



**WORLD FLOOR COVERING  
ASSOCIATION**

## Care & Cleaning Guide

### How to Clean & Maintain Your Carpet

**Here's some advice on cleaning and caring for your new carpet:**

“Wipe your feet on the mat! Leave your shoes at the door! Walk on the plastic liner!”

People can be so fussy about preserving their carpet. Some demand that freshly “mown” look with perfectly parallel vacuum lines across the room. Others lose their heads over a single crumb. Assuming you're not one of “those,” here's some tips on keeping your carpets just as clean and cozy as they were the day they were installed.

#### **Wipe Your Feet**

Mom's three favorite words ring true after all. By placing a mat at the doors that lead to and from backyards and garages — and enforcing their use — mud, dirt and other yuckiness can stay outside and not get tracked across the carpet.

#### **Suck It Up**

Regardless of your militaristic skills when it comes to keeping dirty feet off the carpet, dust, food and other everyday grime is going to make its way onto your precious pile. That's where a good vacuum comes in. Buy one and use it often. You can choose between the old fashioned upright, or one of those fancy robotic models that require little more than the push of a button and the

occasional emptying of the filter. Frequent vacuuming sucks up the dust and loose dirt, refreshing your rugs and extending the life of your investment.

### **Bag It**

If you choose a vacuum that uses bags, make sure you change the bag frequently to allow maximum cleaning efficiency — and to avoid all that dust blowing back out onto your carpets! Newer bag-less models may save time and make the effort even easier!

### **Watch Your Weight**

Heavy furniture, potted plants and other home décor can crush carpet pile and leave compressions that you may not notice until you redecorate or move. It's a good idea to shake things up every once in a while — rearrange the furniture and your carpet will thank you.

### **Stay Out of The Sun**

Those large picture windows invite the sunlight in, casting a beautiful glow across your home. But in the same way the sun damages our skin, its ultraviolet rays can also damage the color of your carpet over time. To avoid sun lightening to your carpets, shut the curtain or blinds when the sun is most intense or use UV glass or film in your windows.

### **Snip the Snags**

Looped carpets tend to snag over time — especially at the seams. It's best not to vacuum over loose yarn or pull at the snags. Instead, treat every loose thread like you would on an expensive suit. Grab a pair of scissors and carefully snip the snag flush with the plush.

### **Watch the Spills**

“To eat or drink on the carpet? That is the question.” Long before Shakespeare might have contemplated that line, everything from cracker crumbs to red wine has found its way onto and into costly carpets. When these events occur (and they *will* occur), begin the clean up process by using a dry cloth to blot up as much debris or liquid as possible. The longer you wait, the more the fibers will absorb the stain. Warm water should then be used to rinse the stained area. Press the cloth into the carpet to soak up the moisture until the stain is gone. Don't scrub and don't use hot water. You'll damage the fibers. Finally, rinse the area with warm water and absorb the wetness with a dry cloth. After your carpet is dry, vacuum it to restore its texture and appearance. There are some carpet cleaners that do actually

work. Ask your retailer about cleaning products that have earned the Carpet & Rug Institute's (CRI) Seal of Approval.

### **Read Up!**

Like a fine piece of clothing, carpet is a textile. Though it doesn't come with a little white tag on the back of the neckline, it does come with maintenance literature provided by the manufacturer. Different fibers, styles and finishes require specific care. In the same way you wouldn't throw a silk blouse in the washing machine, you don't want to make a similar mistake with your carpet. Read up and follow the suggested guidelines. You'll be glad you did.

### **Call the Pros**

Time and traffic take their toll. It's just a fact of life. Carpet manufacturer warranties have very specific instructions on the type of professional cleaning necessary to keep that warranty in force. Refer to that material. Then, when necessary, call on a reputable carpet cleaning service to restore your rugs to their original luster. The knowledge, commercial equipment and experience of a professional can go a long way towards removing stubborn stains and keeping your home beautiful.