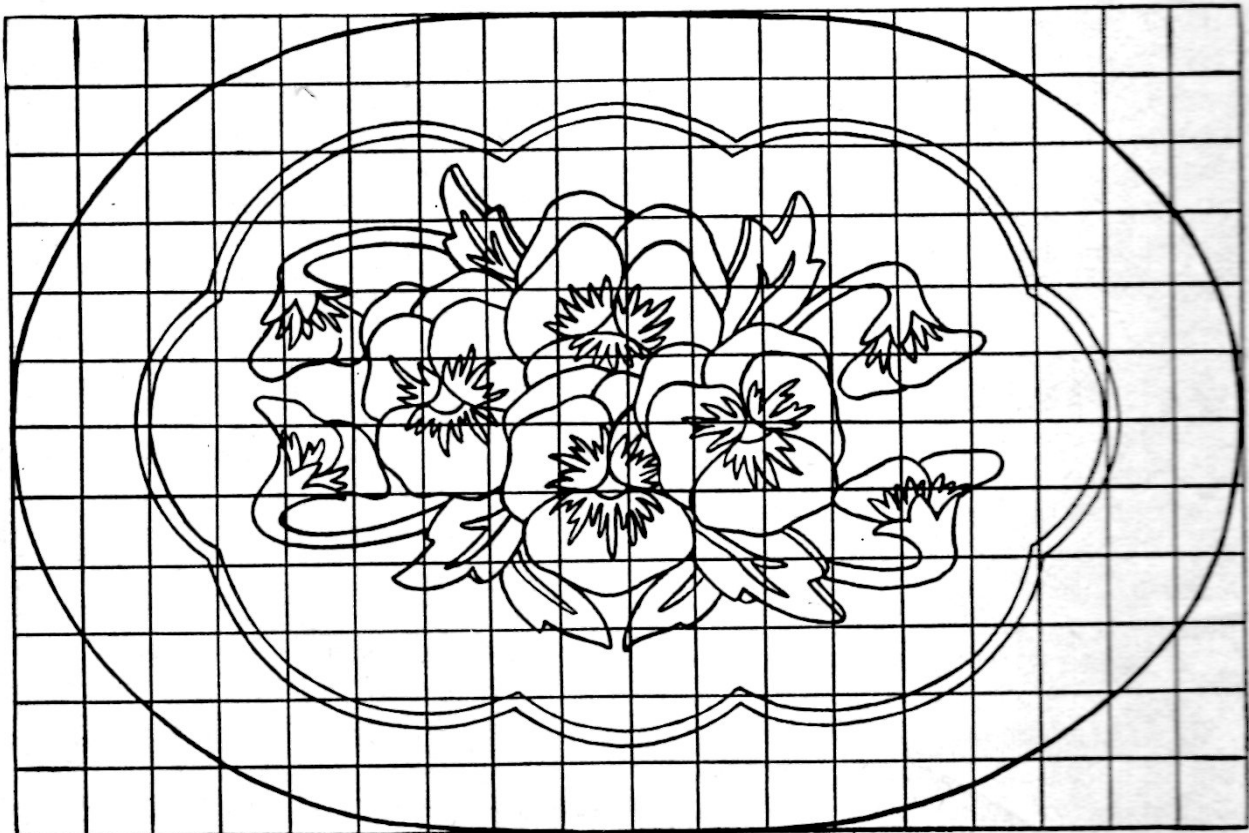
and add distinction and beauty to the interior of any home. Handmade rugs may be hooked, braided, knitted, crocheted or made in various ways. They may be small to the large room size in round, oval, oblong or other shapes.

Hook A Rug

In hooking a rug, one has an unlimited choice of materials, colors, shapes and sizes. Foundation materials, yarns, rug hooks and needles, thumb tacks with long points, rug backing, shears with curved blades, frames, rug binding, in fact everything you need for hooking a rug can be secured from leading mail order houses

or from the needlework departments of large retail stores.

Patterns—You may wish to make your own pattern or buy designs already stamped or printed on foundation material. We have given charts for 3 different designs, shown in squares; by adding the necessary squares, you can make a rug of any desired size. Also



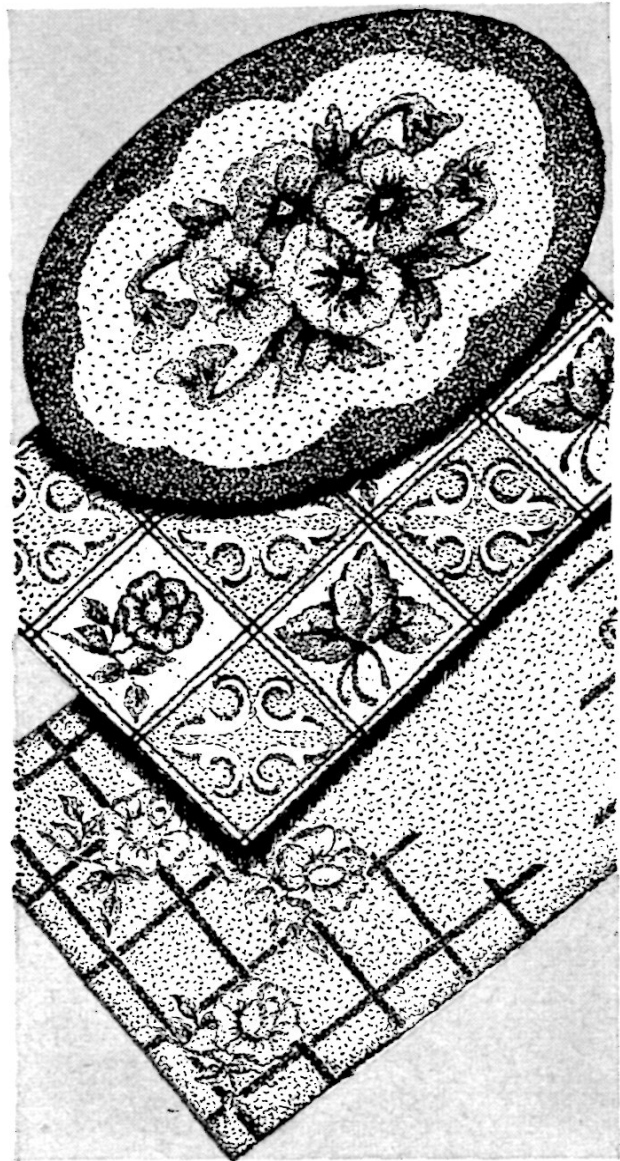
you will find a pansy design for large one piece rug. The lower design (in the group of three rugs) shows roses scattered over foundation, draw lines on foundation to represent trellis.

To enlarge any one of the designs, take a piece of brown wrapping paper and draw a large square the size you want the finished block, divide it into same number of spaces as on chart. Draw pattern to fit squares in the same proportion as given. Transfer pattern to foundation material by going over it with a black crayon, then place design face down on foundation material and press with a warm iron through a dampened cloth. This makes it clear and distinct to follow.

Or you can perforate the design by going over it with an unthreaded sewing machine or use a dress maker's tracing wheel; rub stamping wax over smooth side.

Then there will be those who wish to draw the design free hand. Others may wish to stencil it. To stencil, thumb tack or tape a sheet of stencil paper over design already drawn. Trace design with hard pencil, then cut on pencil lines with a stencil knife or sharp razor blade. Lay this cut-out stencil on foundation material and outline with crayon or dab with stencil paint.

A very attractive rug can be made by mixing the designs, but equally pretty would be one with all squares of same design. To prevent having seams when joining squares or blocks for a rug, work to within 2 or 3 inches of edge all around for each block, then overlap the space left with adjacent block, baste together and work through double thickness of rug foundation. All the blocks can be joined and basted in this manner—and the hooking may be continuous from one end to the other and across. The heavy lines around each design may be worked solid to form a



border or work two rows of stitches on each heavy line. Or you may simply wish to disregard these lines entirely.

Foundation Material — Burlap, monk's cloth or a similar material, or open mesh canvas may be used for the foundation. It is quite important to have the foundation strong and free from any broken threads or flaws. Burlap comes in 40, 48, 60, 72 and 96 inch widths. Canvas is usually 36 and 39 inches wide. Burlap sacks may be used but they should be washed, boiled and dipped in hot starch—add about one-fourth to one-half teaspoon

of powdered gum arabic in starch, mix and dissolve well. Iron sack on one side while still damp to give a glossy surface on which to draw design. A piece of wide tape or binding may be sewn along the edges while working. The tape is not needed if the burlap is large enough to extend two or three inches from edge of design; merely fold back and baste to prevent raveling. The foundation material should be stretched tight with design side up in frame. Thumb tack every 2 or 3 inches, making sure it is square on the frame so the borders will be straight.

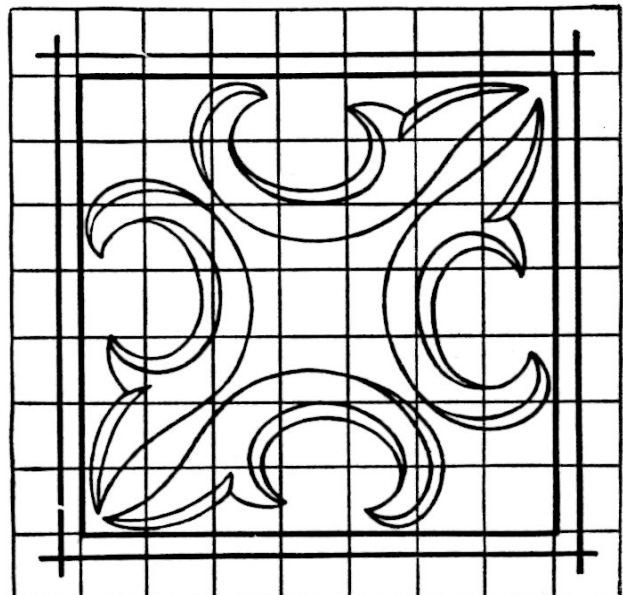
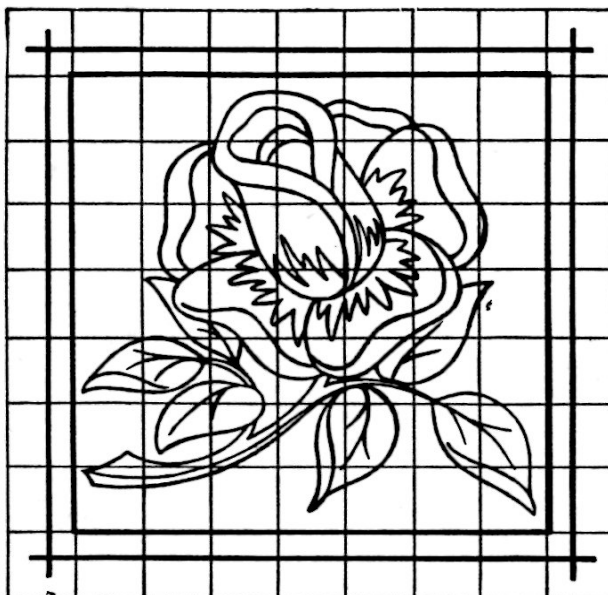
Materials—Wool yarns and woolen materials are best to use, but stockings, blankets, ties, silk, rayon or cotton materials can be used. If old material is used, wash and rip all seams. Use a good commercial dye and follow directions on package for dyeing. Various materials take dye differently, remember that the color appears deeper when fabric is wet. One method that has been used quite successfully in dyeing is to place a piece of cloth into dye pan containing warm water, sprinkle dry dye over it; add another piece of damp cloth, sprinkle more dry dye, and so on, until you have up to a dozen layers; water may be added

as needed. This may stand a few hours or may be boiled without stirring, then rinsed and set. The result is a variety of shades, some pieces slightly spotted with darker color, making lovely flowers.

Some rug makers cut and roll all their materials at once; others cut strips from the piece as they are required. All strips should be cut uniform width, depending on the weight of materials. It is necessary to cut thinner materials wider than the heavier and more bulky materials.

Rug Frames—Many rug hookers prefer to use a frame, others wouldn't make one with a frame. Practically all frames are adjustable and some are equipped with a foot piece which is important if you are using the frame in an upright position. A rug frame may or may not have a stand. The frames can be assembled in a few minutes, as they are accompanied with complete instructions. When not in use, they can be taken apart and stored in a small space. Some prefer to place the rug on the dining table or back of chair and work on it.

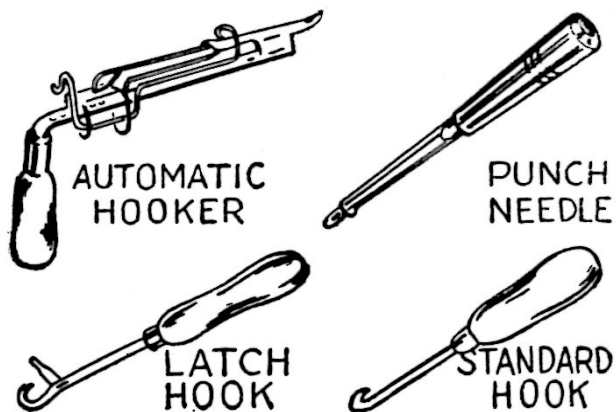
A frame can easily be made at home from four strips of soft wood; make sure the boards are smooth. They



should be about two inches wide and three fourths inch thick; peg or clamp together. People who do rug hooking as a hobby find it convenient to use such a frame, because the larger ones must be dismantled to carry in one's car. The smaller frames do have the advantage, however, they need not be taken apart. To hook a 12 or 18 inch square, you will probably prefer to drape it across the lap or spread on table. If no frame is used, it is necessary to check frequently to see that the hooked part of the rug does not curl or cup.

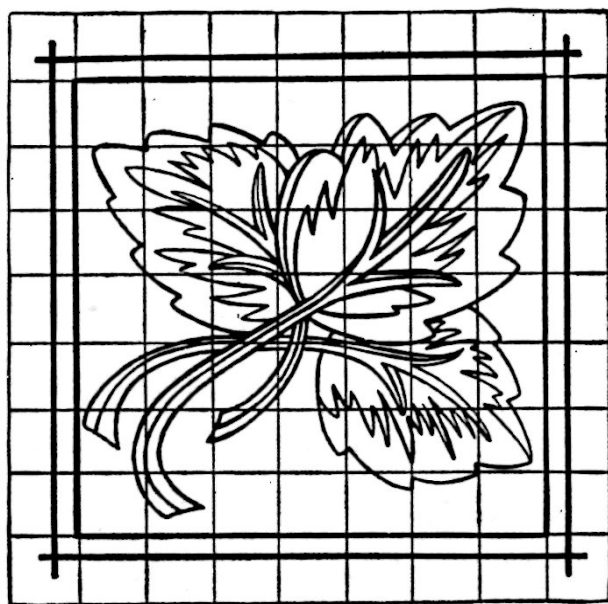
Rug Hooks and Needles—There are many types on the market. The automatic hookers and punch needles have a gauge which assures loops of uniform height. The side upon which you work becomes the back of rug. The pile of the rug formed by loops is worked on the under or right side of rug. No knots are tied. The yarn or strip of material is cut from the needle on top side when end is reached. Next thread a new strand of yarn or strip of material in needle and begin next loop in the same hole. Leave two or three inches of yarn loose, to be clipped off later. Thread rug needle according to directions that come with needle. For

a straight outer edge, put in the outside rows first. Set gauge for shorter pile in the first two outside rows. The remainder of rug is worked with higher pile. You will find this gives a nice rounded edge to the rug.



If you are using a standard rug hook, one that resembles a heavy steel crochet hook, hold yarn or strip of material beneath the part of burlap on which you wish to begin. Hold strip loosely between the third and fourth fingers of left hand. Insert hook between two meshes of material. The weight of yarn will determine whether you pull loops through every second or third mesh of burlap. This kind of hook brings the loops to the top side and it becomes the right side of rug.

Punch automatic rug hooker or punch needle into foundation until the gauge touches the burlap, raise needle to surface of cloth and make another loop. Be careful and do not raise the needle above the burlap between one loop and next—just lift it far enough to slide over to make next loop. Always insert needle vertically, being sure the yarn or strip of material runs freely and does not catch. The open side of the needle should always face ahead of the work. If needle is accidentally raised too high, pull loop out and make it over. If rows are punched too close together, the yarn will pack in the pattern, creating a tendency to curl. The

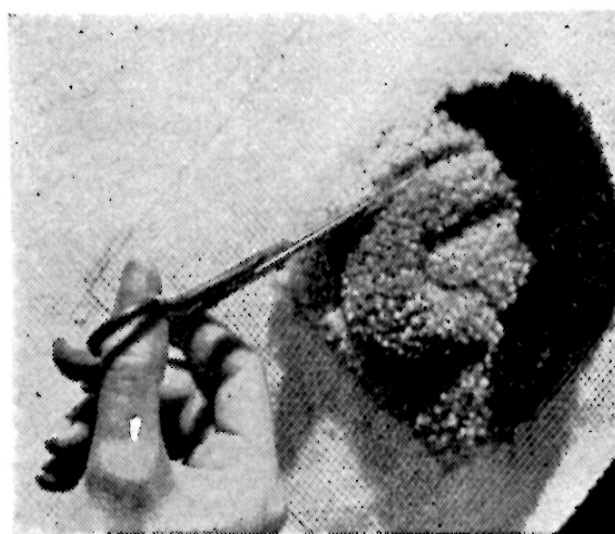
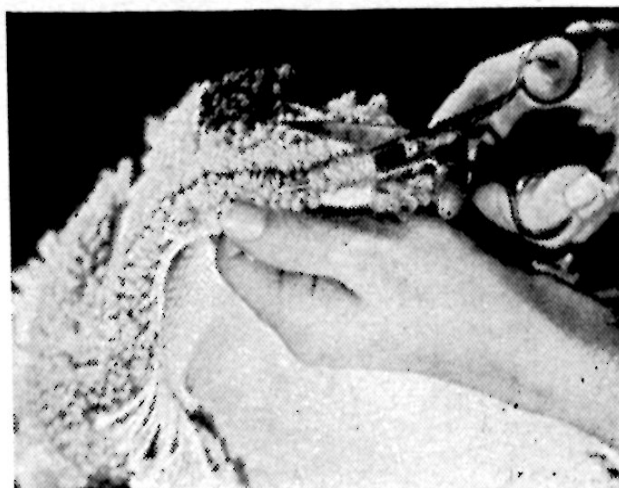


other extreme should be watched also. Experience will soon teach you the proper distance between rows—about 2 threads of burlap between rows of loops usually works out nicely; but this again depends on thickness of material or yarn used. Remember to keep burlap stretched tightly on frame. Hook to within 2 or 3 inches of edge, unless there is a binding already on, then this binding strip is used for facing.

The latch hook is used to hook, pull and knot short lengths of rug wool to the open mesh canvas background. To make such a design, it is necessary to count the squares in the foundation across the width and down length in forming a design.

Finishing—Yarn loops may be clipped while on the frame or after it is removed, if one is used. Pick up loops on blade of scissors, as shown in photograph, and cut through center. If you like, after the loops are clipped, you can bevel off the outline of design with sharp scissors held at an angle, as shown. Never cut loops less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in the lowest part of design. It is not wise to clip loops if material frays easily.

After the hooking is completed, fold edge under and hem down on back unless the tape is on; use carpet warp or heavy linen thread. If the corners



are bulky, cut away some of the excess burlap to mitre them.

A rug should be placed face down and walked on for about a week, then apply regular rug backing to back of rug with brush or rag. There is tape or rubber covered mesh that may be sewed to the back to make it skid proof, but common jar rubbers sewed to the corners will do the work.