

## Carpet Care and Maintenance

### Reduce Soil Accumulation

- ✧ Use doormats at all entrances to keep outside dirt from being tracked onto the carpet. You may want to relocate furniture periodically to allow for an even distribution of traffic and wear on the carpet. Mats and runners on uncarpeted areas adjacent to carpet will reduce soil in heavy traffic areas.
- ✧ The most used areas, such as entrances, doorways, traffic lanes, and in front of chairs will collect dirt faster than other areas. Clean these areas as they begin to show soil. This will stop dirt from spreading and will extend the time between professional cleaning.

### Vacuum regularly

Regular vacuuming and periodic professional cleaning are recommended to keep your carpet looking beautiful. Most dirt, even dust, is in the form of hard particles. When left in the carpet, these gritty, sharp particles abrade the pile as effectively as sandpaper. Regular and thorough vacuuming not only prolongs the life of the carpet, but will enhance its appearance as well.

### Stain Removal

- ✧ Treatment of the affected area should begin immediately upon discovery. The more time that elapses before treatment, the more difficult a stain will be to remove. No carpet is stain-proof, although many are stain resistant.
- ✧ First, scrape food spills gently with a spoon or dull knife, removing as much as possible. Absorb *wet spills* as quickly as possible by blotting repeatedly with white paper or cloth towels. Always work from outer edge of the stain towards the center to avoid spreading. Do not rub or scrub, as the carpet may fuzz.

A good checklist to handle spills should include the following items. Do not use any household cleaners other than those listed, since many household products contain chemicals that may permanently damage your carpet.

1. When using a mild detergent, use a clear, non-bleach liquid dishwashing detergent (such as *Dawn*, *Joy*, or clear *Ivory*). Do not use cloudy detergents as they can leave a sticky residue. Use only ¼ teaspoon of detergent to 32 ounces of water. Follow detergent cleaning with clear water rinsing (until all detergent residue is removed) and then blot dry as much as possible.
2. A solution of one part white vinegar to one part water
3. White cloths or paper towels
4. An ammonia solution of one tablespoon of ammonia to one cup of water. **Do not use on wool or wool-blend products.**
5. Non-oily nail polish remover
6. Chewing gum remover (freeze or solid type)
7. Spot remover specifically for grease, oil, or tar, such as *Carbona* or *Energine*

**Note:** Difficult stains on carpets made from solution-dyed fibers such as polypropylene (olefin) and solution-dyed nylon may be removed with a mild bleach solution (one part chlorine bleach to five parts water). **WARNING: Do not use bleach solution unless you are absolutely certain your carpet is 100% solution-dyed. Carpet dyed by other systems will be damaged.**

- ✧ Draw out any remaining moisture by placing several layers of white towels over the spot and weigh them down with a heavy object that will not transfer color, such as a plastic jug of water.

Even with regular vacuuming, soil particles and oily dirt will cling to the carpet fibers. With foot traffic, these particles and oily dirt are driven deep into the carpet. **We recommend professional cleaning with hot water extraction every 12 to 18 months.**

### Stain Removal Procedures

The recommendations on the following chart should be used for spot cleaning. The numbers are keyed to the stain, and all instructions should be used in the recommended sequence. Some stains are marked **PRO**, indicating that professional knowledge and equipment are necessary.

**A. Water Soluble Stains** - Absorb as much as possible with **white** towels. Blot the stained area with white towels dampened with cool water until there is no more transfer of stain onto the towels. If any of the stain remains, use the detergent solution previously described. Spray lightly onto the spot and blot repeatedly with white towels, working from the outer edge toward the center of the spot to avoid spreading.

**Rinse thoroughly** by spraying with clean water, and then blot or extract. Do not use too much detergent, because the residue will contribute to rapid re-soiling.

STAIN	REMOVAL PROCEDURE
Alcoholic Beverages	A
Asphalt	B, PRO
Beer	A
Betadine	PRO
Berries	A
Blood (wet)	A
Blood (dry)	A-2
Butter	B
Chewing Gum	C
Chocolate	A-2
Coffee	A-1 (D if necessary)
Cola Drinks	A
Cosmetics	A (D if necessary)
Crayon	B
De-icer (Calcium Chloride)	Vacuum, A
Excrement	A
Food Dyes	A
Furniture Polish	A, B, PRO
Glue (white)	A

**A-1.** As in A, but before using detergent, apply the white vinegar solution to a white towel and blot or spray onto spot.

**A-2.** As in A, but before using detergent, apply a household ammonia solution to a white towel and blot or spray onto spot. **Do not use on wool or wool-blend carpet.** Rinse as in A.

**B. Oil-Based Stains** - Blot as much as possible with white paper towels. Apply a special oil such as Carbona or Energine to a paper towel and repeat blotting. (Protective gloves should be worn, as the solvent will quickly remove oils from the skin and could result in irritation.) Do not pour or spray directly on the carpet pile, as damage to the backing or adhesive underneath the carpet could result; use the towels to apply the solvent to the carpet. Repeat as often as necessary.

**Provide adequate ventilation. Do not use flammable solvents.** Follow with procedures in A.

**C. Freeze** stains such as chewing gum and candle wax with ice or commercially available product in an aerosol can. Shatter with a blunt object and vacuum before the chips soften. Follow up with solvent as in B.

**D. Bleach** - **WARNING** - Only carpets that are **solution-dyed** are resistant to bleaching, but do not exceed the recommended concentration. For solution-dyed carpets with stains such as food dyes, fruit drink, and coffee not removed by A-1, use a solution of one part chlorine bleach to five parts water.

Rinse several times with water to remove excess bleach so that none is tracked to other areas of the carpet. Do not use on conventionally-dyed carpet.

Gravy	A
Grease (auto)	B, PRO
Grease (food)	B
Ice Cream	A
Ink (ballpoint)	B, PRO
Ink (permanent)	B (D if Necessary)
Ink (washable)	A
Jelly	A
Lipstick	B
Milk	A
Mud	A
Mustard	A (D if necessary)
Nail Polish	Polish Remover
Paint (Latex, wet)	A
Paint (Latex, dry)	B
Paint (oil)	B, PRO
Rust	PRO
Shoe Polish	B
Tea	A (D if necessary)
Urine	A-1, PRO
Vomit	A-1
Wax	C
Wine	A-2

### **Cleaning**

While vacuuming can remove most dry soil, it is also necessary to clean your carpet on a regular basis to remove the oily, sticky soil that builds up in the pile as a result of cooking vapors, air pollution, and tracked-in dirt. The particles of oily soil deposited on carpet fibers can cause gradual but significant dulling of delicate colors; the color is not lost but is hidden under the film. If this type of soil is allowed to accumulate, it begins to attract and hold dry soil. This is the reason cleaning is so important when dulling of color is first noticed; if allowed to remain too long, it becomes gummy and difficult to remove.

**Warning:** Certain products found in most homes can cause irreparable damage to your carpet. Bleaches, tile cleaners, mildew removers, oven cleaners, and drain openers are very strong chemicals that can discolor or dissolve most carpet fibers. Acne medications containing benzoyl peroxide, a very powerful bleach, are capable of permanently damaging your carpet and most other fabrics as well.

### **The following common characteristics are not covered under most manufacturer warranties:**

#### ✧ **Appearance Retention**

All carpets change in appearance over time, primarily due to foot traffic. Carpet in heavy traffic areas will exhibit the most change. A good quality carpet pad will add to the carpet's durability. Over time, tips of tufts in cut-pile carpet will lose some twist, causing it to bloom. This is normal and to be expected.

#### ✧ **Crushing**

Crushing is the compaction of the pile thickness due to foot traffic or furniture. Regular use of a vacuum with a beater bar in high traffic areas may help reduce changes in appearance.

✧ **Fading or Color Loss**

Carpet may slowly lose color over time. This can be caused from direct sunlight, ozone, emissions from heating fuels, pesticides, cleaning agents, benzoyl peroxide, and other household items. Care should be taken when using these items. Window treatments will reduce exposure to direct sunlight.

✧ **Footprints**

Cut-pile carpets will show footprints and vacuum cleaner marks. The selection of a carpet with a lower pile height and denser construction will help to minimize this effect.

✧ **Indentations**

Indentations will occur from furniture or heavy objects. Furniture coasters will assist in spreading the weight of the object to a larger area. Brushing the affected area with your fingertips will usually restore the crushed tufts to their original position.

✧ **Matting**

The entanglement of fibers and tufts of yarn tips may be caused by a cushion failure or, most often, improper maintenance. Residue from a spill that was not cleaned up thoroughly or cleaning residue that has not been rinsed completely will lead to matting.

✧ **Shading**

Shading is a change in pile direction that results in an apparent change in color. Solid color cut-pile carpets will exhibit this more often than textured or patterned carpets. This is normal. Severe cases of shading are also known as pooling or watermarking. This results in a permanent pile reversal that occurs after installation. It has no known cause and is usually confined only to certain areas of an installation. Pooling or watermarking is not considered a manufacturing defect.

✧ **Shedding**

Shedding is a normal characteristic of cut-pile carpets. *It is more apparent in staple products versus continuous filament products.* Regular vacuuming using a vacuum cleaner with a beater bar will remove most of the loose fibers during the first year.

✧ **Filtration Soiling**

Dust, dirt, pollen, cooking vapors, and other airborne pollutants may appear as dark lines along walls, vents, and doorways. This is usually due to an imbalanced ventilation system that is incapable of removing the volume of air entering the room. The excess air escapes through gaps between floors, walls, and doorways. Professional cleaning may clean the affected areas, but the condition will usually return unless the ventilation problems are corrected. Carpet of any quality will perform the same if subjected to filtration inefficiencies.