

Caring for your carpet

Regular vacuuming

Once carpet is laid, vacuum lightly to remove fluff and lint. Vacuuming should continue at least weekly after that to remove soil and dirt. Quickly removing soil will reduce abrasive forces on the pile fibre. For heavy traffic areas, slow repeated vacuum strokes over the same area of carpet may be necessary. Always vacuum against the natural direction of the pile to help remove dirt. When finishing, vacuum in the direction of the pile to achieve a uniform finish.

Vacuum cleaners and carpet

There are two major types of vacuum cleaners: barrel cleaners and upright cleaners. Upright cleaners are particularly good as they incorporate a pile agitator such as a beater bar or revolving bristle strip that lifts the pile and facilitates the removal of dirt and grit. However, be careful with the agitator as over-use can damage the pile surface. Barrel cleaners rely on suction removal only and most perform the task quite well. Some barrel cleaners now have power head attachments to agitate the pile in the same manner as upright cleaners. Ensure the vacuum cleaner is kept in a sound mechanical condition, and that brushes are cleaned and replaced when worn out.

Hot Water Injection and Extraction – (steam cleaning)

Hot water extraction is generally recognized as the best way to re-vitalise and deep clean your carpet. As a general guideline, steam cleaning should be carried out at 12 – 18 month intervals, depending on the wear and use of the environment. Injection cleaning and extraction should be left to experienced carpet cleaners, preferably a member of a recognised industry group.

Spot cleaning: Do it yourself

It is important to remove any spillage as soon as possible before it penetrates the carpet fibre and pile. In the case of spills, remove the excess spillage immediately by first scraping any solids and blotting liquids with an absorbent material. Use a spoon or blunt knife to remove the bulk of semi-solids or greasy substances and follow this by blotting. Always begin at the outer edge and work towards the centre of the stained area using a blotting or dabbing motion. After most of the spill has been absorbed, place a fresh pile of paper towels over the area and place a flat weight on them. Never rub a stain.

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The following table lists some common types of stains and steps recommended to remove them. Use each cleaning method in the sequence listed and follow the spot cleaning procedure.

Origin of Stain	Nylon	Wool	Polypropylene
Beverages (tea, coffee, soft drinks)	13, 14, 13, 1	1, 2	
Blood	13, 15, 13, 3	3, 2	5, 1
Chewing gum	16; 6, (3-5 min) Repeat if necessary	4	16, 6, 5, 1
Chocolate	13, 15, 13, 1	1, 5	6, 5, 1
Crayon/ Colour marker	6, 3, 17, 3 Repeat if necessary	6, 2	6, 5, 1
Fruit Juice	13, 14, 13, 1	1, 2	5, 1
Furniture polish	6, 13, 1	6, 5, 7	6, 5, 1
Ink (ballpoint pen)	6, 13, 1	18, 2	6, 18, 1
Lipstick	6, 13, 1	6, 2, 1	18, 5, 1, 6
Nail polish	8	8, 6	8
Oil and grease	6, 13, 1	6, 5	6, 5, 1
Paint (oil)	6, 13, 1	9 or 10, 6, 5, 7	9, 6, 5, 1
Shoe polish	6, 13, 1	6, 5	5, 1, 6
Urine (damp stain)	1, 15, 13, 1	5	5, 1
Urine (dry stain)	13, 14, 15, 13, 1	7	5, 1
Vomit	19, 13, 15, 13, 1	7	5, 1, 6
Wax (candle)	12 or 16, 6 (3-5 min)	11, 6	
Wine (white)	13, 14, 13, 1	1, 2	20, 5, 1
Wine (red)	20, 1, 21	1, 2	20, 5,

Legend

- 1 Clean warm water
- 2 Fabric detergent = solution of 1 teaspoon (5ml) of approved wool detergent with 1 teaspoon of white vinegar and 1 litre of warm water
- 3 Clean cold water
- 4 Chewing gum remover (freezing agent)
- 5 Carpet shampoo solution
- 6 Dry cleaning fluid. Caution: ensure that no flame or lighted cigarette is near, and use in well ventilated area.
- 7 Consult specialist
- 8 Nail polish remover - should not include lanolin or be of a greasy nature
- 9 Turpentine
- 10 White spirit
- 11 Absorbent paper and hot iron
- 12 Brown paper and warm iron
- 13 Detergent = 1 teaspoon clear dishwashing detergent with 1 cup warm water
- 14 Undiluted white vinegar
- 15 Ammonia - undiluted household ammonia, foaming type containing detergent
- 16 Freeze with ice cube, shatter with blunt object and vacuum clean
- 17 Solution = water and non-bleach mild detergent
- 18 Methylated Spirits. Caution: ensure that no flame or lighted cigarette is near, and use in well ventilated area
- 19 Baking soda, scrape and vacuum
- 20 Absorbent powder (salt). Sprinkle on spillage, leave overnight and vacuum next day.
- 21 Dye stripper. Dilute 50 to 1 with cold water. Caution: Do not use on dark or patterned carpet.

Carpet cleaning: Professional services

For difficult stains, or for expert assistance, we suggest you contact a professional carpet cleaner.

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