



Cleaning and Maintenance Guide



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Introduction

Carpet care program

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 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 inhouse staff, outsourced professional cleaners or a combination of both. Whichever option is chosen, a cleaner should be directed to 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 maintenances, Acoufelt are willing to assist with names and details of reputable cleaning companies. The effectiveness of any cleaning program depends on careful supervision, trained personnel and the usage of correct equipment and chemicals.

Four Key Measures

Preventative measures
Regular maintenance
Interim maintenance
Long term maintenance



Preventative Measures

Entrance Matting

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 tiles. A building's main entrance area is especially vulnerable to heavy soiling, the majority of which is deposited directly by foot traffic.

It is estimated that within approximately 3 metres of walking into a carpeted room, the residual soil off a pair of shoes is effectively removed. Therefore it is recommended that 3 metres of entrance matting be laid to greatly reduce the amount of tracked in dirt. Acoufelt recommends laying 1.5m of matting outside the main entrance and 1.5m inside.



Regular Maintenance

Carpet tiles are a very tolerant floorcovering and can be significantly soiled long before soiling is visibly evident to the naked eye. 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 regular carpet maintenance. Effective vacuuming should remove up to 80% of the soil present in carpets.

Special Care Areas

A good maintenance programme 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 and lift entries). This may only be a small percentage of the total carpet area but can account for most of the maintenance cost.

Vacuuming

A sturdy vacuum cleaner with strong suction and a revolving agitator bar, beater bar or brush usually yields the best results. For effective vacuuming follow these guidelines:

1. Select professional equipment that is suited to your installation and volume of traffic.
2. Use vacuum cleaners with efficient filtering systems to prevent the redistribution of fine particles.
3. Vacuum slowly and thoroughly, making three to five passes over an area.
4. Empty vacuum bags frequently (a bag 2/3 full reduces the vacuum efficiency by 50%).
5. Keep equipment in good repair ensuring that all parts are kept.
6. Ensure that the floor tool is repaired or replaced should it become burred, so as not to damage the carpet looping.

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 or conference rooms, vacuum every 2nd or 3rd day depending on usage.

Note: Despite the efficiency of regular vacuuming, it will not remove oily and deep embedded soils. These must be removed with periodic deep cleaning (see page 8).

Spot and Stain Removal

Most permanent stains can be avoided by immediate treatment. It is good housekeeping practise to keep a commercial spotting kit on hand, such as the Actichem Conquer & Conquer O2 for household use, or the Actichem AP900 Spotting Kit for large institutions such as hospitals, hotels and large commercial offices.



Regular Maintenance contd.

Important General Techniques

1. Act quickly! When something has been spilt, take steps immediately to rectify it.
2. For liquid spills: Remove as much as possible with a wet vacuum cleaner or sponge. Blot small amounts with a clean white cloth or paper towel. Always work from the outside towards the centre. Proceed with the specified treatment of the remaining stain.
3. For semi-solid spots: Remove as much surface material using a spoon, dull knife or scraper. Always work from the outside toward the centre. Proceed with the specified treatment of the remaining stain.
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 premature 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 when spotting, only agitate using a tapping or a blotting action to prevent fibre and pile distortion.



Interim Maintenance

Interim maintenance is usually carried out in high traffic areas and tracked-in soil areas to restore a clean carpet appearance. Interim maintenance should be carried out approximately once a month and/or before social functions and conferences depending on the volume of foot traffic. There are several techniques that can be used for interim maintenance. The most common are absorbent powder cleaning and bonnet buffing.

Absorbent Powder Cleaning

For this method, a 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 powder is vacuumed away. The advantage of absorbent powder cleaning is that the carpet is not wetted and can be walked on immediately afterwards. This process can be performed by inhouse staff or outsourced professional cleaners.

Bonnet Buffing

This technique utilises a rotary machine fitted with a floppy-loop, textile, circular pad impregnated with special carpet cleaning detergent. Soil is transferred to the pad as it skims over the surface of the carpet tiles. It is a very cheap form of cleaning, is quick and leaves the carpet fairly dry.

Note: Thorough vacuuming is recommended after both techniques. These methods are also unlikely to remove dirt which may have accumulated at the bottom of the carpet pile. Interim maintenance should therefore not be treated as a replacement for periodic deep cleaning (see page 8).

Long-Term Maintenance

Long-term maintenance or periodic cleaning should be undertaken on a fixed cycle. Such maintenance involves a deep-cleaning process to remove oily-soils not removed by 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 spots and stains, removes abrasive soils trapped in the carpet fibres, restores colour, and removes bacteria, dust-mites and other allergens – thus dramatically improving the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in the building. Under normal circumstances, carpets should be deep cleaned every 12 months depending on the volume of traffic. In spaces where there are people who suffer from allergies and health conditions such as asthma, the carpets should be deep-cleaned every 6-8 months. Such periodic cleaning is crucial to the longevity of your carpet.

Wet-extraction

Wet-extraction cleaning should be performed by professional cleaners or by trained in-house staff. Ensure that the equipment used is of good quality and condition, that the chemicals are of a reputable brand, that the cleaner follows the AS/NZS 3733:1995 cleaning standard and that the cleaner is certified by a known cleaning association (such as ACCI, NUCCA, IICRC). Acoufelt will be willing to provide details of the above mentioned points.

During the “wet-extraction” cleaning, ensure you:

1. Pre-inspect the carpet; noting badly soiled areas, spots & stains and carpet damage. 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. Treat any remaining spots or stains using appropriate spotting techniques and chemicals.
5. Provide maximum ventilation to dry the carpet as soon as possible after cleaning.
6. Keep traffic off the carpet until completely dry. Replace furniture using small plastic squares under the feet.

Tips

- Use Actichem AP986 PolyProp Plus specifically designed for the cleaning of polypropylene and solution-dyed nylon carpets.
- Use Actichem AP440 Rinse Pro when rinsing after applying the prespray. This will ensure a minimum residue clean.
- Use Actichem AP455 Emulsifier Plus where the heavy soil method is used.
- Use hot water for more effective cleaning, especially where fats and greases are encountered.

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