



Caring For Your Carpet

Your carpet is a major investment, and like anything else, it will last longer with the proper care. Even with today's high performance fibers, you'll want to do everything you can to prevent stains and to treat them carefully and immediately when they occur. With a little extra time and attention, you'll keep your carpets looking newer longer. Lowe's is happy to provide this information as a service to you.

With careful maintenance, your carpet can look newer longer.

Things to Remember

It's a good idea to keep a swatch of your carpet, the sales receipt, warranty and installation information in case you need to refer to it later. To keep your carpet in the best shape possible, you'll need to follow a simple maintenance routine to protect your investment.

- Vacuum your carpet regularly, especially in high traffic areas. 80 percent of soil in carpet is dry and can be removed with the vacuum cleaner.
- Use a vacuum with a beater bar and brush, and be sure it's set to the correct height for your carpet pile. If the setting is too high for your carpet, you may not be cleaning it effectively. If it's too low, your carpet will get unnecessary wear and tear from the vacuum cleaner. Changing the direction of the cleaner frequently will make vacuuming more effective. This regular maintenance will improve the overall appearance of the carpet.
- Change the bag often to maximize the effectiveness of your vacuum cleaner.
- You'll need to deep clean your carpet about every two years. With today's advanced fibers, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning. You can choose professional or do-it-yourself steam or dry cleaning. If you choose professional cleaning, be sure to use a reputable service and get them to perform a visual inspection of the carpet before giving you a quote.
- High traffic areas will need to be cleaned more frequently by spot cleaning or with a steam cleaner. (There are excellent household steam cleaners on the market that are the size of a vacuum cleaner and are ideal for frequent cleaning).
- If you choose a self-cleaning method, be sure follow the instructions provided with the steamer or self-cleaning product.

Spot Cleaning

Mishaps and stains are inevitable. Your best bet may be to choose a stain-resistant carpet that resists soil and cleans easily. If your carpet is stain treated with a product like Scotchgard, you'll need to follow that manufacturer's instructions for cleaning to avoid voiding the stain warranty.

Familiarize yourself with how to treat stains before they occur. You'll have the most success if you treat them immediately. Always blot the area to be cleaned. One of the best agents to use on water based spills is club soda. Keep a bottle handy at room temperature for emergencies. After blotting to remove a spill, dribble it on, let it set for a moment, then blot again to remove the stain.

If the stain persists, locate it on the chart below and follow the appropriate cleaning steps outlined.

Stain Type	Cleaning Method	Stain Type	Cleaning Method
Asphalt	D	Iodine	A, E
Beer	A	Kool-Aid	A
Beet Juice	B	Latex Paint	A
Blood	A	Lipstick	D
Cherry Cola	A	Medicine (FD & C Colors)	A
Chocolate	D	Mouthwashes	A
Coffee	D	Motor Oil (Used)	D
Cola	A	Mustard	A
Cooking Oil	D	Nail Polish	G
Cough Syrup	A	Oil Paint	D
Cranberry Juice	B	Orange Juice	A
Crayon	D	Orange Soda	A
Dirt	F	Pet Feces	C
Egg	A	Pet Urine	C
Felt Marker	D,E	Prune Juice	B
Furniture Polish	E	Red Clay Soil	F
Furniture Stain	D	Rouge	D
Gelatins	A	Rust	A
Grape Juice	B	Shoe Polish	D
Grape Soda	A	Slime (Toy)	H
Grease	D	Tea	D
Hawaiian Punch	A	Vomit (Human & Pet)	C
Ink (Water Soluble)	A	Water Colors	A
Ink (Ball Point, Permanent)	D	Wine	B

Cleaning Methods

A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blot excess stain or liquid. 2. Soak with lukewarm water one minute and blot with sponge or paper towel. 3. Repeat until no stain is evident on towel or sponge. 4. If stain persists, use 1/2 teaspoon liquid hand/dish detergent without lanolin, mixed with 1 pint water and press into stained area with fingers. Blot excess, rinse with clear, lukewarm water to remove detergent and blot dry. 5. If stain persists, add water again, fold paper towel and place over stain with weight. Check towel every five minutes, or until it is stain free (this procedure may need to be repeated with deep stains). 6. Brush up pile and allow to dry before walking on carpet.
B	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blot excess stain or liquid. 2. Soak with lukewarm water one minute and blot. 3. Apply hydrogen peroxide, immediately follow with household ammonia and blot. ** 4. Rinse with water and blot. 5. If stain persists, follow guidelines 4-6 of Method A.
C	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blot or scrape off excess stain or liquid. 2. Vacuum particles and soften stain with alcohol or dry cleaning solvent and blot immediately. 3. If stain persists, follow guidelines 4-6 of Method A.
D	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blot excess stain or liquid. 2. Wet stain with alcohol or dry cleaning solvent and blot dry immediately. Repeat 2 times. 3. If stain persists, follow guidelines 4-6 of Method A.

E	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blot to remove excess stain or liquid. 2. Rinse with clear, lukewarm water and blot dry. 3. If cleaning method fails to remove stain, have affected area replaced (plugged) by professionals.
F	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow area to dry and vacuum excess. 2. Soak with lukewarm water for one minute and blot with sponge or paper towel. Repeat until no stain is evident on towel or sponge. 3. If stain persists, follow guidelines 4-6 of Method A.
G	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blot excess. 2. Apply nail polish remover and blot immediately. Repeat until no stain is evident on blotter. 3. Brush up pile and allow to dry before walking on carpet.
H	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scrape off excess. 2. Soften stain with vinegar and blot with lukewarm water. Repeat until no stain is evident on blotter. 3. If stain persists, follow guidelines 4-6 of Method A.

Cleaning Method B suggests the application of hydrogen peroxide followed by household ammonia. The use of hydrogen peroxide alone for food dye stains is often sufficient. By immediately adding ammonia, you raise the pH of hydrogen peroxide, which dramatically accelerates the bleaching process. Hydrogen peroxide contains approximately 0.001% phosphoric acid for the very purpose of slowing down the bleaching process. Finally, hydrogen peroxide in itself ages very rapidly (which explains the need for the brown bottle) Shelf life for spot cleaning purposes is only 3 to 6 months. **It is suggested that you use a hydrogen peroxide/ammonia solution only on white and off white colors.

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Common Carpet Problems and Solutions

Crushing is caused by both furniture and foot traffic. The weight of furniture crushes a carpet's pile. Furniture glides or protectors help to distribute the weight of the furniture from pointed "feet" that may dig into the carpet. Changing traffic patterns in a room by rearranging the furniture can help reduce crushing caused by heavy traffic patterns. Frequent vacuuming helps to raise the pile.

Static occurs with cool temperatures and low humidity. Choosing carpet with anti-static protection or using a humidifier will help the problem.

Shedding is most common in wool carpets. New, cut pile carpet will also shed for awhile until the loose fibers are eventually removed with the vacuum cleaner.

Pilling is a condition, usually caused by traffic in certain areas, where small balls of fiber appear on the carpet's surface. If the pilling is minimal, just clip it to reduce the appearance. If it's extensive, call a professional.

Snagging occurs when sharp-edged objects such as furniture, toys or pet claws snag the carpet fiber. Simply clip off the snag if the affected area is small.

Sprouting is a condition where small tufts of fiber stick out above the carpet surface. Clip the individual sprouts level with the carpet. Never pull them or you may pull other fibers in the process and further the damage.

Fuzzing makes the carpet appear "hairy" and is generally caused by slack yarn twist or fibers breaking out of the yarn during wet cleaning or servicing. If this occurs, it needs to be sheared by a professional cleaner.

Was this information helpful? Please [let us know](#) your do-it-yourself experiences. We'd love to hear from you!

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