

# Carpet Care



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# Protect your investment

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 carpet 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 cleaner 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, **ec.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 outweigh such costs. The greatest 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 areas 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 technique

## **Vacuuming**

A good quality vacuum cleaner with strong suction and a revolving brush usually yields the best results. Seek the advice of the vacuum cleaner store or manufacturer to select a vacuum cleaner with the right revolving brush. A brush too soft will achieve little in effective cleaning while one too stiff will cause damage to the carpet.

The use of a quality vacuum cleaner with an adjustable revolving brush set according to pile height is strongly recommended. Please test head/brush adjustment in an inconspicuous area of the carpet.

Use a vacuum cleaner with a good efficient filtering system, such as HEPA grade filtration, to prevent the redistribution of fine particles.

For effective vacuuming follow these guidelines.

1. Select professional equipment that is suited to your installation and volume of traffic.
2. Vacuum slowly and thoroughly making three to five passes over an area.
3. Empty vacuum bags frequently. For example, a bag 2/3 full reduces the vacuum efficiency by up to 50%.
4. 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.

## **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.

Notes: 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 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 the 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. Always work from the outside towards the centre. Proceed with a specified treatment for the remaining stain.
3. For semi-solid spots, remove as much surface material using a spoon, dull knife 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 as residues 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 pre-mature resoiling. It is good practice to apply the spotting solution to a cloth first rather than directly onto the carpet.
6. Always pretest 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 immediate surrounding pile.

# Spot Removal

## 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

### Spotting chart

Clean, white, absorbent cloth (terry towelling).

### Detergent

A crystallising carpet shampoo.

Use as per manufacturer's direction.

### Ammonia

Clear household ammonia.

Two tablespoons (30ml) per litre of water.

### Acid cleaner

Pure white vinegar.

Two tablespoons (30ml) per 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 resoiling and possible fibre damage.

## Type of spot or stain

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



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# Maintenance

## **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 power 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 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 brushed 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 resoiling rate. Encapsulation cleaning should be performed by professional cleaners or by trained in-housed 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 fixed cycle. Such maintenance involves a deep-cleaning process to remove the oil-soils etc. not removed by the 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 Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in the building.

Under normal circumstances carpets should be deep cleaner 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 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 for details.

The following points should be followed when using wet extraction cleaning:

1. Pre-inspect the carpet noting badly soiled areas, spots & stains, carpet damage such as tears etc. Pretest 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 appropriated spotting techniques and chemicals
6. Provide maximum ventilation to dry the carpets as soon as possible
7. Keep traffic off the carpet until completely dry. Replace furniture using plastic squares under the feet.



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## **Colour Variation**

Shade or pattern may vary from sample and between dyelots and within production runs due to normal dyelot variations but will be within recognised textile industry standards. Colour appearance can also vary depending upon type of light under which a sample is viewed and the light sources where the carpet is installed.

## **Permanent Pile Reversal (Shading/ Puddling/ Watermarking)**

The occurrence of pile reversal may develop in any cut pile carpet. It is also commonly referred to as shading, puddling or watermarking. In these instances, areas of the carpet appear to become lighter or darker than the surrounding area. This occurrence in cut pile carpets is random and largely unexplained. It cannot be predicted or prevented and it appears to be related to location or materials used. This condition is not a manufacturing fault and its existence has no effect on carpet performance. However, as the development of this phenomenon can affect the appearance of a carpet, you are advised to discuss this characteristic with your retailer when considering carpet purchase.

## **Geometric Printer or Patterned Carpets**

While manufacturers use the best available techniques to minimise pattern distortion during manufacture, the extensible nature of textile products means that some distortion due to shrinkage or stretch during and after manufacture is unavoidable, such that perfect pattern match cannot be guaranteed. Installation of patterned carpet will require more time, effort and skill and a competent carpet layer should be able to obtain a close pattern match in most circumstances though some irregularities may still be visible, particularly over multiple width installations.

## **Fading**

Carpets, like all other dyed textiles, will slowly lose colour over time when exposed to direct sunlight and should be protected from prolonged periods of direct sunlight. Colour change can also occur as the results of ozone, emissions from heating fuels and air conditioners, pesticides, cleaning agents, benzoyl peroxide and other household items. The occurrence, known as ozone damage, is largely unexplained, but appears to be more prevalent in coastal areas with a high ultra-violet content.



# Summary

## **REMEMBER**

- Prevention is better than cure - use a good quality entry matting system.
- Regularly vacuum using a good quality vacuum cleaner.
- When spots or stains occur, act immediately using recommended methods.
- Perform interim maintenance every month or so if desired.
- Deep clean your carpet using wet extraction methods every year.
- Regular and frequent maintenance is the most effective means of maintaining your carpet.
- Consider the amount of money you have invested in your new floor covering - make sure you get the maximum return.

Our goods come with guarantees that cannot be excluded under the Australian Consumer Law. You are entitled to a replacement or refund for a major failure and compensation for any other reasonably foreseeable loss or damage. You are also entitled to have the goods repaired or replaced if the goods fail to be of acceptable quality and the failure does not amount to a major failure.

**If you have any questions regarding your ec.group range or warranty information, please contact the Customer Care Team on 1800 ecgroup (324 768).**



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to return with  
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Card

Please fill out the attached form and return with  
Proof of Purchase to **ec.group**: PO Box 376,  
Edwardstown 5039 or email form to  
[customercare@ec-group.com.au](mailto:customercare@ec-group.com.au)

## Customer Details

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Purchase Details

Date of Purchase \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Installation \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Carpet \_\_\_\_\_

Colour Name \_\_\_\_\_

Metres Purchased \_\_\_\_\_

## Retailer Details

Store Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sales Person \_\_\_\_\_

Store Address \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

For a full copy of the **ec.group** Warranty relating to your product, please  
contact our customer care team on 1800 ecgroup (324 768) or via email  
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