

A Guide to Choosing the Right Vacuum for Your Carpet

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Introduction

Regular vacuuming keeps your carpets looking great, lasting longer, and free of dirt, dust, and allergens for a healthier indoor environment. This guide may assist you in selecting the correct vacuum with features best suited to your carpet's fibre type (e.g., nylon, wool), style (cut, loop) and construction (wall-to-wall broadloom or modular tiles), ensuring effective cleaning without damage. Always check your carpet manufacturer's care guide in the first instance on key vacuum features to avoid voiding warranties.

Key Considerations

- Fibre Type: Nylon is tough; wool is a natural fibre. Each needs specific care.
- Style: Cut, loop, or mixed. Each needs specific care.
- Construction: Broadloom and modular tiles have different backing materials.
- Pile Height: Low-pile to high-pile the correct cleaning depths vary.
- Premises: Home or Commercial facilities, cleaning requirements vary.
- Traffic Level: High-traffic areas require more frequent vacuuming.

Understanding Vacuum Heads

- Combination Head: Provides suction-only cleaning; surface cleaning.
- Turbohead: Air-driven rotating brush; less effective for carpets than powerheads.
- Powerhead: Motor-driven rotating brush; excellent for carpets to lift dirt.

Carpet Construction and Vacuum Tips

Be sure to seek advice when formulating a carpet maintenance plan and refer to the carpet manufacturer's care guides and warranty statements as well as the Australian and New Zealand standard AS/NZS 3733 – Textile floor coverings – Cleaning maintenance of residential and commercial carpeting.

Broadloom Carpet

- Cut-Pile (e.g., Saxony, Plush): Upright with powerhead and multi-level height adjustment for higher piles. Ensure ample bristle length for effective cleaning depth.
- Loop-Pile (e.g., Berber): Suction-only or powerheads with multi-level brush height adjustment and suitable bristles.
- Cut-and-Loop: Suction-only or powerheads with multi-level brush height adjustment and suitable bristles.

Modular Carpet Tiles

- Cut-Pile Tiles: Dual motor vacuum such as an Upright, featuring a powerhead with multi-level brush height adjustment and suitable bristles.
- Loop-Pile Tiles: Dual motor vacuum such as an Upright, featuring a powerhead with multi-level brush height adjustment and suitable bristles.

Vacuum Features to Look For

- Powerhead: Multi-level brush height adjustment and suitable bristles. Suction-only features.
- Adjustable Suction: Customise power for delicate carpets or rugs.
- HEPA Filtration: Traps dust and allergens, improves Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) and those living with asthma/allergies.
- Edge-Cleaning Tools: Crevice tool or floor heads suitable for use up alongside skirting boards.
- Large wheels for easy glide across carpet.
- Disposable top-fill vacuum bags for efficient airflow.
- Seek commercial grade units for specific Industry applications e.g. Healthcare.

Maintenance Tips

- Optimum airflow: Keep the vacuum free from blockages, replace vacuum bags and filters regularly; improves indoor air quality.
- Brush Roller Care: Routinely clean or replace brush rollers when needed to ensure effective debris pick up.
- Check vacuum cleaner Manufacturer operating instructions.

Glossary

- Powerhead: Independent electric motor-driven rotating brush roller.
- Suction-Only cleaning: No rotating brush; surface cleaning only.
- Air Watts: Measurement of airflow rate and suction pressure.
- HEPA Filtration: Captures at least 99.97% of airborne particles 0.3 microns in size.
- Airflow: Movement of air through the vacuum to carry dirt away.

Final Note

There is not one vacuum cleaner type that can correctly care for all styles and fibres of carpets. Refer to your carpet care guides for vacuum cleaner compatibility specific to your flooring product. Consider the environmental impacts of poorly designed vacuum cleaners and opt for quality materials and efficient design. The ability to repair and the availability of spare parts are important to think about as this reduces the impact on the environment and avoids unnecessarily adding to landfill.

Contact the Carpet Institute of Australia or your carpet manufacturer for more help.



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