



Carpets Cleaning Maintenance Residential Installations

A series of regularly asked questions about carpet¹ cleaning in the home are answered.

- **What is the benefit of having floors carpeted?**
- **What is the purpose of carpet cleaning?**
- **Why is entrance matting important?**
- **What is the role of vacuuming and how important is it?**
- **What about spot and stain removal?**
- **Should the carpet be dry cleaned or wet cleaned?**
- **How often should the carpet need vacuuming, interim cleaning² or corrective cleaning³ and which method or machine should be used on the different carpet pile textures?**
- **The house has just been purchased and there is no information about the carpet so where can information and recommendations about maintaining the carpet appearance be found?**
- **What other factors are related to carpet cleaning?**

What is the benefit of having floors carpeted?

Carpet tends to trap airborne and foot traffic soiling. This helps to maintain better indoor air quality by holding the soiling at floor level instead of allowing it to circulate throughout the home. The life of the carpet will be prolonged when carpet cleaning is conducted regularly and effectively.

What is the purpose of carpet cleaning?

The purpose of carpet cleaning is to retain the original pile texture and overall appearance of carpet for as long as possible, and to ensure the carpet is hygienic and contributes positively to the indoor environment.



Why is entrance matting important?

As the majority of soiling indoors comes from outside the home, matting in the entrance area should help remove particulate soiling and any moisture that is carried by footwear into the home.

What is the role of vacuuming and how important is it?

Vacuuming is one of the most important cleaning steps in the removal of soiling from the carpet. Efficient vacuuming (both machine and operator) will be the major contributor in the removal of this soiling which is directly related to the foot traffic volume and its frequency.



Important features for a vacuum

- To have a motor driven Power Head with a manual or automatically adjustable height Brush or Brush/Beater Bar combination
- To have a filter or filters that will remove greater than 99% of any allergens that may be present in the carpet and ambient air.

NOTE: Refer to the carpet manufacturer's warranty documentation as to vacuum cleaner suitability for use according to the carpet's pile texture.

Vacuum cleaner maintenance

Regular maintenance of the vacuum cleaner is necessary e.g. check filters, the condition and operation of the beater/brush and for any blockages and, the status of the dust collection bag or container.

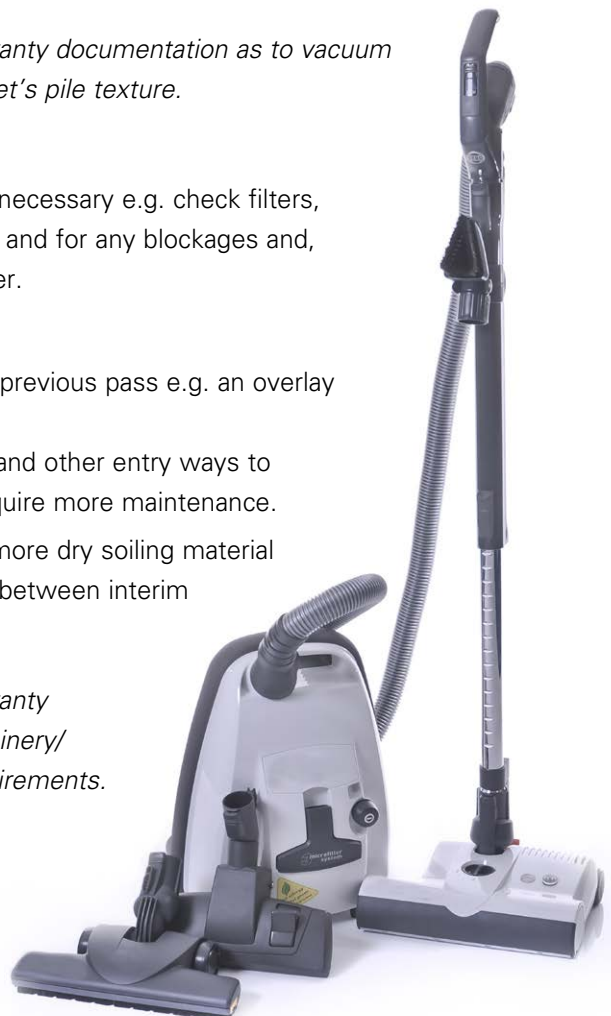
Vacuuming operation

Each pass with the vacuum should overlay the previous pass e.g. an overlay of 50 mm is recommended.

High traffic areas such as a building entry way and other entry ways to facilities within the home are areas that will require more maintenance.

More frequent vacuuming cycles will result in more dry soiling material being removed. This allows for a longer period between interim cleaning and corrective cleaning.

NOTE: Refer to the carpet manufacturer's warranty documentation for cleaning & vacuuming machinery/ cleaning frequency recommendations and requirements.





What about spot and stain removal?

Have a spot and stain removal kit and stain removal guide available that will enable most common spillages, spots and stains to be cleaned up, be removed successfully or the stained area to be left in a condition suitable for removal by a carpet cleaning technician.⁴

- If a spillage has occurred, clean-up the spill as soon as possible by using water only and blotting with a dry white cloth but should this action leave evidence of a stain, a spotting agent is likely to be required
- Spot clean daily as would be carried out on any other flooring surfaces
- Do not use hard surface cleaning products to clean carpets
- Where possible, use only pH 7 (neutral) spotting agents
- Read and follow the instructions on the bottle or container.



NOTE: Refer to the carpet manufacturer’s Carpet Care Guide and warranty documentation for information on Spot and Stain Removal. This information should also be available on the carpet manufacturer’s website.

Should the carpet be dry cleaned or wet cleaned?

When interim cleaning or corrective cleaning is necessary, the cleaning process should be chosen according to the carpet manufacturer’s warranty documentation (e.g. method or process suitability according to the carpet’s pile texture) and, it should be carried out by a carpet cleaning technician.

For example: If the warranty specifies the use of a wet cleaning process, this could be the Hot Water Injection and Extraction method. It is a high moisture cleaning technique that is also referred to as ‘Hot Water Extraction’ or ‘Steam Cleaning’. It is widely used for a ‘freshen-up’ interim clean as well as being a ‘deep’ corrective clean method for carpets.

NOTE: Refer to the carpet manufacturer’s Carpet Care Guide and warranty documentation for information. This information should also be available on the carpet manufacturer’s website.





How often should the carpet need vacuuming, interim cleaning or corrective cleaning and which method or machine should be used on the different carpet pile textures?

Dependant on the level of soiling in the carpet, there are a number of machines and cleaning processes with advantages and disadvantages that can be used. Therefore, the carpet manufacturer’s Carpet Care Guide and warranty documentation requirements and suitable cleaning machines and cleaning frequency recommendations, should be followed. This information should also be available on the carpet manufacturer’s website.

The house has just been purchased and there is no information about the carpet so where can information and recommendations about maintaining the carpet appearance be found?

Where any doubt exists as to the best method of cleaning a carpet, refer to the carpet manufacturer’s warranty documentation and its requirements. If warranty documentation is not available and before either interim cleaning or corrective cleaning is attempted, seek expert advice e.g. a carpet cleaning technician who can determine the carpet pile fibre type and make cleaning recommendations to suit the pile texture.



What other factors are related to carpet cleaning?

– **Soil and stain resistant treatments:**

Some treatments for carpets can provide soil or stain resistance or both. These treatments may be applied by the fibre manufacturer or by the carpet manufacturer. Alternatively, treatments may be applied to the finished carpet, usually after installation. Whilst post-manufacturing treatments may be effective, advice should be sought from the carpet or fibre manufacturer because the application of further treatments may affect any warranty.





– **Entrance matting - walk-on, walk-off mats:**

For preventative maintenance and to collect soiling material before it reaches the carpet inside, walk-on-walk-off mats of an effective size should be placed at entrances to carpeted areas. These mats should be thoroughly cleaned regularly and replaced when visibly worn.

– **Chair mats (pads):**

Desk chairs on castors in home offices can damage both the carpet and the underlay, and for this reason chair mats, usually made of material such as PVC, are recommended.



Notes

1. Carpet and Textile Floor Covering are interchangeable terms and both are used to describe carpet in roll form and modular carpet (i.e. carpet tile and plank).
2. Interim cleaning is carried out to improve the overall appearance of the carpet by removing surface soiling while keeping drying times to an absolute minimum.
3. Corrective cleaning involves the use of water based cleaning systems to remove soiling from deep within the carpet pile.
4. Carpet cleaning technicians should be qualified and experienced.

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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.