

# The New York Times

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## Home & Garden

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Shopping With Philip Gorrivan

### Doormats



Robert Wright for The New York Times

Philip Gorrivan, a designer, straightens the fringe on a flat-weave cotton rug (\$19.50 a square foot) at Woodard & Greenstein, (212) 988-2906, woodardweave.com.

By TIM McKEOUGH

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AS winter approaches, and shoes and boots begin to accumulate muck, a good doormat comes in handy. For an interior designer like Philip Gorrivan, though, finding attractive doormats is a year-round quest.

“I’m constantly on the lookout for the right doormat — everybody needs one, whether you’re in the city or the country,” said Mr. Gorrivan, whose projects include both Manhattan apartments and Connecticut country houses. The problem, he added, is that “most of them are really ugly.”

That's why he keeps stacks of fabric samples and doormats on hand to recommend to clients. Showing a reporter around his East Side studio recently, he displayed one of his favorites: the striped shag silver-and-black doormat from Chilewich. Made with loops of durable vinyl yarn — “an amazing material,” he said, that resembles ordinary carpet — it can be rinsed off easily when it gets dirty. And “it's a beautiful texture for an entryway,” he added, noting that he used something similar to cover the floor of the laundry room in his family's Upper East Side apartment.

To find other appealing doormats, he caught a cab to the Upper East Side showroom of Woodard & Greenstein, a company that makes flat-weave cotton rugs inspired by 19th-century American designs. “I'm not a traditionalist, but I think these patterns are very fresh,” he said, surveying the colorful, striped textiles hanging from the racks.

Because the company makes rugs in custom sizes, he suggested ordering one that was slightly larger than a standard doormat. “A big doormat makes a nice impression,” he said. “It creates a grand entrance.” But since cotton isn't as durable as other materials, he recommended using it “when the weather's nicer.”

At Crate & Barrel, he found something better suited to slushy weather: the hefty Norse Stripe coir doormat, made from the husks of coconuts. With its abrasive fibers, it would help scrub shoe soles, he said, while the red and green would add a festive touch during the holidays.

But the oiled oak doormat with horsehair bristles that he found at Privet House in Warren, Conn., he said, was “the Cadillac of doormats.” It had a price to match: \$185.

Still, spending a few extra dollars on a doormat, Mr. Gorrivan noted, can be worth it.

“It's one of the first things you see when you arrive, and one of the last things you remember,” he said. “You could be at the entrance to the most chic house, but if it's a really ugly doormat, it will leave a lasting impression.”

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