



# Foam Rubber in the Home

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**A** COMPARATIVE newcomer to the upholstery field, foam rubber is rapidly outpacing the traditional paddings and fillings such as kapok, flock, horsehair, and feathers formerly used for the purpose. Foam rubber gives a trim, sleek look well fitted to modern room settings and is, barring accidents, virtually indestructible. Like everything else it has its enemies; it is damaged by intense heat, strong sunlight, and grease and oil. But these are open adversaries, easily seen and guarded against, whereas the ruthless and voracious moths and carpet beetles which work in the dark and in secret have no effect on rubber.

**F**OAM rubber is a soft, resilient material made by whipping latex, the milk-like juice of the rubber tree, to a frothy foam and then moulding it into sheets which can be cut into shapes as desired or into permanent form. The foam sets into a honeycomb of minute interconnecting air cells held together and supported by latex.

There are two types of foam rubber. One is cavity sheet, which is made up to about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. thick and which is used for mattresses, car seats, seats and backs of chairs, and where deep upholstery is required. The other is plain sheet, available from  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. up to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. thick and has a variety of uses. In upholstery it is used for arm rests, occasionally on chair backs, and also

as stiffening strips to edge cavity strips where required.

## Foam Rubber and Sponge Rubber

The terms foam rubber and sponge rubber are often used synonymously, but they refer to two different products. Foam rubber is made by whipping pure latex to a froth and baking it. It is made up of a honeycomb of interconnecting air cells which are open to the outside air and which in use are continually expelling and drawing in air as pressure is applied or released. Because of this action good ventilation is assured. It also explains why, if foam rubber is on a solid base of either wood or metal, ventilation holes are necessary in the base.

**HEADING PHOTOGRAPH:** Suite of modern furniture with foam rubber seats and backs.