

# CARPETS!

HOW TO REPAIR  
SYNTHETIC CARPETS

--Translated from the original by James Penn.

Synthetic carpets are quite fragile, & they can be sometimes irretrievably damaged in certain parts, whether it be due to daily wear, burns, or indelible stains. No matter how the damage is caused, with a little bit of care it is possible to repair it in a way that the end result will be almost invisible.

This repair can be done in different ways, according to the composition of the carpet & the manner in which it is affixed to the floor. There are actually two types of carpet:

\*A wool carpet, consisting of strands of wool sewn onto a piece of cloth which acts as a support. This is quite delicate, & must be repaired in a different manner from synthetic carpets. (The instructions here concern only synthetic carpets, by far the most common & least costly.)

\*Synthetic carpets, consisting of synthetic fibres knitted onto a fiber support, sometimes with a rubber foam undercoating.

Synthetic carpets can be attached to the floor by glue or if their base is rubber foam simply laid & maintained by their own weight.

The repair work consists in cutting out the damaged part & replacing it with a new piece. It is a relatively simple operation, but, in order that the new piece is not visible, two conditions are imperative:

\*The new piece of carpet must be identical in every way with the rest of the carpet. If the colour of the old carpet is faded, try to give the new piece the same tone by rubbing it with some damp dust.

\*The edges of the new piece must be invisible, meaning that it must be cut to exactly the same dimensions as the piece that is to be replaced.

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED

TOOLS	ACCESSORIES
*A sharp blade (universal knife or razor blade)	*A flat ruler
*Hammer	*Some nails
*Paint brush	*A piece of replacement carpet & glue
	*Special carpet glue

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

\*Whenever you lay a new carpet in your home, be sure to put an extra piece aside for any repairs that you might have to do later.

\*If your carpet is stained, treat it immediately with a special product for carpets which you should always keep on hand in case of such accidents. If the stain will not come out, & is particularly ugly, you can then repair it in the above manner.

\*If the stain is quite visible & you are not able to find a corresponding replacement piece, cut a piece out of the existing carpet from an area that is not as noticeable (i.e. under a piece of furniture). Use this as the replacement piece for the stained part & replace it with a piece of carpet that is as close as possible in texture & colour.

## STEPS TO FOLLOW

1) Synthetic carpet is either glued to the floor or simply laid. In either case the method of repair is the same. Find a piece of carpet that is identical in every way with the existing carpet & cut out a piece a little larger than the damaged part.

2) Position the new piece over the damaged part & hold it in place with four nails gently nailed into the floor. If you have a cement floor, use steel tipped cement nails.

3) With a sharp blade guided by a ruler, cut a square, framing the damaged part. Cut the two layers of carpet at the same time as this will guarantee that the new piece will be the exact size of the hole left by the removal of the damaged piece.

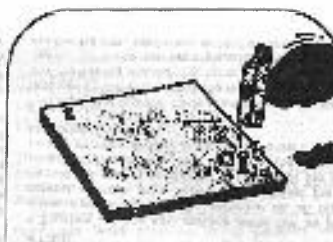
4) Pull out the nails & the damaged piece of carpet. If the old piece has been glued down, some paint thinner or alcohol will unglue it. Then scrape off any traces of this glue from the floor & carefully clean it with a dry paintbrush.

5) Then glue down the replacement piece with some latex or universal glue. If the rest of the carpet is not glued down, but simply "laid" on the floor, glue a piece of cloth to the underside of the main carpet just covering the hole, onto which you can glue the new piece of carpet.

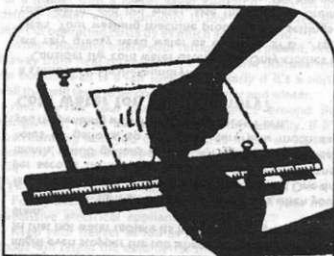
6) Place the new piece in the hole & hit the edges with a hammer so that it will be well glued to the floor. Once it is dry, smooth over the edges with your fingers to hide any borders that are still visible.



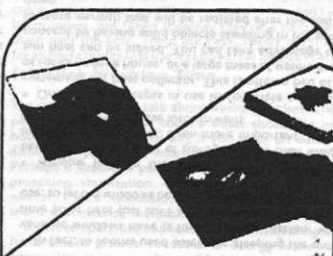
1) I get a piece of new carpet with which I cover the damaged part.



2) To keep this in place I affix it with a few nails.



3) I trace a square or rectangle around the damaged part & cut the two thicknesses at the same time.



4) I take out the damaged part & clean the exposed floor carefully.



5) I glue the exposed floor with carpet glue.



6) I position the new piece & push hard, smoothing over the edges with my finger.

# ELECTRICAL BLACKOUT!

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF  
BLACKOUT

--Translated from the original by James Penn.

An electrical blackout can be general or local, & can affect a part of, or the totality of your electrical installation. Apart from regional blackouts which deprive a whole town or part of a town of electricity, domestic electrical blackouts can have two fundamental causes:

\*A "short-circuit" caused by defective wiring or a defective appliance.

\*An overloading of the circuit due to the simultaneous use of too many electrical appliances (washing machines, electrical radiators, kitchen appliances etc.).

In these two cases the electrical wiring & installation are submitted to an excessive demand for current, which runs the risk of damaging them & causing a fire. This is why your installation is necessarily equipped with a "circuit-breaker", which only allow a certain amount of power to pass through. If the maximum limit is exceeded, it activates & automatically cuts off all the current.

Thus, in case of a blackout, unplug the appliances that caused the overloading, & find the circuit-breaker that activated it, & put it back in the normal position. There are normally three types of circuit-breaker switches.

1) The breaker switch which is the circuit-breaker for the entire electrical installation (i.e. the whole house). Usually it is situated near the electrical counter. In case of any anomaly it activates & cuts the current off to all the secondary circuits.

2) The secondary circuit-breakers or fuses which control the secondary lines of your electrical installation. These can all be grouped near the main circuit breaker or spread out in different parts of the house.

3) Certain electrical appliances have built-in circuit-breakers which are always easy to get at. When you have got the electricity on again, be sure to repair the material that caused the blackout.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

\*Before re-establishing the current, be sure to unplug all the faulty appliances that caused the blackout. Also unplug any heavy appliances, such as refrigerator, as it is best not to have too much strain on the electrical system when it comes on again. This is also good to do if there is a regional blackout.

\*If you have problems with the circuit overloading, be sure to warn others before using such high watt appliances as hair dryers, irons, toasters, etc., especially at night. Also turn off any other electrical appliances to compensate for the power that you will be using.

\*Keep candles, matches & a few flashlights all around the house where they can easily be found, so that they can be got at immediately in case of a blackout. (Dad has us keep flashlights on the floor by the door of the room.)

\*To avoid having to make lengthy investigations when your breaker switch goes off, determine in advance exactly which parts of the house are controlled by which fuses, so that in case of a partial blackout you will be able to localise the problem quickly by determining which fuse blew. A good tip is to label the fuses with which rooms it controls.

\*Never touch the incoming circuit breaker or the electrical counter which are usually the property of the electrical company. In some cases these are sealed shut by the authorities to prevent any tampering.

(Most countries have local emergency numbers manned day & night to whom you can phone & report your problem. If you believe that the problem comes from the interior of these boxes. Be sure to explain how dangerous it is, so that they will come quickly. We have literally had to wait days sometimes!)

## STEPS TO FOLLOW

1) Look outside to see if the neighbours are also without electricity. If so, I light some candles & wait for it to be re-established. Usually these regional blackouts do not last a long time.

2) If it is not a regional blackout, & the whole house is without electricity, the breaker switch has activated & the current is cut off at the counter.

Someone must have plugged in a faulty appliance--unless too many appliances have been plugged in at the same time--provoking an overloading of the circuit. Unplug the guilty appliance before putting the breaker switch back to normal (this is usually right beside the electrical counter).

3) One part of the house is without electricity. The causes are the same but have only affected a secondary circuit controlled by a fuse. Unplug the appliance & replace the fuse.

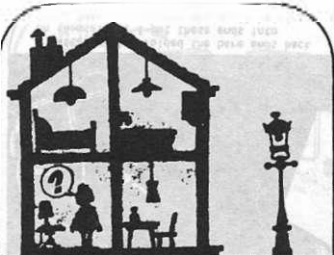
4) Only the appliance doesn't work. The problem in this case is not usually in the installation, but rather due to a defect in the connection or the state of the appliance. Unplug it & repair it.

5) The electrical counter is usually easy to get at; it is generally situated near the front door of a house & sometimes on the landing in apartment buildings.

The main breaker switch is usually just below the electrical counter & is controlled by two buttons or a handle that has two positions. The positions ON and OFF are distinguished by colours or by letters.

\*Usually GREEN is ON and RED is OFF.

Sometimes the fuses (secondary circuit breakers) are grouped on a panel below the counter.



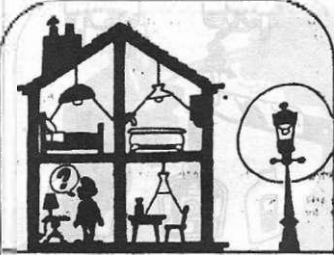
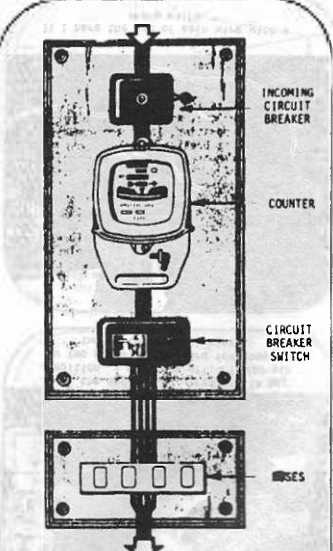
1) The neighbours are also without electricity. A regional blackout. I await the re-establishing of the current.



2) The whole house is without electricity. The breaker switch has activated. I make sure that I find the cause before I put it back to normal.



3) One part of the house is without electricity. A fuse has blown. I find the cause before I replace it.



4) The plugged-in appliance does not work. A problem with the outlet or with the appliance. I try it on another electrical outlet.

5) The main breaker switch is placed under the electrical counter. I put it back to normal by pushing on the green button or in placing the handle back to the normal position.