



Carpet Characteristics

Carpet is by far the most popular and versatile floor covering solution on the market and it is easy to see why.

Carpet offers décor versatility, warmth, insulation, energy savings, comfort, excellent noise dampening properties, a safe; non slip surface, ease of maintenance and value for money.

Carpet Characteristics

Carpet also has characteristics or inherent features that may affect the appearance of the product. It is important that these carpet characteristics are understood by customers.

Colour variation

It is common for an installed carpet to show a small difference in colour or shade from the selling sample, due to normal variations between different production runs or batches.

Manufacturers make every effort to accurately repeat colours between batches, but small differences are unavoidable. Warnings to this effect are commonly displayed on the labels of carpet samples.

It should be noted that colour assessment is subjective and may be affected by lighting conditions and/or small changes in the carpet texture. Prior to purchasing carpet, the Carpet Institute recommends that carpet samples be viewed in different lighting conditions at the installation site.

Appearance change

Carpet will gradually change in appearance over time due to normal use and fading from exposure to ultra violet radiation from sunlight.

While sunlight is the most common cause of fading, household chemicals can also contribute to change in colour. Similarly, high temperature and humidity conditions may accelerate the onset of fading.

The Carpet Institute recommends that carpet be protected from sunlight by use of shading devices such as window reflective films, curtains, awnings and blinds.

Pile reversal shading

Pile reversal shading is an optical effect – an apparent colour difference caused by light reflected or absorbed from disturbed carpet pile.

When caused by foot marking and vacuuming, pile reversal shading is temporary and can be reversed by vacuuming or brushing the carpet in the normal direction of pile lay.

Permanent pile reversal shading (PPRS) – also referred to as watermarking, pooling or puddling – appears as irregular shaped light and dark patches in a cut-pile carpet. It is not a change in colour but a change in pile direction that sometimes randomly appears, generally after use. The cause is unknown and the phenomenon is unpredictable.

Apart from affecting appearance, PPRS has no detrimental effect on the durability of the carpet.



Carpets that may be prone to PPRS should bear a manufacturer's label which points out this phenomenon. A brochure is also available from the Carpet Institute website at www.carpetinstitute.com.au.

Pile flattening

Carpet pile will flatten to some extent due to normal use. Regular vacuuming and periodic professional cleaning will reduce the degree of flattening.

Matting

Matting is a wear-induced characteristic that is seen as the merging together of carpet tufts to the stage where they may become less defined.

Matting occurs in all carpets to some extent and is not considered a manufacturing defect unless it occurs rapidly or to an unacceptable degree.

Missing or damaged tufts

Missing or damaged tufts in new carpet can be replaced by hand sewing. It is recommended that the carpet manufacturer be given an opportunity to manually replace missing tufts or small areas of tuft damage. A tuft repaired in this manner by an experienced technician should not detract from the quality or the durability of the carpet.

Shedding

Shedding is the term used to describe the release from the carpet yarn of very small fibres that collect on the surface of the carpet.

Shedding is activated by foot traffic and vacuuming and is usually only seen in new carpet installations. As a carpet 'settles' or 'beds down', shedding becomes less and less noticeable.

Sprouting

Sprouting is the release onto the carpet surface of extra-long tuft legs that are trapped within the carpet pile during manufacture, installation or use. Sprouts can be carefully trimmed with napping shears/scissors without damaging the carpet.

Snagging

Snagging is the forceful removal or distortion of tufts from a loop pile carpet. If snagging does occur, displaced tufts can be repaired on-site by an experienced technician.

Pattern matching

Manufacturing processes introduce stresses and pressures on the carpet structure in both the length and width directions. As a result, a repeating pattern may not exactly match along the length of the carpet or across its width, particularly from one production run to another. An experienced installer will make every effort to achieve a reasonable pattern match.

Smell from new carpet installation

With good room ventilation, the so called 'new carpet smell' should disappear within approximately four days of the carpet being installed. For further information, refer to the Carpet Institute's Fact Sheet on Indoor Air Quality at www.carpetinstitute.com.au



Seam peaking

Seam peaking is normal when joined carpet is stretched into place. Lighting conditions can accentuate a carpet seam and create the impression that the pile on the side closer to the light source is a lighter shade than the pile on the other side of the join.

Carpet seams are never invisible but they should be straight, aligned and as flat as possible. For further information, refer to the Carpet Institute Fact Sheet on Seam Peaking at www.carpetinstitute.com.au

Shift Lines

Shift lines are parallel lines appearing at regular intervals on the surface of patterned loop pile carpets. These lines are due to the nature of construction and are sometimes more apparent with 'large' designs and patterns. Shift lines are not considered to be a manufacturing defect.

NOTES

Australian Carpet Classification Scheme

A well-constructed carpet, correctly chosen for the intended use, can sustain a good deal of wear if properly maintained.

When buying carpet look for products that have been graded by the Australian Carpet Classification Scheme (ACCS).

Carpets graded by the ACCS carry distinctive labels featuring a '6-star' system of rating for residential carpets and a '4-star' system for carpet in contract / commercial installations. The more stars the better the likely appearance retention and performance properties of the carpet.

The ACCS also has an environmental certification component called the ACCS Environmental Certification scheme. For further information on the ACCS and ECS, visit the CIAL website: www.carpetinstitute.com.au



Each manufacturer of a carpet may offer its own warranty as to the look and durability of that manufacturer's carpets.

The Carpet Institute administers the ACCS but does not provide any warranty on ACCS graded carpets.

A warranty provided by a manufacturer is subject to proper installation and correct care of the carpet in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Exclusions from the ACCS rating scheme include:

- Permanent Pile Reversal Shading (PPRS)
- carpet subject to localized severe wear including:
 - carpet installed on multi step stairs
 - carpet subject to frequent use by furniture with castor wheels such as office chairs. (A chair pad is essential to protect the carpet pile and its backing structure.)
 - carpet in front of chairs where there is constant scuffing and grinding motion of footwear. (Protective mats are recommended).



Measuring, Laying and Installing

Carpet installation is technically demanding and should only be conducted by experienced technicians.

Here are some things to consider.

- Ideally the area to be carpeted should be measured by your retailer who will consider the way rooms flow into one another, how ambient light falls, and the way foot traffic will 'funnel.' Your retailer can advise you on the placement of seams and joins.
- Carpet on stairs wears more quickly than other areas. Buy enough extra carpet to re-do stairs at some point.
- Carpet manufacturer's warranties require carpet to be installed in accordance with Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 2455 – Textile Floor Coverings, Laying Practice. Ask your retailer to confirm that the installation will be consistent with the requirements of this Standard.

Carpet Maintenance

Carpet must be regularly maintained by following the manufacturer's recommended maintenance procedures, which typically include:

- treating spots and stains as soon as they occur
- regular vacuuming – weekly in general use areas and more often in high traffic areas such as hallways
- professional cleaning every 12 – 18 months to remove trapped soil.

Detailed information on cleaning maintenance procedures is contained in the Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 3373 – Textile floor coverings – Cleaning maintenance of residential and commercial carpeting.

The Importance of Underlay

Like carpet, underlay is available in various grades and qualities. Ask your retailer about the options available.

An underlay should be firm but comfortable. As a guide, standing on the underlay you should not be able to feel the floor with the heel of your shoe.

If replacing carpet, don't be tempted to use the existing underlay. It will have the same wear patterns as your old carpet and these will quickly appear in a new carpet.

Further Information

Contact Carpet Institute of Australia Limited on 03 9804 5559, email info@carpetoz.com.au or visit our website www.carpetinstitute.com.au

About the Carpet Institute of Australia

The Carpet Institute of Australia Limited (CIAL) is the lead industry association for Australia's \$1.6 billion carpet industry. CIAL represents carpet manufacturers, carpet retailers and other suppliers of goods and services to the industry.

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The "Carpet It Just Feels Better" campaign is an initiative of the Carpet Institute of Australia, a non-profit association sponsored by carpet manufacturers, their suppliers and other companies that provide goods and services to the broader carpet industry.

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