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# Carpet

Broadloom carpet and carpet tile installation,  
underpad selection, power stretching, and NB  
basement carpet considerations

16 Expert Answers from Floor IQ

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## How do I prepare an old hardwood floor for carpet installation without damaging the wood underneath in my Woodstock home?

**Preparing old hardwood for carpet installation requires careful surface preparation that protects the wood underneath while creating a smooth, stable base for your new carpet.** The key is addressing surface imperfections and securing loose boards without using methods that permanently damage the hardwood.

Start by **thoroughly cleaning the hardwood surface** to remove all dust, debris, and any old finish residue. Vacuum between board gaps and wipe down with a damp cloth. Next, **walk the entire floor systematically to identify squeaks and loose boards.** Mark these areas with painter's tape. For squeaky or loose boards, drive 2-inch finishing nails through the face of the hardwood into the subfloor below, countersinking the nail heads slightly. This secures the flooring without the permanent damage that screws would cause.

**Address any protruding nail heads** by hammering them flush with the wood surface or slightly below. High spots from nail heads will create bumps that telegraph through carpet padding and become permanent wear points. If you find any severely cupped or crowned boards (common in older Woodstock homes due to decades of humidity cycling), these high spots need to be sanded level. Use 80-grit sandpaper on a palm sander for isolated problem areas, but avoid aggressive sanding that removes significant wood thickness.

**In New Brunswick's older housing stock, particularly in Woodstock's heritage homes built pre-1960, you may encounter wide gaps between hardwood boards** from decades of seasonal movement. These gaps won't affect carpet performance, but extremely wide gaps (over 6mm) can create soft spots in the carpet. Fill only the widest gaps with wood filler, allowing it to cure completely before proceeding.

**Install a quality carpet pad appropriate for your hardwood subfloor.** Choose a rebond pad with moisture-resistant backing rated for wood subfloors. The pad provides cushioning while protecting the hardwood from carpet tack strips. Never install carpet directly on hardwood without padding — the lack of cushioning will cause premature carpet wear and potential damage to the wood surface.

**Position tack strips carefully around the room perimeter,** maintaining the standard 3/8-inch gap between the strip and wall (two-thirds of your carpet thickness). When nailing tack strips to hardwood, use 1.5-inch nails that penetrate the hardwood and bite into the subfloor below without going completely through floor joists. Avoid placing tack strips directly over gaps between hardwood boards where possible.

**Consider the long-term implications for your Woodstock home.** Hardwood floors are valuable assets in NB's housing market, and carpet installation that preserves the wood underneath maintains your options for future renovations. Avoid adhesive-backed carpet tiles or glue-down installations that could damage the hardwood surface

during future removal.

**Hire a professional carpet installer** for the actual carpet installation, especially in rooms with complex layouts or transitions to other flooring types. Professional installers have the power stretching tools necessary for proper carpet tensioning and can navigate around obstacles like radiators or built-in furniture common in older Woodstock homes. They'll also ensure proper seaming in larger rooms and create clean transitions at doorways.

The preparation work described above is well within DIY capabilities and will save you \$200-400 in contractor prep charges while ensuring your hardwood remains undamaged for potential future restoration.

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Q2

## How much does it cost per square foot to install carpet in a 20-unit apartment building in Saint John NB?

**Commercial carpet installation in a 20-unit Saint John apartment building typically runs \$4-\$8 per square foot fully installed**, with the wide range reflecting carpet quality, subfloor conditions, and project complexity. Multi-unit projects achieve better per-square-foot pricing than residential jobs due to economies of scale.

**Material costs** for commercial-grade carpet suitable for rental properties range from \$2-\$5 per square foot. You'll want commercial-rated nylon broadloom (minimum 28-32 oz face weight) or modular carpet tiles that can handle tenant turnover and frequent cleaning. Carpet tiles are increasingly popular in NB rental properties because individual damaged tiles can be replaced without redoing entire rooms — crucial for landlord maintenance budgets.

**Installation labour** adds \$2-\$3 per square foot for a project this size. Commercial installers in the Saint John market can work efficiently across multiple identical units, reducing per-unit setup time and material waste.

However, older apartment buildings in Saint John often have subfloor challenges that increase costs. Many buildings from the 1960s-1980s have concrete slab floors that may need moisture testing and preparation, or wood subfloors that require leveling compound or plywood overlay.

**Saint John's coastal location** creates specific considerations for apartment carpet selection. The Bay of Fundy's influence keeps humidity levels higher and more variable than inland NB communities. Choose carpet with moisture-resistant backing and antimicrobial treatments to prevent mould and mildew issues common in Maritime rental properties. Avoid jute-backed carpets in favor of synthetic backing materials that won't absorb moisture from the concrete slabs typical in Saint John apartment construction.

**Additional project costs** include old flooring removal (\$1-\$2 per square foot), subfloor preparation if needed (\$1-\$4 per square foot), and potential asbestos testing for pre-1986 buildings (\$25-\$50 per sample). Saint John has many older apartment buildings where vinyl tile or adhesive may contain asbestos — always test before removal in buildings constructed before 1986.

**For a 20-unit building** averaging 600 square feet of carpeted area per unit (bedrooms and living areas), expect total project costs of \$48,000-\$96,000. The investment pays dividends in tenant satisfaction and reduced turnover — quality carpet installation makes units more attractive and comfortable during Saint John's long heating season.

**This scale of commercial work requires professional installation.** Multi-unit carpet installation involves coordinating with tenants, managing material deliveries to upper floors, and ensuring consistent appearance across all units. Find experienced commercial flooring contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network who understand the logistics of apartment building projects and carry appropriate WorkSafeNB coverage for commercial work.

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## What is the best carpet for New Brunswick bedrooms during cold winters?

**A quality nylon broadloom carpet with a dense, cut-pile construction and a thick, high-density foam underpad is the best choice for NB bedrooms during our long, cold winters.** Carpet provides more thermal insulation underfoot than any other flooring type, and in a province where heating season runs from October through April, that warmth makes a real difference in comfort and energy efficiency.

**Nylon is the fibre to choose.** Nylon broadloom in the 40–60 ounce face weight range delivers the ideal combination of softness, durability, and warmth for NB bedrooms. It's the most resilient carpet fibre available — it bounces back from foot traffic and furniture compression better than polyester, and it resists matting and crushing over years of use. Quality nylon broadloom runs \$3–\$5 per square foot for materials in New Brunswick. Brands like Shaw, Mohawk, and Beaulieu offer excellent residential nylon lines widely available through NB flooring retailers.

**Polyester (PET) is the budget alternative** at \$2–\$4 per square foot. It feels wonderfully soft initially — often softer than nylon — and comes in rich, vibrant colours. However, polyester fibres mat down and lose their plush feel faster than nylon, especially in primary bedrooms that see daily traffic. For a guest bedroom or child's room where long-term pile retention matters less, polyester can be a smart budget choice. For master bedrooms, invest in nylon.

**The underpad is where winter warmth is won or lost.** A high-density foam pad (6–8 lb density) in 7/16" to 1/2" thickness provides the thermal insulation layer that makes NB bedroom carpet feel warm even when it's -25°C outside. Don't go thicker than 1/2" in a bedroom — excessively thick padding actually makes carpet feel unstable underfoot and accelerates wear by allowing too much flex. A quality underpad adds \$1–\$2 per square foot. For a standard NB bedroom of 180 square feet, the underpad investment is \$180–\$360 — well worth it for the comfort and insulation it provides.

**Pile style matters for NB bedrooms.** Choose a cut pile (plush, saxony, or textured/trackless) rather than a loop pile (Berber) for bedrooms. Cut pile is softer underfoot, especially first thing in the morning on a cold NB winter day, and textured cut pile hides vacuum marks and footprints better than smooth plush or saxony. If you prefer a more tailored look, a cut-and-loop pattern combines softness with visual interest.

**Total cost for a New Brunswick bedroom carpet installation** with quality nylon broadloom and premium underpad runs \$4–\$8 per square foot fully installed. A standard 180-square-foot bedroom costs \$720–\$1,440 complete, including old flooring removal, underpad, carpet, and professional power stretching. This is a project where professional installation is recommended — power stretching carpet to proper tension requires specialized tools and ensures the carpet stays smooth and wrinkle-free for its full lifespan. Poorly stretched carpet develops ripples and bumps within 2–3 years, especially in NB homes where seasonal humidity changes affect the backing.

One important NB note: during winter's forced-air heating season, indoor humidity drops to 20–30% in many homes. While this doesn't affect carpet the way it affects hardwood, extremely dry air increases static electricity in carpet fibres. Running a whole-home humidifier to maintain 35–45% relative humidity reduces static shocks and keeps the indoor environment more comfortable overall.

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## Is carpet a good choice for a New Brunswick basement recreation room?

**Carpet can work well in an NB basement recreation room, but only if you choose the right product and address the moisture challenges that every New Brunswick basement presents.** The wrong carpet installation over a Maritime basement concrete slab will develop mould, mildew odours, and musty dampness within 2–5 years. The right installation provides warm, comfortable flooring that transforms a cold basement into usable living space.

**The moisture reality of NB basements.** Every concrete basement slab in New Brunswick continuously releases moisture vapour from the ground below. The Maritime water table sits close to the surface in many NB communities, and spring snowmelt (April–June) temporarily increases this moisture migration. This means any carpet installed directly on bare concrete — with standard foam padding — will absorb that moisture into the pad and backing, creating a breeding ground for mould and mildew that you may not detect until it's a serious problem.

**Carpet tiles are the best carpet option for NB basements.** Modular carpet tiles with moisture-resistant backing (brands like FLOR, Interface, and Shaw carpet tiles) are purpose-built for below-grade installations. They don't require a separate underpad, their backing resists moisture migration from concrete, and if one section gets stained or develops a problem, you replace individual tiles rather than the entire floor. Quality carpet tiles run \$3–\$6 per square foot for materials. For a 400-square-foot basement rec room, that's \$1,200–\$2,400 for materials, plus \$800–\$1,600 for professional installation — or you can install them yourself as a DIY project since most are loose-lay or peel-and-stick.

**If you prefer broadloom carpet,** you must install a moisture barrier system between the concrete and the carpet pad. Options include a dimpled drainage membrane (\$1.50–\$3.00 per square foot) that creates an air gap above the slab, allowing moisture to evaporate rather than absorbing into the pad. Use a closed-cell foam pad rather than standard rebond pad — closed-cell foam resists moisture absorption. Never use standard rebond (bonded urethane) padding on a concrete basement floor in New Brunswick, as it acts like a sponge for ground moisture.

**Choose synthetic fibres for basement carpet.** Nylon or polyester broadloom — never wool. Synthetic fibres don't absorb moisture and resist mould growth inherently. Olefin (polypropylene) is another option specifically designed for moisture-prone areas, though it's less soft underfoot than nylon.

**Before any carpet installation, test your basement slab for moisture.** Tape a 2-foot square of clear plastic sheeting to the concrete floor and leave it for 48–72 hours. If moisture droplets form on the underside of the plastic, your slab has active moisture migration that must be addressed before installing any carpet. A professional moisture test (calcium chloride or relative humidity probe) costs \$50–\$150 and gives you a precise reading. If moisture levels are excessive, you may need to address exterior drainage, install a sump pump, or apply a concrete moisture mitigation system before installing flooring.

**Total cost for a basement rec room carpet installation** in New Brunswick runs \$1,600–\$3,200 for a 400-square-foot space with quality broadloom, moisture-resistant pad, and professional installation. Carpet tiles installed DIY can reduce this to \$1,200–\$2,400 in materials alone. Either approach gives you the warmest, most comfortable flooring option for a basement — just don't skip the moisture management steps.

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Q5

## What type of underpad should I use for carpet in my NB home?

**Choose a high-density foam or rubber underpad rated 6–8 lb density in 7/16" thickness for most rooms in your New Brunswick home — this delivers the best balance of comfort, carpet longevity, and thermal insulation for our climate.** The underpad is the hidden foundation of every carpet installation, and in NB's long heating season, it's the layer that determines how warm your carpet feels underfoot on cold winter mornings.

### Underpad Types and Where to Use Them

**Rebond (bonded urethane) foam** is the most common residential underpad and works well for bedrooms, living rooms, and hallways on upper floors. Look for 6–8 lb density — this is the weight per cubic foot of the foam and directly indicates its durability and support. Budget rebond at 4–5 lb density feels soft initially but compresses permanently within a year, leaving your carpet unsupported and prone to premature wear. Quality rebond at 6–8 lb density costs \$0.75–\$1.50 per square foot in New Brunswick and maintains its resilience for the carpet's full lifespan.

**Closed-cell foam underpad** is essential for any carpet installation over concrete in NB — basements, slab-on-grade entryways, and ground-floor rooms without a crawl space. Unlike rebond foam, closed-cell foam does not

absorb moisture, which is critical in New Brunswick where concrete slabs continuously release moisture vapour from the Maritime water table. Closed-cell foam pads cost \$1.00–\$2.00 per square foot and provide both moisture resistance and thermal insulation.

**Rubber underpad** (flat slab or waffle rubber) is the premium choice for high-traffic areas like stairs, hallways, and family rooms. Rubber is the most durable underpad material — it resists compression better than foam over years of heavy foot traffic. It also provides superior sound dampening, which matters in multi-level NB homes where noise transmission between floors is a concern. Rubber underpad runs \$1.50–\$3.00 per square foot and is worth the premium in areas that see daily heavy use.

**Fibre (felt) underpad** made from recycled textile fibres offers excellent thermal insulation and sound absorption. It's denser and firmer than foam, providing a more stable feel underfoot. Some NB homeowners prefer fibre pad for its warmth during heating season. It costs \$1.00–\$2.00 per square foot and works well on upper floors but should not be used over concrete without a separate moisture barrier.

**Thickness matters, but more isn't always better.** For most residential carpet, 7/16" (11mm) is the sweet spot. Going thicker — 1/2" or more — can feel luxuriously soft but actually shortens carpet life by allowing too much flex in the carpet backing, which stresses seams and accelerates fibre wear. For Berber and low-profile loop carpet, use a thinner, firmer pad (3/8" at 8+ lb density) to prevent the carpet from stretching and buckling.

**For NB basements specifically**, pair closed-cell foam underpad with a polyethylene vapour barrier beneath it, or use a combination pad that integrates both the vapour barrier and cushion in one product. This dual-layer approach blocks moisture migration from the concrete while providing comfort and insulation — essential for making an NB basement feel like livable space rather than a cold concrete box.

Budget roughly \$1–\$2 per square foot for quality underpad in your carpet installation estimate. For a typical NB home with 800 square feet of carpet across bedrooms and living areas, that's \$800–\$1,600 for underpad — an investment that directly extends carpet life by 3–5 years and makes every step more comfortable during our six-month heating season.

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Q6

## How long does broadloom carpet typically last in a New Brunswick home?

**Quality broadloom carpet lasts 10–15 years in most New Brunswick homes, with premium nylon products reaching 15–20 years in low-traffic bedrooms when properly maintained.** The actual lifespan depends on fibre type, carpet quality, underpad selection, foot traffic, maintenance habits, and — specific to NB — how well you manage indoor humidity and winter tracking of salt, sand, and moisture.

**Fibre type is the biggest longevity factor.** Nylon broadloom in the 40–60 ounce face weight range is the most durable residential carpet fibre and typically delivers 12–15 years of service in moderate-traffic NB living rooms and 15–20 years in bedrooms. Polyester (PET) carpet looks beautiful when new but mats down faster, typically lasting 8–12 years in bedrooms and 5–8 years in higher-traffic areas. Olefin (polypropylene) is the least resilient fibre for residential broadloom, lasting 5–8 years before showing significant wear patterns.

**Underpad quality directly affects carpet lifespan.** A high-density underpad (6–8 lb density, 7/16" thickness) supports the carpet backing and prevents premature fibre crushing. A cheap, low-density pad collapses within 2–3 years, leaving the carpet unsupported and accelerating wear from underneath — you'll see traffic patterns and matting years earlier than expected. Investing \$1–\$2 per square foot in quality underpad can extend your carpet's presentable life by 3–5 years.

**NB-specific factors that shorten carpet life.** Our Maritime climate creates several challenges that homeowners in drier provinces don't face. Winter tracking is the biggest one — sand, gravel, road salt, and calcium chloride de-icer get tracked onto carpet from October through April, and these abrasive particles act like sandpaper on carpet fibres every time someone walks across the floor. A good entry mat system (exterior scraper mat plus interior absorbent mat) and a strict shoes-off policy can add 2–3 years to your carpet's lifespan. Vacuum high-traffic paths at least twice weekly during winter to remove abrasive particles before they grind into the fibre.

**Moisture is the other NB concern.** Carpet in basement installations faces continuous moisture vapour from concrete slabs, which can degrade the backing and promote mould growth in the underpad — reducing lifespan to 5–8 years even with quality materials if moisture management is inadequate. On upper floors, NB's summer humidity can cause musty odours in carpet if the home lacks air conditioning or dehumidification. Running a dehumidifier to keep indoor humidity below 55% during summer protects both carpet and underpad.

**Professional cleaning extends carpet life significantly.** Hot water extraction (steam cleaning) by a professional every 12–18 months removes embedded dirt, salt residue, and allergens that regular vacuuming can't reach. In NB, schedule professional cleaning in late spring after the worst of the winter tracking season, so your carpet goes into summer months clean and free of abrasive residue. Professional cleaning runs \$150–\$400 for a typical NB home's carpeted areas.

**When to replace rather than clean.** Once carpet shows permanent traffic patterns, persistent matting that doesn't bounce back after cleaning, or odours that survive professional extraction, it's reached the end of its useful life. Worn carpet isn't just unattractive — it loses its thermal insulation properties, which matters during NB's long heating season. Replacement costs for quality nylon broadloom with professional installation run \$4–\$8 per square foot in New Brunswick, making carpet one of the most affordable flooring options to refresh when the time comes.

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## Can I install carpet tiles in my NB basement as a DIY project?

**Yes** — carpet tiles are one of the most DIY-friendly flooring options for a New Brunswick basement, and they're specifically well-suited to below-grade installation because their moisture-resistant backing handles concrete slab conditions that would ruin traditional broadloom carpet. If you can measure, cut with a utility knife, and work methodically, you can install carpet tiles in a basement rec room or family area over a weekend.

**Why carpet tiles work so well for NB basements.** Quality carpet tiles designed for basement use (brands like FLOR, Shaw, Interface, and TrafficMaster) have built-in moisture-resistant backing that doesn't require a separate underpad or vapour barrier in most conditions. This is a major advantage over broadloom carpet in New Brunswick, where every concrete basement slab releases moisture vapour from the ground below — especially during spring snowmelt when the water table rises. The tiles' integrated backing blocks this moisture from reaching the carpet fibres while still providing cushion and thermal insulation against the cold concrete.

**Before you start — test your slab for moisture.** Tape a 2-foot square of clear plastic sheeting to your basement floor and leave it for 48–72 hours. If heavy condensation forms underneath, your slab has active moisture issues that need to be addressed before any flooring installation. Light condensation is normal for NB basements and most quality carpet tiles can handle it. If moisture is excessive, address the source (exterior drainage, sump pump, crack sealing) before installing any flooring. A professional moisture test costs \$50–\$150 and gives precise readings.

**The installation process is straightforward.** Start by cleaning the concrete floor thoroughly — sweep, vacuum, and remove any paint, adhesive residue, or sealant that would prevent the tiles from laying flat. Fill cracks and low spots with concrete patching compound and let it cure. Find the centre of the room by snapping chalk lines from the midpoints of opposite walls, creating a crosshair that serves as your starting point. Lay tiles outward from the centre in a grid pattern so cut tiles at the walls are equal on opposite sides.

Most basement carpet tiles are either **loose-lay** (held in place by their own weight and friction) or **peel-and-stick** (adhesive backing). For NB basements, loose-lay with double-sided carpet tape at the perimeter and transitions is often the best approach — it allows you to pull up individual tiles for inspection or replacement if moisture issues develop. Some installations use a light application of carpet tile adhesive applied with a roller for a more permanent hold.

**Cut tiles to fit along walls and around obstacles** using a straightedge and sharp utility knife. Score the backing, snap the tile along the score line, and trim any remaining fibres with the knife. Leave a 3–5mm gap along walls for slight expansion — the baseboard or quarter-round covers this gap.

**Materials cost for a DIY carpet tile basement project** runs \$3–\$6 per square foot for quality tiles with moisture-resistant backing. For a 400-square-foot basement rec room, budget \$1,200–\$2,400 for tiles plus \$50–\$100 for adhesive tape, a utility knife, chalk line, and straightedge. Compare this to professional broadloom carpet installation at \$1,600–\$3,200 for the same space, and the savings are significant.

**The biggest advantage for NB homeowners** is replaceability. If a section gets stained, damaged by a minor water event, or develops a moisture issue, you replace individual tiles for \$3–\$6 each rather than tearing out an entire carpet. In a province where basement moisture surprises are a real possibility, this modular approach provides peace of mind that broadloom simply cannot match.

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**Q8**

## What carpet fibre is most durable for a home with pets in New Brunswick?

**Nylon carpet fibre is the most durable and pet-friendly choice for New Brunswick homes, outperforming polyester and olefin in stain resistance, resilience, and long-term wear.** Solution-dyed nylon, in particular, has the colour built into the fibre during manufacturing rather than applied after, making it virtually impossible to bleach or permanently stain from pet accidents.

Nylon's molecular structure gives it exceptional resilience — the fibres spring back after being crushed by foot traffic or pet napping spots, maintaining their original texture far longer than polyester. For NB homes with dogs or cats, look for **branded nylon systems like Mohawk SmartStrand (technically triexta), Shaw Anso, or Invista Stainmaster.** These include built-in stain and soil protection that won't wash out over time. Expect to pay **\$3–\$5/sq ft for quality nylon broadloom** in the NB market, plus **\$1–\$3/sq ft for installation with underpad.**

Polyester carpet is softer and less expensive (\$2–\$4/sq ft), but it mats down in high-traffic zones and is harder to clean deeply once pet hair and dander embed in the fibres. Olefin (polypropylene) resists moisture well and is sometimes marketed for pet households, but it crushes easily and attracts oily soils — not ideal for a busy NB home with active pets.

**New Brunswick's Maritime humidity adds another layer to this decision.** During the summer months when indoor humidity can climb above 60% without air conditioning, carpet absorbs ambient moisture and holds pet odours more aggressively. In winter, forced-air heating dries the air to 20–30% relative humidity, which helps with odour but generates more static — something pets and their owners both dislike. A nylon carpet with a moisture barrier backing helps manage both extremes. If you're carpeting a basement where pets spend time, Maritime moisture migrating through the concrete slab can trap odours in the pad underneath, so a **closed-cell foam underpad or moisture-resistant rubber pad** is essential rather than standard rebond.

**Practical tips for pet owners choosing carpet in NB:** Select a **medium-toned, multi-colour or flecked pattern** that hides pet hair between vacuumings. Choose a **low-profile loop or cut-pile texture** (avoid tall shag or frieze, which trap hair and are harder to clean). Ensure the installer uses a quality stain-resistant pad rated for pet households. Plan on professional deep cleaning every 12–18 months to manage allergens and embedded dander, and vacuum with a HEPA-filter machine at least twice a week.

For carpet tile rather than broadloom, brands like Shaw or Interface offer modular tiles with moisture-resistant backings that let you replace individual tiles if a pet accident soaks through — a practical advantage in a basement rec room or mudroom.

**Professional installation is strongly recommended** for broadloom carpet, especially with pets. A properly power-stretched installation prevents ripples and wrinkles where pets' claws can catch and pull fibres. Seams must be tight and well-sealed so pet accidents don't seep underneath. NB flooring installers typically charge **\$4–\$8/sq ft fully installed for quality nylon broadloom with pad**, and the investment pays for itself in longevity compared to replacing a cheaper carpet every few years.

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Q9

## How do I choose between carpet and hardwood for NB bedrooms?

**The choice between carpet and hardwood for New Brunswick bedrooms comes down to warmth and comfort versus longevity and style — and NB's Maritime climate plays a significant role in both options' performance.** Carpet delivers unmatched softness and warmth underfoot during NB's long heating season, while hardwood adds lasting value and can be refinished for decades.

**Carpet's biggest advantage in NB bedrooms is thermal comfort.** From October through April, New Brunswick homes run heating systems that make bare floors noticeably cold, especially in bedrooms over unheated garages or crawl spaces. Quality nylon broadloom with a thick underpad creates an insulating layer that keeps feet warm on winter mornings and dampens sound transmission between floors. A standard NB bedroom (roughly 180 sq ft) costs **\$720–\$1,440 fully installed** with quality carpet and pad. Carpet also reduces noise — a major consideration in two-storey NB homes where bedroom floors sit directly above living spaces.

The downside is lifespan. Even premium carpet shows wear in 10–15 years and cannot be refinished — only replaced. It also harbours dust mites, pet dander, and allergens, which matters in NB's humid summers when indoor air quality can suffer without proper ventilation.

**Hardwood, by contrast, lasts 50–100 years with periodic refinishing** and adds measurable resale value to your home. Engineered hardwood is the smarter choice for NB bedrooms because it handles the province's dramatic humidity swings — indoor levels can shift from 20% in winter to 65% in summer — far better than solid hardwood, which may develop visible gaps during the heating season. A 180 sq ft bedroom costs **\$1,100–\$2,500 fully installed** with engineered hardwood, so the upfront investment is higher but the long-term cost per year of use is often lower.

Hardwood bedrooms do feel cold in NB winters unless you add area rugs, slippers become a necessity, and the click of footsteps at night can wake light sleepers. If noise is a concern, a quality cork or acoustic underlayment beneath engineered hardwood helps significantly.

**Consider your specific NB home conditions.** In older homes (pre-1970s) with board subfloors, both options require subfloor preparation, but carpet is more forgiving of minor imperfections. In homes over damp crawl spaces — common in coastal Saint John, Shediac, and river valley communities like Fredericton and Miramichi — engineered hardwood or even LVP may perform better than carpet, which can absorb moisture and develop musty odours. For second-storey bedrooms in well-maintained homes with proper humidity control, either choice works

beautifully.

**A practical middle ground** that many NB homeowners choose is hardwood throughout the bedroom with a large area rug under and around the bed. You get the durability and value of hardwood with the warmth and softness of carpet where your feet actually touch the floor. The rug can be replaced or cleaned far more easily than wall-to-wall carpet.

**Both carpet and hardwood are straightforward professional installations**, but hardwood installation (nail-down or glue-down) requires specialized tools and experience — always hire a professional. Carpet broadloom also benefits from professional power-stretching for a wrinkle-free result that lasts.

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## What is the best moisture-resistant carpet option for NB basements?

**Carpet tiles with moisture-resistant or waterproof backing are the best carpet option for New Brunswick basements, outperforming traditional broadloom in every measure that matters below grade.** NB's Maritime climate, high water table, and spring snowmelt make basement moisture an ongoing reality rather than a one-time concern, and your flooring choice must account for this.

Traditional broadloom carpet installed directly over a concrete basement slab is one of the most common flooring mistakes in NB homes. The concrete continuously releases moisture vapour — the Maritime water table sits close to the surface across much of the province, and spring snowmelt from April through June temporarily increases that vapour transmission. Standard jute-backed broadloom and rebond foam underpad absorb this moisture like a sponge, creating the musty basement smell that plagues thousands of NB homes within 2–5 years of installation.

**Carpet tiles from brands like Shaw, Interface, or Flor use a fibreglass-reinforced or PVC backing** that blocks moisture migration from below while allowing the tile to be individually removed, cleaned, or replaced if a section gets wet. Expect to pay **\$3–\$6/sq ft for quality carpet tiles** in the NB market. For a typical 400 sq ft basement rec room, that's **\$1,200–\$2,400 for materials** plus installation. Many carpet tiles are designed for loose-lay or peel-and-stick application, making them one of the more DIY-friendly basement flooring options.

**If you prefer the wall-to-wall feel of broadloom**, choose a synthetic-backed carpet (not jute) and pair it with a **closed-cell foam or rubber underpad with a built-in moisture barrier**. Products like DRlcore Subfloor panels or a dimpled drainage membrane (\$1.50–\$3.00/sq ft) installed beneath the pad create an air gap between the concrete and carpet system, allowing moisture to evaporate harmlessly rather than soaking into the pad. This adds cost but dramatically extends carpet life in NB basements.

**Before installing any carpet in an NB basement, moisture testing is non-negotiable.** Use a calcium chloride test or relative humidity probe to measure moisture vapour emission from the slab. If readings exceed 3 lbs per 1,000 sq ft per 24 hours (calcium chloride) or 80% relative humidity (probe test), you need to address the moisture source before laying any flooring. This test costs **\$50–\$150** and takes 24–72 hours — a small investment against a \$2,000+ carpet installation.

**Practical recommendations for NB basement carpet:** Run a dehumidifier year-round, targeting 45–55% relative humidity. Ensure your gutters and downspouts direct water at least 6 feet away from your foundation. Check for visible water seepage or staining on basement walls before investing in carpet. If your basement has a history of water intrusion — even minor dampness during spring thaw — consider luxury vinyl plank or carpet tiles over a drainage membrane rather than broadloom.

**Installation is a good DIY project for carpet tiles** with loose-lay or peel-and-stick backing — straightforward cuts, no power stretching, and no specialized tools. Broadloom carpet, however, requires professional installation with proper seaming and stretching, especially in basements where moisture-resistant pad placement is critical to the system's performance.

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**Q11**

## How much does it cost to carpet a bedroom in New Brunswick?

**Carpeting a standard New Brunswick bedroom (roughly 150–200 sq ft) typically costs \$720–\$1,440 fully installed, including quality carpet, underpad, and professional labour.** The final price depends on the carpet fibre, pile density, pad quality, and any subfloor preparation needed.

Here's how the costs break down for a typical 180 sq ft NB bedroom. **Carpet materials** run \$2–\$5/sq ft for residential-grade broadloom — polyester sits at the lower end (\$2–\$4/sq ft) with a softer feel but less durability, while nylon (\$3–\$5/sq ft) is the more durable and stain-resistant choice that flooring professionals recommend for any room with regular foot traffic. **Quality underpad** adds \$0.50–\$1.50/sq ft and makes a bigger difference in comfort and carpet longevity than most homeowners expect — never let an installer skimp on pad quality to hit a lower price. **Professional installation** runs \$1–\$3/sq ft in the NB market, covering measurement, cutting, seaming, power stretching, and baseboard trim work.

Putting those numbers together for a 180 sq ft bedroom:

- **Budget option** (polyester carpet, standard pad): \$360–\$720 materials, plus \$180–\$540 labour = **roughly \$540–\$1,260 total**

- **Mid-range option** (quality nylon, good pad): \$540–\$900 materials, plus \$180–\$540 labour = **roughly \$720–\$1,440 total**
- **Premium option** (branded nylon or wool, premium pad): \$900–\$1,440 materials, plus \$180–\$540 labour = **roughly \$1,080–\$1,980 total**

**Additional costs to budget for:** If you're replacing existing carpet, removal and disposal adds **\$1–\$2/sq ft (\$180–\$360)**. If the bedroom has old hardwood or vinyl underneath that needs subfloor preparation, add **\$1–\$3/sq ft**. Baseboard removal and reinstallation runs **\$2–\$4/linear foot** if needed. Moving furniture typically adds **\$50–\$200 per room** if your installer handles it.

NB flooring prices run **approximately 10–15% below the national Canadian average**, which is one advantage of living in the Maritimes — but prices vary 25–40% between contractors for identical scope, so **always get at least three quotes** before committing.

**For NB bedrooms specifically**, consider your home's heating setup. Bedrooms over unheated crawl spaces or garages — common in older Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John homes — benefit from a thicker, denser pad (8 lb density or higher) that adds insulation value. During NB's long heating season from October through April, that extra thermal barrier keeps feet noticeably warmer on cold mornings. A premium pad adds only \$50–\$100 to a bedroom installation but makes a meaningful comfort difference.

**Professional installation is recommended for broadloom carpet** — the power stretching, seaming, and edge tucking require specialized tools and experience. A poorly stretched carpet develops ripples and wrinkles within a year, requiring re-stretching that costs \$150–\$300. Getting it done right the first time is worth the labour investment.

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## Should I install carpet on my NB stairs and what style looks best?

**Yes, carpet on stairs is one of the smartest flooring choices for New Brunswick homes — it dramatically reduces noise, adds warmth underfoot during the long heating season, and provides critical traction and cushion on what is statistically the most dangerous area of your home.** For style, a low-profile cut pile or textured loop in a mid-tone colour delivers the best combination of appearance, durability, and safety.

Bare hardwood or painted stairs in NB homes become slippery hazards, especially in winter when dry socks on smooth wood offer almost no grip. Carpet provides a non-slip surface that also cushions falls — important in homes with young children or older residents. It also absorbs the noise of foot traffic between floors, a significant benefit in two-storey NB homes where bedrooms sit above living spaces.

**For stair carpet style and fibre, durability is the priority.** Stairs see concentrated, repetitive foot traffic on the nose (front edge) of each tread, which crushes and wears carpet far faster than flat floors. Choose **nylon fibre with a tight, low-profile cut pile or textured construction** — these resist crushing and matting at the stair nose better than polyester or high-pile options. Avoid frieze (long twisted fibres) and plush velvet on stairs — frieze shows footprints and wear patterns quickly, while plush develops visible traffic lanes within a year or two.

**The three main approaches to stair carpet in NB homes are:**

**Wall-to-wall broadloom** wrapped over each tread and riser creates a seamless, fully covered look. This is the traditional approach and offers maximum noise reduction and warmth. It requires professional installation with proper tucking into each tread-riser junction. Expect to pay **\$15–\$30 per step fully installed** (including materials, pad, and labour) for a standard straight staircase of 12–14 steps, totalling **\$180–\$420** for the full staircase.

**A carpet runner** leaves several inches of finished wood or painted stair exposed on each side, creating a classic, higher-end look that's very popular in NB heritage homes and newer builds alike. Runners are typically 27–36 inches wide, held in place with runner rods or professionally bound edges, and cost **\$200–\$600 installed** depending on the carpet quality and staircase length. This option works beautifully when the underlying wood stairs are in good condition.

**Individual stair treads** (pre-cut carpet pieces for each step) offer a budget-friendly, DIY-possible option at **\$10–\$25 per tread**, but they don't provide the polished look of professional broadloom or runner installation and tend to shift over time.

**NB-specific considerations:** In homes where stairs connect a heated upper floor to a cooler basement or ground level, carpet adds meaningful insulation value to the stair assembly. In coastal NB communities like Saint John or Shediac, the higher ambient humidity means carpet on stairs dries more slowly after being tracked on with wet feet

— choose a **solution-dyed nylon with stain treatment** for easier cleaning. Select a medium-tone pattern or heathered colour that hides dirt and wear rather than a solid light or dark shade.

**Always hire a professional for broadloom stair carpet installation.** Wrapping carpet over stair noses, tucking into risers, and creating invisible seams requires specialized knee-kickers, stair tools, and significant experience. Poorly installed stair carpet is both an eyesore and a tripping hazard — this is not a DIY project.

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## How do I prevent musty carpet smell in my New Brunswick basement?

**Musty carpet smell in NB basements is almost always caused by moisture migrating through the concrete slab and being absorbed by the carpet pad, creating ideal conditions for mould and mildew growth.**

Preventing it requires controlling the moisture source, not just masking the odour — and New Brunswick's Maritime climate makes this a year-round challenge that demands a systematic approach.

NB sits in one of Canada's most moisture-intensive climate zones. The water table across much of the province is relatively shallow, and concrete basement slabs continuously release moisture vapour upward regardless of whether you can see or feel surface dampness. This vapour emission intensifies during **spring snowmelt (April–June)** when the water table rises, and again during **summer humidity peaks (July–August)** when warm, moisture-laden Maritime air condenses on cooler basement surfaces. Standard rebond foam underpad and jute-backed carpet absorb this moisture like a wick, and within 2–5 years, the musty smell becomes entrenched.

**To prevent or eliminate the problem, address these layers in order:**

**Control exterior water first.** Ensure gutters and downspouts direct water at least 6 feet away from your foundation. Grade the soil around your foundation to slope away from the house. Check for visible water seepage or staining on basement walls — if you see active leaks, address those before investing in any flooring solution. These exterior fixes cost relatively little and eliminate the largest moisture sources.

**Run a dehumidifier year-round,** targeting 45–55% relative humidity in the basement. In NB's humid summers, a basement dehumidifier may run continuously and extract 30–50 litres per day. In winter, forced-air heating dries the air naturally, but a dehumidifier still helps during shoulder seasons. A quality dehumidifier costs \$250–\$500 and is the single most effective tool against basement mustiness.

**Install a moisture barrier between the concrete and your carpet system.** If you're installing new carpet, use a **dimpled drainage membrane** (\$1.50–\$3.00/sq ft) over the slab, which creates an air gap that allows moisture vapour to dissipate without contacting the pad. Alternatively, use a **closed-cell foam or rubber underpad with a built-in vapour barrier** instead of standard rebond foam. Never install regular rebond pad directly on NB basement concrete — it's the number one cause of musty carpet basements in the province.

**Choose the right carpet for below-grade NB installations.** Carpet tiles with PVC or fibreglass-reinforced backing (\$3–\$6/sq ft) block moisture from below and can be individually lifted to inspect or dry if needed. If you prefer broadloom, select synthetic-backed carpet (never jute) paired with moisture-resistant pad.

**If your existing carpet already smells musty,** the pad is almost certainly contaminated with mould or mildew. Surface cleaning — even professional steam cleaning — rarely eliminates the odour permanently because the

mould lives in the pad, not the carpet face. In most cases, **replacing the pad and installing a moisture barrier** is necessary. If the carpet fibres themselves have absorbed mould, full replacement is the practical solution. Budget **\$4–\$8/sq ft fully installed** for new moisture-resistant carpet with proper pad and barrier.

**Test your slab's moisture emission** before reinstalling any carpet. A calcium chloride test or relative humidity probe costs **\$50–\$150** and tells you exactly what you're dealing with. If readings are excessively high, a moisture barrier alone may not be sufficient — consult a basement waterproofing professional before investing in new flooring.

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**Q14**

## **What carpet pile type is best for high-traffic areas in NB homes?**

**A textured cut pile (also called textured plush) in nylon fibre is the best carpet pile type for high-traffic areas in New Brunswick homes, offering the ideal balance of durability, appearance retention, and comfort.** It resists matting and crushing far better than smooth plush or polyester options, and its multi-directional fibre twist hides footprints and vacuum marks that plague formal plush carpets.

Understanding how pile type affects performance in heavy-use areas helps you make a confident choice. **Textured cut pile** uses heat-set twisted fibres that point in different directions, creating a casual, forgiving surface that doesn't show footprints or traffic patterns the way a smooth velvet plush does. This is the most popular residential carpet style in NB for good reason — it works in hallways, family rooms, living rooms, and stairs without looking worn within a few years.

**Loop pile (Berber)** is another strong option for high-traffic zones. The uncut loops create a dense, firm surface that resists crushing well and cleans easily. However, loop pile has two drawbacks: it can snag on pet claws or sharp objects, causing runs that are difficult to repair, and some homeowners find it less comfortable underfoot than cut pile. **Level loop** (all loops the same height) performs better in traffic than multi-level loop, which shows wear patterns more readily.

**Cut-loop combinations** (a mix of cut and looped fibres) create attractive patterns and hide soil well, making them a practical choice for NB entryways and family rooms. They offer good durability but can be harder to vacuum thoroughly in the loop sections.

**Pile types to avoid in high-traffic areas:** Saxony (smooth, formal plush) shows every footprint and vacuum mark, developing visible traffic lanes within months in a busy NB household. Frieze (long, tightly twisted fibres with a casual, curly appearance) hides footprints well but tends to mat and tangle in concentrated traffic paths like hallways. Shag carpet of any kind is impractical for high-traffic areas — it crushes, tangles, and traps dirt deep in the fibres.

**Fibre choice matters as much as pile type.** Always choose **nylon** for high-traffic carpet. Nylon's molecular resilience means the fibres bounce back after being compressed by foot traffic — polyester fibres deform permanently under pressure and show matting much sooner. Solution-dyed nylon adds superior stain resistance, which is valuable in NB entryways and family rooms where wet boots, spilled drinks, and tracked-in salt are seasonal realities. Expect to pay **\$3–\$5/sq ft for quality nylon textured cut pile** in the NB market.

**NB-specific considerations for high-traffic carpet:** Winter salt and sand tracked into NB homes from October through April is abrasive and accelerates carpet wear. A good-quality door mat at each entrance, combined with a no-shoes household policy, extends carpet life significantly. During NB's humid summers, carpet in high-traffic areas benefits from dehumidification to prevent the fibres from holding moisture and developing odour. Choose a **medium-tone, multi-colour or heathered pattern** that disguises tracked-in soil between cleanings.

**Pair your carpet with a dense, quality underpad** — 6–8 lb density minimum for high-traffic areas. A thin, cheap pad lets you feel every subfloor imperfection and wears out before the carpet, causing the carpet to break down prematurely. Professional installation with proper power stretching is essential in high-traffic areas to prevent ripples and wrinkles that accelerate wear at the ridge lines.

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Q15

## Can I install broadloom carpet myself or do I need a professional in NB?

**Broadloom carpet installation is one of the few flooring projects where hiring a professional is strongly recommended over DIY, even for experienced NB homeowners.** The specialized tools, seaming techniques, and power-stretching process required for a quality broadloom installation make it fundamentally different from DIY-friendly options like click-lock LVP or carpet tiles.

The core challenge with broadloom is **power stretching**. Carpet must be stretched tightly across the room and hooked onto tack strips around the perimeter. This requires a power stretcher — a professional tool that costs \$300–\$500 to purchase and applies controlled tension across the full width of the room. Without proper stretching, carpet develops ripples and wrinkles within 6–12 months as it relaxes, creating tripping hazards and an unprofessional appearance that eventually requires re-stretching (\$150–\$300). A knee-kicker alone, the smaller tool DIYers often rely on, cannot adequately stretch carpet in rooms larger than a closet.

**Seaming is the second major challenge.** Most NB rooms are wider than a single carpet roll (typically 12 feet wide), requiring at least one seam that must be invisible and durable. Professional seamers use a hot-melt seaming iron and tape to bond carpet edges permanently, creating a joint that's nearly impossible to detect. DIY seams tend to be visible, separate over time, and allow dirt to collect in the gap. In open-concept NB homes with large living areas, a poor seam becomes the most noticeable feature of the installation.

**Stair carpet installation** adds another level of difficulty. Wrapping broadloom over stair noses, tucking into tread-riser junctions, and ensuring each step is uniformly taut requires stair-specific tools and considerable practice. Poorly installed stair carpet is both unsightly and a genuine safety hazard.

**What you CAN do yourself to save money:** Remove existing old carpet and underpad (\$1–\$2/sq ft saved), move furniture out of the room (\$50–\$200 saved), and remove and reinstall baseboards (\$2–\$4/linear foot saved). These preparation tasks are straightforward and reduce the installer's time on site.

**If you want a genuine DIY carpet project,** consider **carpet tiles** instead of broadloom. Modular carpet tiles with peel-and-stick or loose-lay backing are designed for homeowner installation — no stretching, no seaming, no

specialized tools. They're available in quality nylon fibres at **\$3–\$6/sq ft**, and many options include moisture-resistant backings ideal for NB basements. You can replace individual tiles if they stain or wear, which is impossible with broadloom.

**NB-specific factors that favour professional installation:** Many older NB homes — particularly in Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John's established neighbourhoods — have irregular room shapes, radiator alcoves, and uneven subfloors that require experienced fitting. In basements, proper moisture-resistant pad installation over NB's typically damp concrete slabs is critical to preventing mould and musty odours; a professional knows how to layer the vapour barrier and pad correctly.

**Professional broadloom installation in NB runs \$1–\$3/sq ft for labour**, which translates to roughly **\$200–\$600 for a standard bedroom** or **\$400–\$1,200 for a larger living room**. Given the cost of the carpet itself and the risk of a failed DIY installation requiring professional correction, the labour investment is well worth it for broadloom.

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## What thickness of underpad is best for comfort on NB bedroom carpet?

**For maximum comfort in NB bedrooms, choose an underpad that is 7/16 inch (11mm) thick with a density of 6–8 lbs per cubic foot.** This combination provides the plush, cushioned feel you want underfoot while still supporting the carpet properly and maintaining its warranty — going thicker or softer than this actually causes problems.

It's natural to assume that thicker and softer pad equals more comfort, but carpet manufacturers set maximum pad thickness and minimum density specifications for a reason. **Excessively thick or soft underpad** (more than 1/2 inch for most residential carpet) creates too much flex under foot traffic, which stresses and eventually breaks the carpet's backing and click-lock or adhesive seams. It also makes the carpet feel unstable — like walking on a waterbed — rather than luxuriously cushioned. Most residential carpet warranties require pad no thicker than **7/16 inch with a minimum 6 lb density**, so exceeding these specs can void your coverage.

### The three main underpad materials, ranked for NB bedroom comfort:

**Memory foam underpad** (7/16 inch, 6–8 lb density) delivers the most luxurious feel — it compresses slowly underfoot and recovers its shape, creating a noticeably plush walking surface. Expect to pay **\$1.50–\$2.50/sq ft** in NB. This is the premium choice for bedrooms where comfort is the top priority.

**Rebond foam underpad** (7/16 inch, 6–8 lb density) is the industry standard and most common choice. Made from recycled foam pieces bonded together, it provides good cushion and support at **\$0.50–\$1.50/sq ft**. It's the best value for most NB bedroom installations and performs well for 10–15 years.

**Rubber underpad** (typically thinner at 3/8 inch but very dense) offers firm support and excellent durability. It doesn't feel as soft as foam but maintains its performance for 20+ years and provides superior moisture resistance. At **\$1.00–\$2.00/sq ft**, rubber pad is a strong choice if your NB bedroom sits over an unheated crawl space or if you prioritize longevity over maximum softness.

**New Brunswick's climate makes pad choice especially important in bedrooms.** During the heating season from October through April, bare floors radiate cold, and the underpad serves as a thermal insulation layer between your feet and the subfloor. A **7/16 inch, 8 lb density pad provides measurable insulation value** (roughly R-1 to R-1.5) that you'll feel on cold NB mornings. For bedrooms over unheated garages or crawl spaces — common in older Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John homes — this thermal buffer makes a meaningful difference in comfort and can modestly reduce heating costs.

If your NB bedroom is on the second floor above a heated space, pad choice is more about comfort and sound dampening than thermal insulation. In this case, a quality 7/16 inch rebond pad provides excellent noise reduction

between floors — a real benefit when bedrooms sit above living areas.

**One important caution for NB bedrooms over concrete (basement bedrooms):** Standard rebond pad absorbs moisture from below. In basement bedrooms, choose a **closed-cell foam pad or rubber pad with a built-in moisture barrier**, even though it may feel slightly less plush. The trade-off in softness prevents the musty odour problems that plague NB basements with standard foam pad. Budget roughly **\$0.50–\$1.00/sq ft more** for a moisture-resistant pad.

**Always confirm your specific carpet's pad requirements** with the manufacturer or your installer before purchasing — the wrong pad can void the carpet warranty and shorten its lifespan regardless of how comfortable it feels on day one.

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