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Carpet Cleaning Parramatta

# [CARPET MAINTENANCE TIPS]

A complete guide of how to care for your carpets to keep your carpets looking great and maximize their life span.

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## Carpet Maintenance Tips

### Why should you care about carpet maintenance?

If you have built your own house or gone to the trouble of having carpet installed, you will know that good carpeting is an investment. Carpet installation is quite an expensive endeavour and so you will want to maximise the life of your carpets.

Good carpet care will definitely extend the life cycle of your carpets. A consistent maintenance program is easy to put in place and is cost effective. This will lead to sustained benefits in terms of the carpet's colour and overall appearance, as well as maintenance of the texture and strength of the carpet fibres themselves.

## Prevention

Prevent dirt from coming into contact with the carpets. One simple and obvious way to do this is to have floor mats placed at the entrances. This will encourage people to remove any excess dirt from their shoes before they enter the house. Additionally, placing a nice rug immediately in the entrance will also help capture debris and prevent it from coming into contact with the carpet. While this will cause the rug to become soiled, rugs are much easier to clean than carpets.

Preventing dirt from entering in the first place can lead to decreased maintenance costs.

## Vacuum Cleaning

Most carpet cleaning experts agree that vacuuming is one of the most important parts of the carpet maintenance program. Vacuum cleaning is an extremely efficient method of removing dirt and is a very cheap form of carpet cleaning.

How often you vacuum your carpets varies depending on a variety of factors. Overall some areas have a tendency to become more soiled. These trouble prone areas include entrance areas and corridors, whereas bedrooms and studies tend to accumulate less dirt. For heavily trafficked areas, vacuum cleaning twice per week is recommended. Other areas can be vacuumed on a weekly basis.

## How to vacuum clean carpets

- Use slow strokes. Slower movements are much more effective at vacuuming dirt than quick and fast movements.
- Areas which are heavily soiled or exposed to a lot of pedestrian traffic will require several passes in order to fully clean the areas.
- Sometimes some agitation of the carpet fibres with the vacuum cleaner head is required in order to help loosen soil.

## Recommended vacuum cleaning equipment

- Vacuum cleaner heads should have brushes that contact the carpets. The brushes help part the carpet fibres for a deeper clean.
- Brushes should be checked for wear and tear and changed as necessary.
- Change the bag when  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. As the bag nears full capacity the vacuum becomes less effective.
- Use High Energy Particulate Air (HEPA) filters. These are special filters that serve as a one way filter on the vacuum cleaner. The HEPA filters allow allergens to enter the vacuum cleaner and prevent them from being re-dispersed in the environment. Regular vacuum cleaners actually tend to cause allergens to be dispersed in the air.

## Treating spills and accidents

### Take Immediate Action

The quicker you react to the spill, the less chance that a permanent stain will develop.

1. Scrape off any excess material and then blot the remaining spill with some paper towelling or other absorbent material.
2. Rinse the spot with some water and apply a carpet cleaning solution.
3. Agitate the affected area gently, starting on the outside and then moving inside to the middle of the spot.
4. Blot the treated area and then rinse again with water.
5. Finally blot the area again to remove excess moisture.
6. Rubbing the stain should be avoided as this may cause the stain to spread.

If the stain remains after this initial treatment, you should repeat the process again.

### Special Types of Stain Removal

#### *Grease or oil based stains:*

Go through the procedure above. Following these initial steps, treat the area with a specific Paint / Oil / Grease Dry Solvent applied to a paper towel. Gently agitate and then blot to remove excess substance. Rinse the affected area with water and then blot again to remove moisture.

#### *Coffee and Tea stains:*

Initially blot the area to remove the substance. Rinse with water and then apply a special coffee stain remover. Rinse with water and then blot the excess moisture.

#### *Biological Stains:*

This category of stains includes stains caused by blood, vomit, urine and other body fluids. If such a stain occurs you should initially blot and remove any excess substance and follow this by rinsing the area with water. You should apply a specialised alkaline disinfectant solution with a low pH (below pH 10 is recommended).

## Interim Cleaning

Aside from regular vacuum cleaning and treating any spills as they occur, a key part of any carpet maintenance regimen is to institute an interim cleaning program that is designed to give your carpets a deeper clean on a regular basis. Interim cleaning should be carried out at least once every 6 months.

The main type of cleaning method recommended for interim cleaning is either Low Moisture cleaning or hot water extraction (steam cleaning) in high traffic areas.

## Low Moisture Carpet Cleaning

Otherwise known as “Dry Carpet Cleaning”, low moisture cleaning involves the following stages:

1. Vacuum cleaning all areas to be treated to remove any excess dirt or soil.
2. Apply the cleaning substance (usually a powder) to areas of the carpet which have become dirty or soiled.
3. The cleaning substances should be agitated or brushed so that it works its way into the carpet fibres.
4. Vacuum the treated areas to remove the cleaning agent and the dirt.

The low moisture cleaning substances are designed to attract both water and oil based substances. The cleaning substance binds to the soiling agents and following the vacuuming both the dirt and the cleaning agent are removed.

Low moisture cleaning methods are useful to keep carpeted areas clean between hot water extraction cleaning episodes.

## Deep Cleaning

Deep cleaning is a critical part of the carpet treatment regimen. Deep cleaning helps restore and rejuvenate the carpet. The most effective and highly recommended form of deep cleaning is hot water extraction, otherwise known as steam cleaning. Deep cleaning of carpets should be carried out at a minimum of once every 18 months.

## Hot Water Extraction

This is the gold standard of carpet cleaning. Hot water extraction makes use of specialised equipment which infiltrates hot water combined with a cleaning solution into the carpet. The solution and water mix into the carpet and bind dirt and grime, while at the same time the machine exerts a powerful vacuum to remove both the solution and the attached dirt.

## Notes Regarding Hot Water Extraction

- Before using the cleaning solution, test it to make sure that it dries without any residue or stickiness. Pour a small amount of solution into a saucer and let it dry. If it is sticky or leaves a residue, you should avoid using it.
- Recommended cleaning solutions should have a pH under 10.
- Over-wetting is a real danger with hot water extraction and can lead to mould and mildew formation. With proper cleaning methods, most carpets should dry within 4-6 hours. Several dry passes are recommended to remove excess water. Also use fans to promote drying.
- Identify any stain and pre-treat these areas before hot water extraction.
- Do not allow any traffic onto the carpets before the carpet has fully dried.

## Equipment

There are many different machines available for hot water extraction. Regardless of the make, the following specifications are important to keep in mind:

- Water delivery pressure should be at least 120 PSI.
- Vacuum should have at least 150 inches of mercury lift.