

HOW A 9' OPTION IN FLOORING SIZE EQUATES TO LESS WASTE & LOWER COST

With both broadloom carpet and resilient sheet vinyl, the vast majority of products come in rolls that are 12-feet in width. There are few variations; some manufacturers provide sheet goods in 12' 6", 6', and 9' widths as well, but the 12-foot roll is decidedly the industry standard. However, there is one large area in which the standard 12' or even 6' roll comes up short (or long): corridors. The tables below provide an illustration of how the use of a 9-foot roll in a corridor can provide significant cost savings to the end user:

CORRIDOR DIMENSIONS	
Corridor width (in feet)	8.5
Corridor length (in feet)	300
Total square feet	2,550
Total square yards required	283
Material cost per square yard	\$30.00

Roll Width (in feet)	9.0	12.0
Roll length (in feet)	300	300
Total square yards required to order	300	400
Material waste (in square yards)	17	117
Material waste (in %)	5.6%	29.2%
Wasted material cost	\$500.00	\$3,500.00
Savings realized using a 9-foot roll over a 12-foot roll in just one corridor	\$3,000.00	

Standard building corridors are between 8- and 8 ½-feet in width. A 12' roll that is run down the length of the hallway will create a large amount of wasted material that must be trimmed from the sides of the roll. This also equates to a large amount of wasted money spent on that flooring material that will go straight to the recycle bin or dumpster. The only exception to this large amount of wasted material and money is if the installer "railroads" the material, i.e., turning the flooring so there are seams every 12' feet down the length of the corridor. A well-installed seam will be virtually undetectable, but never invisible. In addition, seams are always the weakest point of a flooring installation, whether resilient sheet goods or carpet.

Many flooring manufacturers are making both carpet and sheet goods in 6-foot wide rolls as well. Carpet or resilient flooring that is 6-feet in width will not create the same amount of waste of either material or dollars, but it too will create a seam down the entire length of the corridor. The following is taken from the Carpet & Rug Institute's website (<http://www.carpet-rug.org/commercial-customers/selecting-the-right-carpet/size-options.cfm>):

This narrow carpet roll (6-foot width) is often a benefit in high-rise buildings where transporting a 12-foot roll is difficult or expensive. The narrow width may also provide a cost savings where many hallways or other narrow spaces exist. However, careful planning is needed to avoid more seams.

The reason most manufacturers do not take advantage of providing a 9' roll is almost purely cost-driven. The machinery for manufacturing both carpet and sheet vinyl is standardized for 12-foot goods. The machinery, labor, and necessary manufacturing down-time during the change-over make the production of variably sized goods unattainable for most flooring manufacturers.

However, the cost expenditures could soon be realized in the added business they will surely receive once end users become aware of the significant material savings that can be realized through using 9-foot goods in corridors and smaller rooms throughout a large facility, as seen in the example above.