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Winter 2008

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Left opposite page: With pets, hard flooring is easier to keep clean than wall-to-wall carpeting.

Above: Choose durable fabrics that will help conceal your pet's hair on the furniture.

Left this page: An open room not only creates warmth and flow to a room, but also allows your pet to move about freely.

A Pet-Friendly Place Called Home

By Alison Adamo

Interior designer Christopher Hoover offers tips on how to pet-proof your home

Just picture it now: You recently hired an interior designer to give your living room a facelift. After spending thousands of dollars on extravagant furniture and beautiful flooring, you sit down to admire the hard work put into your newly made over room. But wait! It seems as if your Chocolate Lab has shed his entire coat on your new (and expensive) white couch, and you wonder why he wasn't taken into consideration beforehand.

According to Christopher Hoover, Allied ASID and owner of Environmental Design Services (EDS) in San Francisco, "A pet is also a member of the family. Making accommodations for him or her from the beginning can alleviate much frustration down the road. At EDS, we always try to make a space for the pet's bed and food/water bowls that is out of sight, yet comfortable for him or her." Additionally, Hoover suggests hard flooring for clients with pets. "Hard floors are easier to keep clean than wall-to-wall carpeting," he adds.

In the past, Hoover was the proud pet parent of a Cocker Spaniel with a light coat and a Tibetan Terrier with

a sable coat. "The Cocker Spaniel would constantly shed and, being a fan of dark flooring, it was something I constantly had to battle," he says. "When choosing the stain color of flooring, I consider animals, children and the client's tolerance for maintenance and upkeep."

There are other ways to pet proof your home. If your furry friend has a tendency to linger on the furniture, Hoover recommends choosing durable fabrics that help conceal his or her hair. "If you have a dog with a coat that sheds, you will undoubtedly have issues with fur on surfaces," he notes. Your pet-friendly environment should include surfaces that can be cleaned easily, flooring and durable fabrics that complement the color of the pet's fur, a comfortable area for his or her bed and food station, and easy access to the outdoors.

Hoover notes that pet proofing the entire home is only necessary if the pet is allowed in all areas, as well as if he or she is permitted to climb on the furniture. "I have had several clients with well trained pets that never ventured into the living room or the kitchen. If your pet is likely to have run of the home, it is wise to consider

this when choosing fabrics and finishes," he says. What's more, you should vacuum your furniture weekly; professional cleaning of your upholstery should be done as needed—generally once a year.

When hiring an interior designer, it is important to keep your precious pet in mind when discussing potential design elements. "Our ultimate goal is to lead the client to smart choices that will make his or her lifestyle and comfort the best it can be," Hoover says. "At EDS, we aim to give a space a warm, clean and luxurious feel without limiting its usefulness. Having grown up in a home where the living room was off limits, I have made it my mission to create a space where you can kick your feet up without guilt (mind you, muddy boots are still not welcomed!)." 🐾

Environmental Design Services is a member of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), International Interior Design Association (IIDA), and National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA). For more information, call (415) 441-4328 or visit www.eds-interiors.com.



Christopher Hoover, Allied ASID

Headshot: Matt Photography; above: Jacob Elliot

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