

CARPETS FOR HALLS AND STAIRS

CHOOSE YOUR COLOUR OR PATTERN

'Hallways and landings are the perfect place for bold colours or brave patterns,' says Inga Morris. 'Not only will something out of the ordinary make a great first impression, but transitional spaces provide the opportunity to use a more daring carpet that might overwhelm in any other room.' Stripes are still a hot trend and can help to elongate a hall, or look out for spots or even animal print. Many companies produce patterned designs for stairs plus a complementary plain carpet that can be used in the adjoining hall or landing. Avoid pale shades and opt for a strong colour or pattern, or a flecked or mottled weave to disguise marks.

SELECT YOUR STYLE

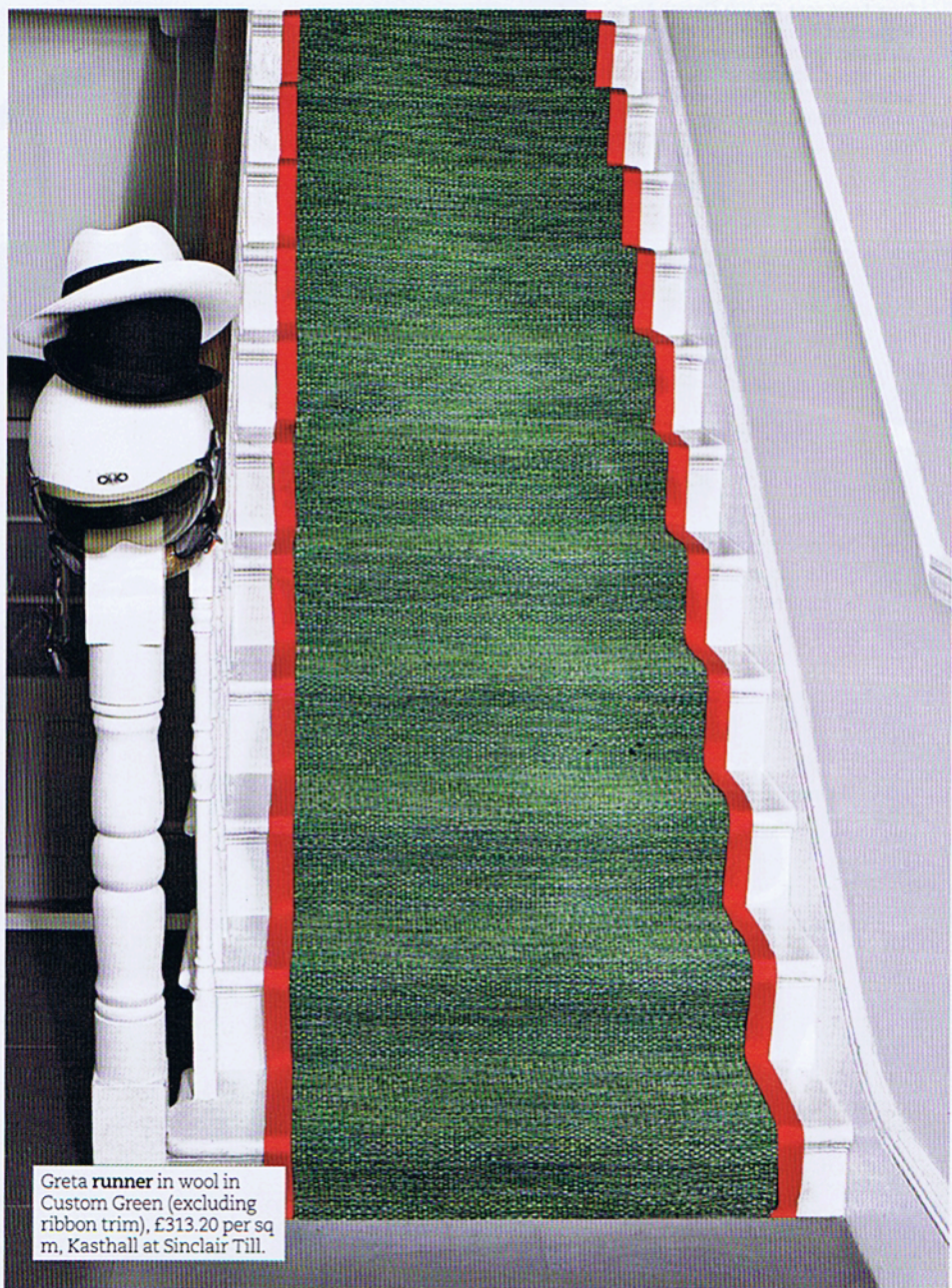
'Heavy-traffic areas need a hard-wearing floor covering, so choose something tightly woven, such as a dense twist pile or a low-level loop,' says Lorna Haigh at Alternative Flooring. 'Avoid very soft carpets and deep piles, which can be slippery and dangerous on stairs. Large-loop piles are not ideal, either, as heels can get caught in them and they "grin" when wrapped over the nose of the stair.'

CONSIDER MATERIALS

Invest in the best-quality carpet you can afford, either 100 per cent wool or one with at least 80 per cent wool content. Exceptionally durable, wool also resists dirt, so it retains its appearance well, is easy to clean and naturally flame retardant. 'Wool is often blended with nylon or polypropylene in an 80/20 mix,' says Rupert Anton. 'These fibres, which are also hard-wearing and stain resistant, can help to make the carpet even more resilient.'

RUNNERS

Carpet can be fitted on stairs or you can have one bound with a contrasting border to make a runner. Ready-made runners can be a woven Wilton or flatweave. Flatweave carpets have the advantage of being super-supple, so can be fitted on almost any staircase. To make your stair runner last longer, buy a length a few inches longer than you need and tuck the excess under at the bottom of the stairs. When the runner starts to wear, you can shift it up slightly, which will help to prolong its life.



HARD-WEARING HALL CARPETS

- 1 **Hartley** in wool in Ivory Diamond, £95 per linear m (70cm wide), The Carpet Library.
- 2 **Mississippi** in wool in Lime/Red, £58 per sq m, Crucial Trading.
- 3 **Skinny Black** in wool, £139 per sq m, Alternative Flooring.
- 4 **Crystal** in wool in 816, £102 per sq m, Blenheim Carpets.
- 5 **Avebury** in wool in Overton Stripe, £39 per sq m, Cormar Carpets.

