



Carpet Care & Maintenance Industry Guidelines



The Floor Trader of Tacoma has put together this information as a consumer guide to general guidelines provided by most manufacturers.

PROTECT AND PRESERVE

Most carpet products today use polyester fibers in the construction of their carpets. Not all polyesters are the same so keep that in mind. Yes, nylon is still sold but, in our opinion, the polyester fibers used today are out performing the old standby nylon products in many ways. A majority of our in stock carpet are using polyester fibers which are known for their extreme stain resistant properties, their great lack of fading in sunlight and their overall softness and durability. Polyester carpets are the best value for the money in today's carpet market. Following the guidelines outlined in this document will ensure that your carpets will maintain their appearance at the highest possible level and give years of satisfactory service and enjoyment to your whole family.

ENTRY MATS

The first line of defense for your new carpet is an entry walk off mat or hardsurface entryway. Manufacturers suggest a high quality absorbent mat be used at all entrances leading to your carpets. Regularly vacuuming and cleaning the walk off mats is essential in maintaining their ability to absorb everything tracked into the home from the outside. They tend to reach a high soil load very quickly, especially if you live in the country or have a lot of dirt right outside the doorway.

VACUUMING

The most important maintenance procedure for any floors is the regular removal of dry soil by vacuuming. Appropriate vacuuming is suggested to be 4 slow passes back and forth in the same area. For carpet, a dual motor vacuum with brush rollers, with an adjustment for carpet pile height is suggested. For best results, change vacuum bags before they become two-thirds full. Some manufacturers do not even recommend vacuums with beater bars. Quite a few manufacturers even recommend new sonic vibrating vacuums for soft pile carpet.

All vacuums must be approved under the Carpet and Rug Institute's Indoor Air Quality Vacuum Cleaner Program. A comprehensive list of approved products can be found at www.carpet-rug.org.

SPOT CLEANING

Spills and spots must be addressed immediately for best results. Spills that are allowed to dry are much more difficult to remove. Spot cleaners used on today's carpets should be approved by the CRI Seal of Approval Program. These products are listed at www.carpet-rug.org. We have a great one in stock that we recommend. Ask your sales person for the details.

SPOT REMOVAL GUIDE

A. Scoop or up any solid matter first using a blunt knife or spoon. A wooden tongue depressor or bone spatula is also useful for this purpose. Take care not to force any of the solid matter into the face of the floors.

B. Blot up as much liquid as possible using a clean white absorbent towel or sponge. It is imperative that as much of the spill as possible be physically removed from the floors before any cleaning or spot removal agent is introduced.

C. While it is unlikely that any cleaning or spot removal agent will damage the color of the polyester fiber used in the manufacturer's floors, it is always prudent to test the cleaning agent on an inconspicuous area of floors before use. Apply the cleaning agent to a clean white cloth - not directly to the floors. Always start from the outside of the stained area and work towards the center using a blotting motion to push the spill to the center. Do not rub or scrub your floors as this will spread the spot and may result in physical damage to the surface of the floors.

D. Rinse carefully with cold water using a clean cloth.

E. Blot dry with an absorbent towel, or use a cold air fan to complete drying.

Please refer to the chart below for specific spot cleaning recommendations.

Spot Cleaning Guide (Begin with Step One and proceed to Step Two or Three if necessary)			
Stain	Step One	Step Two	Step Three
Alcoholic beverages	1	2	
Bleach	1		
Blood	1	2	4
Butter	2	9	
Candle Wax	10**	8	12
Chewing Gum	5	9	
Chocolate	2	4	
Coffee	1	2	4
Colas & soft drinks	1	2	4
Cooking oil	2	8	
Cream	2	4	
Egg	2	4	12
Feces/Excrement	2	4	12
Floor wax	2	12	
Fruit juice	1	2	4
Furniture polish	2	4	12
Gravy & sauces	7	2	4
Ink (ballpoint pen)	9	2	4
Ink (felt tip pen)	9	2	4
Lipstick	8	2	12
Milk	2	4	
Mustard	2	4	
Nail polish	8 & 7	4	
Oil & grease	8 & 7	2	
Paint (oil based)	12		
Paint (Acrylic)	1	2	
Rust	6	4	12
Salad dressing	2	4	
Shoe polish	8	4	
Soot	11	2	4
Tar	12		
Tea	1	2	4
Tomato sauce	7	2	4
Urine (fresh)	1	2	4
Urine (old stain)	4	12	
Vomit	2	3	4
Wine	1	2	4
Unknown material	4	2	

Spot & Stain Removal Chart Cleaning Method	
1	Cold water.
2	CRI approved spot removal agent such as FreshFloors by WF Taylor or equivalent applied with a clean white cloth.
3	Clear household disinfectant.
4	50/50 Bleach and water solution. *
5	Chill with ice cubes in a plastic bag. Pick or scrape off gum.
6	Mix 1/3 cup of white vinegar with 2/3 cup of water.
7	Warm water.
8	Nail polish remover (always thoroughly rinse with water after treatment).
9	Isopropyl (Rubbing) alcohol.
10	Place a white terry cloth towel or an uncoated brown paper bag over the wax and apply a warm iron (set to the lowest setting) to the towel or paper. Wax will melt and be absorbed by the towel or the paper.
11	Vacuum clean.
12	Seek assistance from a professional carpet cleaner.

*Always rinse the area with hot water to flush out the chemical used as to not leave a bleach residue.

** Test this procedure in an inconspicuous area or on a scrap material. Be careful not to melt the floors fiber by using an iron at the wrong setting. If there is any doubt proceed immediately to procedure #12.

RECOMMENDED SPRAY CLEANER: FreshFloors by WF Taylor

For more information, visit <http://cri105.info/>.

INTERIM CLEANING

Low Moisture Compound Cleaning is a cleaning technique that applies highly absorbent material onto the floors face and is then agitated into the floors and allowed to dry. The cleaning compound and soiling debris are then removed by thorough vacuuming. Host®, Dri-Matic, and Capture® are good examples of low moisture compounds that will provide interim cleaning. These agents are also effective spot removers. After physical removal of as much of the spill as possible, the area should be allowed to dry before applying these agents.

RESTORATIVE CLEANING

- Hot Water Extraction is the method of restorative cleaning recommended and endorsed by the manufacturers. This method is proven to be the most effective means of removing entrapped soil and other residues. This method requires proper equipment to be used for best results. Even with the best available equipment and practices, this method leaves the floors slightly wet. Floors must be allowed to dry completely prior to being used. The use of air movement devices and the HVAC system will help shorten the drying time. The Manufacturer requires that all systems used on its floors be approved under the Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval Program.

The Manufacturer also prefers that all equipment be at least a Silver Level cleaning system. Floors should only be cleaned by trained technicians. IICRC Certified technicians are preferred. **DO NOT USE CARPET CLEANING MACHINES LIKE THE RUG DOCTOR!**

- Hot Water Extraction is sometimes inaccurately referred to as "steam cleaning". (THE RENTAL MACHINES LIKE THE RUG DOCTOR, GREEN MACHINE, OR BISSELL) There is NO steam used in this method. This method injects a cleaning solution under relatively low pressure onto and into the yarn. This solution is either water alone or water mixed with a recommended cleaning agent at the correct dilution ratio. The suction devices do not recover the necessary amount of cleaning water put into the carpet thus two things happen. One, the carpet stays too wet and breaks down the latex backing of the carpet and secondly, the carpet fibers are never truly rinsed from the cleaning solvent. What happens is that the carpet dries with the cleaner residue on the carpet thus making it dirty faster. The carpet fibers get sticky and thus the carpet gets dirtier faster which leads to more cleaning, more solution and a major dirt problem all caused by the consumer. This will not be a warranty issue. Receipts of professional cleaning will be required for submitting ANY claim to the manufacturer.

True Steam Cleaning is described as a truck mounted steam cleaner or professional portable steam cleaning carpet cleaning machine. Typically, the temperature of this solution is higher than ambient room temperature. Per most manufacturers the temperature of this solution is usually about 180-220 degrees at the wand head. The injection of this cleaning solution along with the action of the pre-spray described below loosens and releases the soil from the yarn. The loosened soils and the cleaning solution are then extracted from the floors using wet vacuums engineered specifically for this purpose and incorporated into the equipment.

- A pre-spray is recommended prior to the extraction process. The pre-spray is applied with a common pump type or electrically driven sprayer. As a general rule, this pre-spray must stay on the surface of the floors for at least 30 minutes prior to extraction. In very heavily soiled areas, this pre-spray is gently agitated into the floors pile to facilitate the emulsification and release of the soil.

- In-tank cleaning agents should never be mixed in excess of the recommended dilution rates. When using a "box & wand" or truck mount Hot Water Extractor or walk behind units, one pass with spray and two dry passes are recommended.

- Thorough and complete drying is critical on all carpet. Failure to allow floors to dry completely prior to receiving traffic may result in damage to the face of the carpet, the integrity of the latex holding the carpet together, as well as, compromising the integrity of the installation leading to wrinkles, buckles and seam fail-

ure. Residual water may also facilitate microbial growth.

The Manufacturer does NOT recommend any cleaning method that exposes the floors face to rotary friction. This would include all Rotary Brush/Shampoo methods as well as the “Spin Bonnet” method.

****USE OF THESE METHODS WILL VOID FACTORY WARRANTIES.****

CLEANING FREQUENCY

The following guidelines have been established by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC). They are to serve as guidelines on recommended cleaning frequencies for floors from a public health perspective in addition to a traditional aesthetic concern for appearance retention.

NOTE: Although these are generally followed traffic-rating guidelines, users of this information should be aware that the condition of every building differs in traffic, soiling rates and usage. Common sense, experience and good judgment help dictate the best floors maintenance program. Each individual facility should be assessed based on use, climate and desired appearance level.

Floors Owner/Maintainer		
Traffic Soil Rating	Vacuuming	Spot Cleaning
Light <500 foot traffics per day	1-2 per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed
Medium (moderate) 500-1000 foot traffics per day	Daily in traffic areas. Overall 3-4 times per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed
Heavy 1000-2500 foot traffics per day	Daily in traffic areas. Overall 4-7 times per week	Daily in traffic areas. Overall 4-7 times per week
Very Heavy >2500 foot traffics per day	1-2 times daily in traffic areas. Overall 7 times per week	1-2 times daily in traffic areas. Overall 7 times per week

Professional Carpet Cleaner/Restorer	
Interim Maintenance (Between Restorative Cleanings)	Restorative Cleaning
1 to 3 times annually	1 to 2 times annually
3 to 6 times annually	2 to 4 times annually
6 to 12 times annually	3 to 6 times annually
12 to 52 times annually	6 to 12 times annually

For best results, a maintenance program should be planned, documented and executed. It is very helpful to use a color coded floor plan to indicate cleaning and vacuuming frequencies.

Remember that floors maintenance is not a one time event but rather a planned process that begins the day the floors is installed and continues throughout the service life of the floors.

This information is provided by the Floor Trader of Tacoma in keeping with the best, currently available industry practices and standards. Manufacturers will assume no liability for any complaints resulting from improper maintenance or from any other factor outside its direct control.