

RUG SELLING TIPS:

The rug retail market has grown to astonishing levels, as more and more demand for hard floors (and rugs to go on top of them) has boomed. As with any in-demand product, this has resulted in a flood of rugs at all levels of quality and price from many countries, and this currently has an adverse effect on the selling price of “second hand” rugs. Prices across the board for reselling rugs have dropped dramatically, so it is not an ideal market to try to sell them in. (There are of course **always** exceptions for rugs of particular quality or provenance.)

Our clients have often turned to us for advice on rugs they no longer can use in their homes due to a move, downsizing, décor changes, or estate organization. Here are our recommendations for selling avenues and steps to help in the process:

IDENTIFY WHAT TYPE OF RUG YOU HAVE FOR POSTING/SHARING:

- 1) **Hand-woven, Machine-woven, or Tufted/Hooked.** (HAND WOVEN rugs very clearly have the knots/design visible on the back. MACHINE WOVEN have machine stitching along the edges. TUFTED rugs are covered on the back with material like burlap. HOOKED rugs have loops visible on the back and may have a material cover.)
- 2) **Natural Fiber** (wool, cotton, silk) or **Synthetic Fiber** (nylon, acrylic, olefin, polyester or viscose)?
- 3) **Country of Origin?** (See if the rug has a label.)
- 4) **Rug Age?** Contemporary (post-World War II), semi-antique (1900-1945), or antique (pre-1900).
- 5) **Rug Look?** Colors, design (floral or geometric), and overall condition.
- 6) **Rug Photos to take.** Full view from each end (rugs look differently from each end). Close up photos of field elements/colors. Close up photo of any BACK CORNER so the shopper can see the rug type and quality (place a coin or ruler in photo for knot scale).

IDENTIFY WHAT PRICE YOU WANT FOR YOUR RUG:

- If your rug is **antique** or **semi-antique**, contact an appraiser. You will want two values – “replacement value” and “cash value.” The first will be for DONATION purposes (if you decide to donate the rug rather than selling), and the second will be what rugs like this are getting cash in today’s market. These values will be VERY different, so be prepared.
- If your rug is **contemporary**, you can search for similar rugs on-line to see what they are selling for new, and determine what a reasonable asking price is based on this.

CHOOSE YOUR SELLING AVENUES:

- **Rug Dealers & Consignment Stores:** If your rug is collectible a rug dealer may offer to buy instead of consign (if they can sell it for 2x their cost). Consignment store fees can range from 20-40%, and the selling process may take a few years.
- **eBay, Craig’s List, and selling sites:** Best to work with someone who works with these sites often as there are scams everywhere.
- **Social Media circles & email:** Post to your own circles to showcase your rug for sale.

(Other Options Besides “Selling”...)

GIFT TO FAMILY/FRIENDS:

- ❖ If someone you know admires your hand woven rug, it is nice to allow another generation to be part of this rug’s lifespan.
- ❖ Sometimes a “rug’s story” adds value and appreciation to an older rug. Where it was woven, how old it is, perhaps the story of how the rug was acquired. There are many rug resources on the tradition of particular weaving regions, and those stories can help make a “gift” of a rug even more thoughtful.
- ❖ An appraisal can give rug details as well as value for insurance purposes. (If you need general rug identification information, type and age, you can email us photos or bring the rug by our shop for a visit and we can give you identification basics.)

CHARITABLE DONATION:

- ❖ A donation to a non-profit can sometimes allow you a tax deduction that is greater than what the rug could be sold for. For organizations you support, this can allow them a rug that can be used, or perhaps one to sell and help fund their operations.
- ❖ Most organizations will require that the rug be clean, so you will need to factor the cost of a wash into the equation.
- ❖ An appraisal will be needed for your documentation, as well as a photo of the rug.

RECYCLE or REPURPOSE:

- ❖ Hand woven and machine woven rugs can be made into smaller versions of themselves, or several small rugs from a larger rug. Synthetic machine woven rugs can be re-dyed, and some hand woven rugs can be over-dyed certain colors (i.e. change a pastel or light color rug into brighter colors). Certain stains (such as pet urine) cannot take dye again, as pet urine destroys fiber dye sites.
- ❖ Damaged or worn hand woven rugs can be made into small accent pillows. If the rug has interesting motifs and borders to work with some fantastic pieces can be designed.
- ❖ Rugs can be prepared for hanging and enjoyed as wall textile art.

PLACE INTO PROPER STORAGE: Sometimes a rug is worth holding on to until the “market” changes or until you find the perfect person to gift the rug to. In these situations rugs must be properly stored to protect them from insects, rodents, moisture, and heat.

- ❖ All natural fiber rugs should be washed and a moth repellent applied before being placed in storage. The rugs should be wrapped in Tyvek paper, or another water-resistant, but “breathable” wrap. Moth repellents must be reapplied every 2 years.
- ❖ Natural fiber rugs should NEVER be wrapped in plastic. This can lead to mildew and “musty” odors.
- ❖ If placed in a storage unit, you are looking for climate controlled and with regular pest control service for rodents. You will want to place the rugs several inches up off of the ground (in case there is water damage to the unit).
- ❖ We offer storage services (and advice) if needed.