

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

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How Does CARPET Get its Color

There are several factors to consider when selecting carpet, but choosing the right color is often the most difficult part of the process. Most of our customers make relatively "safe" choices such as light or medium colors in neutral tones.

Colors like beige, taupe, gray and even off white are popular because they blend well with just about any decor. Carpets in bold colors like burgundy, deep, rich browns, regal blues and purples, soothing greens and even multi-colored patterns are not uncommon for us to see in our clients' homes.

But have you ever wondered how these colors and patterns get into the carpet? There are several dye methods used on modern synthetic carpets. Each has its benefits and limitations.

Synthetic carpet fibers such as Nylon, Polyester and Olefin are made through a process called extrusion. Imagine a metal colander or spaghetti strainer.

See "How Does CARPET Get Its Color" on next page

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If you fill it with plastic pellets and heat it up, the plastic pellets begin to melt. As the plastic liquefies, it falls through the holes in the colander and forms long strands. If you hold the colander high enough, each strand of plastic will cool and solidify into a single filament. This is basically what extrusion is, except with carpet fibers the colander is replaced with a machine made up of tiny "colanders" called spinnerets.

Fiber manufacturers can add color during the extrusion process by mixing in colored plastic pellets with the non-colored ones. This process produces a pre-colored filament in which the color goes all the way through the fiber. We call this process solution dyeing.

Solution-dyed carpets are the most colorfast and are very resistant to fading and bleaching. Typically found in commercial carpets, solution-dyed fibers can also be used in residential carpets. In fact, olefin fibers commonly found in Berber style carpets can only be dyed in this way. This is because olefin fibers are the least absorbent fibers and

they simply will not absorb dye. This characteristic also means olefin fibers are highly stain-resistant.

After extrusion, the filaments or fibers are spun into a yarn from which the carpet pile will be made. Nylon is the most popular fiber for residential carpet, and it can be dyed in a number of ways. For example, the yarns can be dyed before they are made into a carpet in a process called yarn dyeing. If several different colors of yarn are used, the carpet can be made in an almost unlimited variety of patterns. Many carpets in hotels and office buildings are made this way.

Print dyeing is used when a specific pattern such as flowers, geometric shapes or even pictures are needed. The dyes are sprayed or printed onto the carpet in a pattern that is controlled by computers. You will often see print dyeing on novelty carpets found in children's playrooms, day care centers, movie theaters and shopping malls.

The most common technique is continuous dyeing. After the yarns have been stitched into a primary

backing material, the carpet passes through a line of jets that spray hot dye into the face yarns. This is the fastest and most cost-effective way to dye carpet. Chances are, if you have a light to medium solid-color carpet, it was dyed in this way.

How a carpet was dyed will determine how well it resists color loss, fading or bleaching. With any attempt to remove spots, stains or discolorations you must consider the carpet fiber and dye method. A spotter that works fine on one carpet may cause irreversible color loss in another.

Most manufacturers have specific requirements about what kind of spotting agents can be used to avoid loss of warranty. It is therefore very important that you exercise care and common sense when responding to any spills or spots on your carpet. When in doubt, blot with an absorbent cloth, and call **A-Town/Hi-Tech** at (325) 692-0500. We can give you recommendations for treatment or schedule a professional visit to help prevent damage and keep your carpet beautiful.

The Good Life



Good Clean Funnies

Why is it so windy inside a stadium?

There are hundreds of fans.

What's red and bad for your teeth?

A brick.

What's blue and smells like red paint?

Blue paint.



These bacon ranch chicken skewers were intended to star at your next tailgate cookout. They are easy, interesting, and incredibly adaptable.

Bacon RANCH Chicken Skewers

Directions

Whisk together ranch dressing and hot chili paste in a large bowl.

Mix in chicken pieces and toss to evenly coat. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and marinate in the refrigerator for 1 to 3 hours.

Preheat an outdoor grill for medium-high heat and lightly oil the grate.

Remove chicken from the bag and transfer to a plate or baking sheet lined with paper towels. Pat chicken pieces dry with more paper towels.

Thread a piece of onion about 1 1/2 inches down the skewer. Thread the end portion of one strip of bacon onto skewer so the rest of the strip is hanging down. Skewer on a piece of chicken; thread on the next portion of the bacon. Turn the skewer so that the long end of the bacon is again hanging down. Repeat this process of skewering and turning until the entire strip of bacon is threaded, using 4 to 5 chicken pieces. Thread a second piece of onion onto the end of the skewer. Repeat for all twelve skewers.

Season chicken skewers with salt and pepper as desired.

Cook the skewers on the preheated grill, turning every 3 to 4 minutes, until nicely browned on all sides and the meat is no longer pink in the center, 12 to 16 minutes total per skewer. Serve with ranch dressing as a dipping sauce.

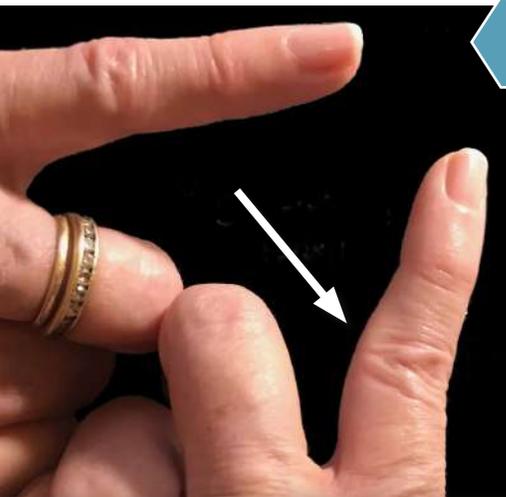
Ingredients

- 1/3 cup ranch dressing
- 1 teaspoon hot chili paste (such as sambal oelek)
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into 1 inch pieces
- 24 (1-inch) pieces red onion
- 12 slices thick cut bacon
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 12 (6 inch) bamboo skewers, soaked in water for 2 hours

Recipe courtesy allrecipes.com



Smartphone PINKY Joins List of Tech Injuries



Cell Phone Elbow, Smartphone Neck Pain, Texting Claw and now Smartphone Pinky, the newest tech injury.

Supposedly a dent appears in the little finger on the middle bone. Sometimes people say the position of their pinky changes, or that the finger starts to sway downward from the knuckle. **You might check yours!**

Although the supposed malady is debated, notice that most people do hold their phones so that the little finger takes most of the weight.

According to The Conversation, the change in the little finger might well be just a soft tissue compression from the constant weight of the phone. Unlike Cell Phone Elbow, no one has reported actual pain from the little finger.

With Cell Phone Elbow, pain and tingling in the forearm and little finger come from holding a mobile phone up to the ear or holding it while lying in bed for a long time. The pain comes from the shoulder rubbing the ulnar nerve, one of the major nerves in the arm. Just six minutes of those postures increases the strain on the nerve by 69 percent.

Texting Claw is a repetitive strain injury that presents as pain in the thumb and wrist. It comes from making small repetitive movement with the thumb against the screen. Reduced texting appears to alleviate the problem.

Finally, neck pain can come from staring down at a screen for a prolonged period, which increases strain on the shoulder blade.

No one has studied Smartphone Pinky yet, but an abundance of Twitter, Instagram and TikTok users claim it's real with photographic evidence.

Microfiber Sheets: To BUY or Not To BUY

If you like to sleep warm and cozy, microfiber sheets might be a delightfully less expensive option, but sleeper beware.

As the name suggests, microfiber sheets are not made with anything that grows on the earth. These are machine-made fibers such as polyester and polyamides.

The best of the microfibers will be lightweight and soft. But to people used to the softness of cotton, or those with sensitive skin, microfibers can feel irritating.

But there's one huge difference between cotton and microfiber: A high-quality set of Egyptian cotton sheets costs \$350. A high quality microfiber sheet set costs: \$50 to \$60.

For this price, microfiber sheets sleep warmer and resist stains. They dry wrinkle-free and come in lots of colors. They don't fade, or pill.

Microfiber sheets are not measured in thread count. The thickness is measured in grams per square meter (GSM). A GSM of 90 and below is generally a low-quality sheet and will easily tear. A 100 GSM sheet is considered high quality and doesn't cost much more.

Look for a brushed finish, which creates softness. Double brushed means that both sides are brushed, and this is important. If it is only brushed on one side, the unbrushed side may be uncomfortable.

A fitted sheet pocket is crucial for proper fit. Look for at least 15", but if your mattress is thick, go for 22 inches.



Here's a rule of thumb: If you love high thread-count cotton, you might hesitate to buy microfiber. Your opinions may well vary.



Fireplace Safety: Where There's SOOT, There May Soon Be FIRE



The soot, called creosote, is one of the top reasons for the thousands of fires involving fireplaces each year, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Creosote is flammable and should be cleaned out annually if the fireplace is used regularly. Find a National Chimney Sweep Guild Certified chimney sweep.

- Have a cap installed at the top of the chimney to keep it from becoming blocked by birds, animals or debris.
- Use clean-burning wood. Hardwoods like oak burn cleaner than softer woods like pine. Dried wood burns cleaner than green.
- Follow directions when using manufactured fire logs. Use one at a time. Don't crack or break manufactured logs. This will release energy at a high rate, resulting in a shorter burn time. Fire logs create less creosote than wood.

- Make a fire that fits the fireplace. If it's too big or too hot, it wastes fuel and can crack the chimney.
- If the fireplace has glass doors, leave them open while burning a fire log to allow air circulation and cleaner burning.
- Always use a fireplace screen.
- Keep a fire extinguisher on hand and have smoke detectors throughout the house.
- Use kindling to start a fire. Never use flammable liquid.
- When building a fire, place logs at the rear of the fireplace, preferably on a grate.
- Don't burn anything but wood in the fireplace. Never burn a Christmas tree.
- Keep the area around the fireplace and chimney clear of flammables.

Professional chimney sweeps say any soot deposits more than a quarter-inch thick present a fire hazard.





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