



# The Art of Layering Rugs

DECOR

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Assembling an outfit and designing a room are similar. Both require a balanced combination of layers, texture and color. Just as bespoke garments are to stylists, textiles have long been a go-to for designers looking to add dimension, movement and visual diversity to a space. Rugs are a natural way to the means. And lately designers have been giving up rug monogamy to double and triple down.





## Bird's Eye View

“Once you have your bottom rug, the fun begins,” said interior designer and home stager [Meridith Baer](#). “The top rug really depends on budget and what appeals to you and goes with your art, accessories and home style.” Oppose a soft, solid shade with a bold and bright pattern for a modern feel. Or lay down a cowhide for a flash of the rustic. “It’s a great way to add texture and personality while creating a more eclectic and primitive look,” interior designer Kim Radovich said of the hides.

Oriental rugs and geometric prints are other top choices. Just make sure they contrast sufficiently with the base. “The smaller rug on top has the pizzazz: a handmade Persian, kilim, Moroccan, vintage or over-dyed rug,” Baer explained.

Color scheme and sizes are largely situational, depending on the base layer. Radovich recommended experimenting with a few options before committing. “The best thing to do when layering rugs is to play with them until the look feels right,” Baer added. “If you get bored one day, just move them all around and mix up your rugs in new and fun ways.”





## Layout

The bottom layer should be treated like a border for the ones on top of it. Make sure it extends at least past the furniture arrangement then choose a top rug or two that fit closer to the inner lines of the assembly. Determining how far the base should extend “depends a lot on the layout of a room,” Gildersleeve said. “There’s no set rule...a 5’x8’ rug is a great size if it’s going halfway under a sofa with a coffee table on it—and that’s it. You don’t want to have a room [where] you won’t even see the rug.”

This rule of thumb is especially true when two pieces are the same shape and placed in the same direction. It will render as intentional rather than haphazard. “All furniture in an area should at least touch the rug. In cases such as a dining room, it is important that all furniture is on the rug,” Baer said.

Layering rugs is also a great way to define a space in large rooms that serve multiple purposes. Placement beneath a coffee table makes for a designated seating area and helps dictate the flow of the space. This is helpful in an awkwardly shaped room such as an entryway. In these spaces Radovich will layer hides and skins that have curvy undefined shapes. “I would find a custom [base] rug to fit the space perfectly and add a curved rug to add movement and texture. Hides are the best option because they organically have a curvy shape. It always adds drama and personality.”