



## Carpet Maintenance

### THE BEST VACUUM

Keep in mind that carpet is probably subject to more abuse than any other home furnishing. Different qualities and styles of carpet will perform differently, and the way the carpet is vacuumed and maintained, as well as the condition of the vacuum cleaner, can also affect performance.

It is essential to vacuum often (minimum once per week), using a top quality vacuum, to prolong the life of the carpet.

Vacuum cleaners with revolving brushes or beater bars and a high filtration internally- housed vacuum bag are recommended for the best overall cleaning. Change the bag regularly and check for worn belts.

### DEALING WITH SPILLS

Many carpets available today have been treated with a stain resistant treatment and/or a soil repellent treatment. Most food and beverage spills can be cleaned easily without leaving a permanent stain; however, even carpet with a stain resistant treatment is not "stain proof". The longer the spill or staining material is allowed to remain on the carpet, the more difficult it may be to remove.

Change of colour may occur as a result of contact with certain household products. Some, such as acne medicines, will cause a gradual change while others, such as bleaches, strippers or products containing bleaching agents, will cause almost immediate change. This type of change is due to the destruction or severe modification of the carpet dye and cannot be corrected.

Staining of carpets can be caused by contact with products such as beverages, mustard, foods, medicines, iodine, hair products, pesticides, vomit, urine, feces and indoor plant fertilizer. In effect, the carpet fibre is dyed by the colourant in the product and many such stains are therefore virtually permanent.

For both colour change and staining, prevention is the best cure. Products such as those noted above should be kept away from carpets.

Follow these general procedures for emergency stain removal

Act quickly when anything is dropped or spilled. Remove spots before they dry.

Remove any loose material prior to cleaning up the stain.

**Never scrub - always blot. Do not rub vigorously.**

Blot liquids with a clean, white, absorbent cloth or paper towel. For semi-solids, scoop up with a rounded spoon. For solids, break up and vacuum out as much as possible.

Pre-test any spot removal agent in an inconspicuous area to make certain it will not damage the carpet or its dyes.



Apply a small amount of the recommended cleaning solution to the cloth. Work in gently. Do not scrub. Work from the edges of the spot to the centre. Blot thoroughly. Repeat until the spot is removed.

Follow the steps on the Carpet Spot Removal Chart. After each application, absorb as much as possible before proceeding to the next step.

Repeat with clean water, and blot again to remove any remaining cleaner residue. To ensure the cleaned area has been thoroughly neutralized of any cleaning residue, dampen with white vinegar.

Absorb remaining moisture with layers of white paper towels, weighted down with a non-staining glass or ceramic object.

When completely dry, vacuum or brush the pile to restore the texture.

If the spot is not completely removed, contact a professional carpet cleaner.

#### MAINTENANCE - Carpet Spot Removal Chart

1	Dry Cleaning Fluid - A non-flammable spot removal liquid available in grocery and hardware stores.
2	Nail Polish Remover (Amyl Acetate) - Often has a banana fragrance. Do not use if it contains acetone.
3	Detergent Solution - Mix 2 cups of cold water and 1/8 teaspoon of mild liquid detergent (no lanolin. non-bleach).
4	Warm Water - Lukewarm tap water.
5	Vinegar Solution - One part white vinegar to one part water.
6	Ammonia Solution - One tablespoon household ammonia to one cup of water.
7	Spot Removal Kit - Available from retail carpet stores or professional cleaners.
8	Call a Professional - For additional suggestions, special cleaning chemicals or the ability to patch the area.

Find the spot source in the first column and read across that row for the correct method to try. Try the first method suggested, then the second, and third, etc., until the spot is successfully removed.

Spot	Method
Acid	6,4,8
Acne Medication	1,3,6,5,4,8
Alcoholic Beverage	3,6,5,4
Ammonia	5,4
Bleach	3,4,8
Blood	3,6,4,7
Candle Wax	1,6



Cement and Glue	2,1,3,6,5,7
Chalk	3,4
Charcoal	3,4
Chewing Gum	1
Coffee	3,5,4,7,8
Cosmetics	2,1,3,6,5,4,7,8
Crayon	1,3,4
Drain/Toilet Cleaner	4,3,5
Dye	1,3,6,5,7,8
Food	3,6,5,4,7,8
Fungicides/Insecticides/Pesticides	1,3,6,5,4,8
Furniture Polish (Water Base)	3,6,5,4,7,8
Furniture Polish (Solvent Base)	2,1,3,6,5,4,7
Furniture Stain	2,1,3,6,5,4,7,8
Graphite	3,4
Grease	1,3,4,7,8
Ink	2,1,3,6,5,4,7,8
Iodine	1,3,5,4,7,8
Lipstick	2,1,3,6,5,4,7,8
Medicine	2,1,3,6,5,4,7,8
Merthiolate	3,6,5,4,7,8
Nail Polish	2,1,3,7,8
Oil	1,3,6,4,8
Paint	2,1,3,7,8
Plant Food	3,6,5,4,7,8
Rust	5,3,4,7,8
Shoe Polish	2,1,3,6,4,7,8
Soft Drinks	3,6,5,4,7,8
Soot	1,3,4,8
Tar	1,7,8
Toothpaste	3
Urine	3,5,7,8
Vomit	3,6,5,4,7,8
Wine	3,6,5,4

*NOTE: Some spills contain chemicals that may discolour or even damage the carpet fibres or dyes. If you have doubts about what caused the spill or how to remove it, contact a professional carpet cleaner.*

**LONG TERM CARE - Deep Cleaning**

While vacuuming on a regular basis is essential, consider deep cleaning your carpet at least once every twelve to eighteen months. A certified professional cleaner is recommended. However, you may want to do it yourself. If the choice is to personally clean the carpet, review the manufacturer's recommendations so that the method used does not void the warranty.

**Wet Method - either a shampoo cleaning or hot water extraction method.**



It is extremely important not to over-wet the carpet. Undercushion should not become wet. Over-wetting can result in wicking of staining material from the backing and even promote the growth of mould and mildew on the backing or cushion.

It is necessary to remove furniture or place plastic or aluminium foil under and around the furniture legs to prevent rust or stains.

When the carpet is rinsed, the rinse water should contain a good quality "all fibre rinse" neutralizing agent.

For hot water extraction, room temperature should be maintained at normal levels. Increasing temperature will increase humidity and prolong drying time.

Let the carpet dry completely before walking on it. Fans and open windows will speed up the drying process.

The carpet should be thoroughly dried within 12 to 24 hours in order to avoid the possible growth of mould or mildew.

Shampoo cleaning should be either rinsed with the hot water extraction method or thoroughly vacuumed to remove residue.

#### **Dry Method - either absorbent compound, absorbent pad, or dry foam method**

These methods are minimum-moisture systems that may be applicable for certain types of carpet and where high humidity makes it difficult to remove a wet cleaning solution. Professional cleaning can save you time and energy.

Ask your retailer if he can recommend a certified professional cleaner. Check references. Or contact a cleaning or floorcovering association, but be sure to obtain a qualified, certified cleaner. You can also contact the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (1-800-835-4624) to obtain the names of member firms in your area. The IICRC has published a standard for carpet cleaning referred to as IICRC S001-1991. You may wish to request that this standard be adhered to by your cleaner.

Some professional cleaners have the capability of cleaning area rugs either in your home or in their own facility.

**IMPORTANT:** Be sure that the room is well ventilated with fresh air (open doors and/or windows and use exhaust fans) during and immediately after the cleaning process.

All methods - it is essential to fully extract all soil, moisture and cleaning agents from the carpet after each deep cleaning procedure. The carpet, when dry, should then be vacuumed.