

# Protect your investment



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Carpet is an important design and decorative element. Its colour, pattern and texture contribute to an overall atmosphere and visual effect that can dramatically influence the image of private and commercial premises. It offers many functional benefits, but above all it is cost effective.

## Protect your carpet investment

A carefully planned and executed maintenance program will help protect the aesthetic and functional value of your carpet. Such a program should be considered at the time of carpet selection and finalised at the latest before installation. This maintenance guide has been compiled to help you plan and implement an effective care program.

## Planning a maintenance program

Maintenance programs may be carried out by in-house staff, by outside professional cleaners or a combination of both. Whichever is chosen a clean should pre-inspect the carpet, identify its construction and fibre, evaluate the soiling and cleaning needs and proceed with the appropriate cleaning method and procedures. Should you choose to outsource your carpet maintenance or any part of it, etc. Group is willing to assist with names and details of reputable cleaning firms.

The effectiveness of any cleaning program depends on careful supervision, trained personnel and the use of correct equipment and chemicals.

There are four key steps:

- Preventative measures
- Regular maintenance
- Interim maintenance
- Long term maintenance

## Preventative measures

Good quality walk-off matting and similar soiling barriers provide the first protection against tracked-in dirt which typically accounts for 80% of the soil deposited on carpets.

## Entrance matting

Main entrances are especially vulnerable to heavy soiling, the majority of which is deposited directly by foot traffic. We estimate that within approximately 3 metres of carpet, the residual soil off a pair of shoes is effectively removed. Therefore we consider that 3 metres of entrance matting will greatly reduce the amount of tracked-in dirt and in turn reduce the degree of maintenance. We recommend a minimum of 2 metres of entry matting outside all main entrances.

The cost of such a system is not small but the long term savings through careful planning in this area will far out-weigh such costs. The greatest carpet killer is abrasion by grit and soiling by dirt. Because 80% of soil is carried into a building on shoes it follows that performance and appearance retention is not entirely the responsibility of the carpet.

**Remember: prevention is better than cure.**

## Regular maintenance

Carpets are very tolerant floor coverings and can be significantly soiled long before soiling is visibly evident. Controlling soil is a preventative concept which will keep soiling to a minimum and prevent the build-up of abrasive dirt which can damage the carpet. With tracked-in and airborne soil accounting for 95% of the overall soil deposited on carpet it follows that regular vacuuming is the most important component of our carpet maintenance program. Effective vacuuming removes up to 80% of the soil present in carpets.

## Special care areas

A good maintenance program gives special attention to the area where soil is tracked in (such as entrance doorways) and to areas where foot traffic is most concentrated (such as passage ways, lift entries, etc). This may only be a small percentage of the total carpet area but can account for most of the maintenance cost.

# Cleaning techniques



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## Vacuuming

A sturdy vacuum cleaner with strong suction and a revolving agitator bar, beater bar or brush usually yields the best results. For effective vacuuming follow these guidelines:

1. Select professional equipment that is suited to your installation and volume traffic.
2. Use vacuum cleaners with good efficient filtering systems to prevent redistribution of the fine particles.
3. Vacuum slowly and thoroughly making three to five passes over an area.
4. Empty vacuum bags frequently (a bag 2/3 full reduces the vacuum efficiency by 50%).
5. Keep all equipment clean and ensure all parts are in good working order. Ensure that the floor tool is repaired or replaced should it become burred so as not to damage any loop pile carpeting.
6. The use of a quality vacuum cleaner with turbo adjusted according to pile height is strongly recommended. Please test head adjustment in an inconspicuous area.

## Vacuuming techniques

1. For high traffic and tracked-in-soil areas, vacuum daily using equipment with good brush action and high air flow.
2. For lighter traffic areas such as offices, conference rooms etc. vacuum every 2nd or 3rd day depending on usage.

Note: Despite the efficiency of regular vacuuming it will not remove oily or fine contamination bonded to the carpet pile. These must be removed with periodic deep cleaning, outlined in Long-term maintenance.

## Spot and stain removal

Every carpet is bound to acquire occasional spots and stains during its life. Most stains can be avoided by immediate or at least daily treatment of spots and spills. If not treated they can often become permanent stains. It is good housekeeping practice to keep a commercial spotting kit on hand, however the following guide will assist you in removing most common spots and spills.

## Important general techniques

1. Act quickly! When something has been spilled, take steps immediately to rectify it.
2. For liquid spills, remove as much as possible with a wet vacuum cleaner or blot / absorb with a sponge or towel. Blot small amounts with a clean white cloth or paper towel. Always work from the outside towards the centre. Proceed with the specified treatment for the remaining stain.
3. For semi-solid spots, remove as much surface material using a spoon, dull knife or scraper. Always work from the outside toward the centre. Wipe up any remaining excess with a dry towel. Proceed with the specified treatment for the remaining stain. Remember: It is important to remove as much residue as possible before any chemicals are introduced.
4. For dry soil stains (sand, soot, etc.) remove as much of the spot as possible using a vacuum cleaner.
5. Do not over apply spotting solutions as this can result in premature re-soiling. It is good practice to apply the spotting solution to a cloth first rather than directly onto the carpet.
6. Always pre-test a spotting solution on an inconspicuous location before using it. Check for dye and fabric stability.
7. Never scrub or rub aggressively. Wipe the area affected in each direction to remove as much contamination as possible. On completion reset the pile in the same direction as the immediately surrounding pile.

# Spot removal



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## Spotting chart

The following spotting chart is given as a guideline for the removal of known spots and spills. If the nature of the spill is unknown start with clean water or a mild, crystallising shampoo solution. If this is unsuccessful, when the carpet is dry, treat the spot with a solvent type cleaner. If the stain persists seek professional advice as other cleaning procedures may permanently set the stain. Never use any household cleaning solutions including dishwashing liquid and tub and tile cleansers except where specified in this guide.

## Spot removal agents

- **Blotting material**  
Clean, white, absorbent cloth (terry towelling).
- **Detergent**  
A crystallising carpet shampoo.  
Use as per manufacturer's directions.
- **Ammonia**  
Clear household ammonia.  
Two tablespoons (30ml) per litre of water.
- **Acid cleaner**  
Pure white vinegar.  
Two tablespoons (30ml) to one litre of water.  
Mix 15ml detergent and 30ml acid for some procedures.
- **Solvent**  
White spirits.

## Spot removal methods

1. Solvent + blot / detergent + blot / water + blot dry
2. Detergent + blot / ammonia + blot / detergent + blot / water + blot dry
3. Detergent + blot / mix acid & detergent + blot / water + blot
4. Detergent + blot / ammonia + blot / acid + blot / water + blot dry
5. Freeze solid with ice-cubes (in a plastic packet) / shatter and break off the gum / solvent + blot / blot dry
6. Mix ammonia & detergent + blot / water + blot dry
7. Detergent + blot / acid + blot / water + blot dry
8. Seek professional advice

These procedures may be repeated for stubborn stains but not more than 2 or 3 times as excess residue will be left resulting in premature re-soiling and possible fibre damage.

## Type of spot or stain

Alcohol / Beer	3	Lipstick	1
Asphalt / Tar	1	Milk	2
Auto oils	1	Mustard	3/8
Blood	2	Nail varnish	1
Butter	1	Paint (oil based)	1
Chewing gum	5	Rust	8
Chocolate	2	Salad dressing	1
Coffee	3	Shoe polish	1
Cooking oil	1	Soot	1
Egg	2	Tea	3
Faeces	2	Tomato sauce	2
Fruit juice	3	Toothpaste	2
Furniture polish	1	Urine (fresh/wet)	6
Gravy/sauces	1	Urine (dry)	7
Hair spray / Oil	1	Vomit	4
Hand cream	1	Wax crayons	1
Ice cream	2	Wine	3
Ink (ball point)	1	Water based paint (fresh)	2
Ink (felt tip)	1	Water based paint (old)	1
Ink (fountain)	4		

# Maintenance



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## Interim maintenance

Interim maintenance is usually carried out in high traffic areas, tracked-in soil areas or other specific areas to restore clean carpet appearance. It can be carried out approximately once a month or before social functions, conferences etc. depending on the foot traffic volume. There are several techniques used for interim maintenance but the most common are absorbent powder cleaning, bonnet buffing or encapsulation cleaning.

Note: these methods are unlikely to remove dirt which may have accumulated at the bottom of the carpet pile. Interim maintenance should therefore not be looked on as a replacement for periodic deep cleaning.

## Absorbent powder cleaning

This detergent impregnated powder is sprinkled onto the pile and brushed into the carpet. The detergent component of the mixture releases greasy soils from the surface of the fibres and the residual powder is vacuumed away. The advantage of absorbent powder cleaning is that the carpet remains dry and can be walked on immediately afterwards. This process can be performed by in-house staff or outside professional cleaners.

## Encapsulation cleaning

Crystal polymerising detergent is applied by pad or brushes with either a rotating or oscillating machine. Dislodged soiling is then held by dried polymers to be later vacuumed out of the carpet pile.

Encapsulation cleaning is a quick form of cleaning with very good cleaning appearance, fast drying and has a very low re-soiling rate.

Encapsulation cleaning should be performed by professional cleaners or by trainer in-house staff.

**Thorough vacuuming is recommended before and after all Interim Maintenance techniques.**

## Long –term maintenance

Long-term maintenance or periodic cleaning should be undertaken on a fixed cycle. Such maintenance involves a deep-cleaning process to remove the oily-soils etc. not removed by regular or interim maintenance. Wet or spray extraction cleaning is recommended for this process.

Wet extraction (sometimes called steam-cleaning) removes a vast majority of the spots and stains present. It also removes abrasive soils trapped in the carpet fibres, restores colour, removes bacteria, dust-mites and other allergens thus dramatically improving the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in the building.

Under normal circumstances carpets should be deep cleaned every 12 months depending on the volume of traffic. Where there are people who suffer from allergies such as asthma the carpets should be deep-cleaned every 6-8 months. Such periodic cleaning is crucial to longevity of your carpet.

## Wet-extraction

Wet-extraction cleaning should be performed by professional cleaners or by trained in-house staff. Ensure the equipment used is of good quality and condition, the chemicals are of a reputable brand name, the cleaner follows the AS/NZS 3733:1995 standard and they are certified by a known cleaning association please contact [ec.group](mailto:ec.group) for details.

The following points should be followed when “wet extraction” cleaning:

1. Pre-inspect the carpet noting badly soiled areas, spots & stains, carpet damage such as tears etc. Pre-test the chemicals to be used in an inconspicuous location, checking for dye and fabric stability.
2. Thoroughly vacuum the area to be cleaned.
3. Follow standard carpet cleaning techniques applicable to the equipment being used. Normally this involves pre-spraying the entire carpet or just the traffic-lanes and rinsing out using an acid rinse or extraction detergent where heavy soil is encountered.
4. Use hot water for more effective cleaning. Especially where fats and greases are encountered.
5. Treat any remaining spots or stains using appropriate spotting techniques and chemicals.

# Maintenance



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6. Provide maximum ventilation to dry the carpets as soon as possible.
7. Keep traffic off the carpet until completely dry. Replace furniture using small plastic squares under the feet.