

RECORD OF PURCHASE

Many carpet retailers, manufacturers, and fiber producers offer specific warranties relating to carpet. Obtain copies of all warranties, care information, and copies of receipts relating to your purchase. Keep records of your purchase for questions or assistance in the future.

Purchase Date _____

Carpet Retail Store _____

Phone # _____

Carpet Manufacturer/Brand Name _____

Product/Style Name/Color _____

Fiber Type/Brand _____

Installer _____

Installation Date _____

Cushion Type _____

Carpet Cleaning Professional _____

Phone # _____

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The Carpet & Rug Institute (CRI) is the national trade association for the carpet and rug industry. Its members are manufacturers and suppliers providing the vast majority of all carpet produced in the United States.

CRI offers extensive information about carpet, installation, maintenance, indoor air quality, and other topics at www.carpet-rug.org.

Carpet & Rug CARE Guide



 **CRI**TM
THE CARPET AND RUG INSTITUTE

REGULAR CARPET CARE

Carpet fibers are designed to hide soil and reflect light. Consequently, soil in carpet is not as visible as it is on smooth flooring where soil remains on the surface and is easily seen. The ability of today's carpet fibers to hide soiling is a positive feature for most consumers. However, the lack of apparent soiling does not eliminate the need for regular cleaning. Soil can damage the fibers permanently if allowed to remain in the pile.

Even with carpet's ability to resist soiling and stains, a regular maintenance program extends the life and appearance of your carpet. Specific carpet care information may be available from your carpet retailer or carpet manufacturer.

VACUUMING - WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Whether you're cleaning out the spare bedroom or just tidying up around the house, it is important that dirt and dust are removed, not simply moved around or thrown back into the breathing zone.

Properly vacuuming carpet is the easiest and most effective way to keep your carpet clean. It may be surprising, but something as simple as regular vacuuming can also have the largest impact on the cleanliness of your home and the air you breathe.

The Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) recommends vacuuming areas often that receive the most traffic, such as hallways, stairs, and exterior entryways in the home. Ideally, vacuum all the floor coverings a minimum of once a week, and the high-traffic areas more often, based on the usage. If you have pets, you may need to vacuum more frequently. Removing loose soil while it remains on the carpet's surface is important so that it is not ground into the carpet fibers.



Use a vacuum cleaner that effectively removes soil and minimizes generating dust from the filter and around the machine while keeping the carpet looking good. To help consumers select an effective vacuum, CRI initiated the Seal of Approval program to test cleaning products and equipment, including vacuums. Vacuum cleaner models are evaluated by an independent testing laboratory and tested for removing soil adequately, containing the dust in the machine and in the filter bag, and carpet appearance retention. Those products that achieve the carpet industry's standard are identified by CRI as Seal of Approval certified. Because of the impact of vacuum cleaners on indoor air, cleaning efficiency can vary significantly, it is important to identify models that clean well and protect the indoor environment. Vacuum cleaners that have met the Seal of Approval standards are listed on CRI's website: www.carpet-rug.org/soa.



NOTES

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Stain-Resistant Carpet - Most of the carpet manufactured today comes with either built-in fiber attributes or finishes that make it more stain and soil-resistant. Although stain-resistant carpet, introduced in 1986, is easier to maintain, it still requires care. Attempt to remove spots as soon as something is spilled or tracked on the carpet. If spills or soils are allowed to remain, they may become permanent. Contact the appropriate representative outlined in the carpet warranty to get specific information on cleaning. Carefully follow the directions given. Improper action taken during cleaning, or by applying an unauthorized treatment, could result in voiding your warranty.

Topical Treatments - The use of topical treatments without the expressed approval of the carpet manufacturer prior to application may void applicable warranties. Topical treatments include soil retardants, stain repellents, anti-static treatments, anti-microbials, deodorizers, and de-foamers.

Wear - Most carpet manufacturers offer a "wear" warranty. Wear is defined as the loss of pile weight or pile fiber (usually 10 percent) due to abrasive wear only. What appears to be wear may be an appearance change in the carpet related to traffic, matting, cushion, or permanent fiber damage caused by soiling, rather than a loss of fiber (See *Matting*, *Crushing*).

Yellowing - Yellowing is caused by a variety of outside influences, such as pollutants from heating fuels, changes in alkalinity, cleaning solutions, and atmospheric or environmental contaminants. Not all carpet yellowing can be removed; however, the use of acetic acid (white vinegar), citrus acid, or tartaric acid is often successful in eradicating many cases of yellowing. Please note: In some cases, the use of an alkaline detergent solution prior to using one of these acid rinses may cause permanent yellowing. A solution of one part white vinegar mixed with one part water is recommended. If yellowing persists or is widespread, contact a carpet-cleaning professional.



Vacuum Cleaner Selection

For maximum effectiveness, use a vacuum cleaner with adjustable and rotating brushes that can loosen ground-in soil and has a strong enough airflow to penetrate to the backing, to remove all particles.

Regularly using a CRI Seal of Approval/Green Label vacuum cleaner will maintain a cleaner indoor environment. For the best cleaning results, no matter what type vacuum cleaner you purchase, inspect it periodically to be sure it is functioning properly:

- Keep brushes clean and replace them when worn.
- Keep vacuum hoses and attachments free of obstructions that restrict airflow.
- Inspect the vacuum head for rough edges or bent metal that may damage your carpet.
- Inspect belts frequently to make certain they are working properly.
- Always keep a spare belt for replacement as needed.
- Follow the vacuum cleaner manufacturer's instructions, and change the filter bag when it reaches maximum capacity.
- It's important to know that most manufacturers require the use of a CRI certified vacuum cleaner to maintain the warranty of carpet.

DEEP CLEANING - WHEN, WHY, & WHO

Regular vacuuming is the most important cleaning activity; but restorative cleaning must be performed to remove stubborn or embedded soil. The Carpet and Rug Institute recommends that carpet be cleaned using a restorative cleaning method every 12-18 months. **Use a cleaning method recommended by the carpet manufacturer to maintain your warranty.**

Professional cleaning services should be considered before your carpet and rugs begin to show severe soil. Letting carpet and rugs become excessively soiled will make cleaning more difficult and shorten the carpet's useful life. The Carpet and Rug Institute maintains a list of approved service providers on its website, www.carpet-rug.org.

In order to determine the amount and type of cleaning services needed, have the cleaning representative come to your home for a visual inspection. He or she can check the carpet for problem stains or excessively soiled areas that require additional attention. Obtain a written agreement for all work to be performed. Under normal circumstances, there should be no extra charge for moving furniture, preconditioning, and routine spot and stain removal.

Beware of pricing that may seem too good to be true. Most cleaning is based on the total number of square feet to be cleaned. Many firms have cleaning specials; however, pricing by the room or low prices quoted over the phone may have hidden restrictions or additional cost add-ons. A reliable firm will tell you the steps needed to clean your carpet and provide a written agreement before work begins. If you question the need for any required add-ons, contact the carpet manufacturer for assistance.



WHICH CLEANING METHOD FOR VARIOUS FIBERS?

The majority of carpet manufactured today is constructed with synthetic fibers (e.g. nylon or polyester) and may be cleaned with most cleaning methods. Other fibers may require special attention. Synthetic fibers can be cleaned by different methods, so rely on the carpet manufacturer's recommendations.

When choosing any cleaning method, select cleaning agents sold especially for stain-resistant carpet cleaning, and follow the directions for dilution and application. Never use soap, laundry detergent, automatic dishwasher detergent, or any of the strong household cleaning agents intended for use on hard surfaces, such as woodwork, linoleum, or tile.

For best cleaning results, always vacuum the area to be cleaned first and apply a pre-conditioning solution, to begin loosening soil, prior to cleaning. These solutions typically require 8-10 minutes to begin loosening soil. Tested, approved, and recommended products are listed online at www.carpet-rug.org.

Natural Fibers may require specialized care, therefore rely on the carpet manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning:

If you have **wool fibers**, avoid excessive agitation and excessive heat should be avoided. Wool can also be easily damaged by bleaches and alkalies.

Clean wool with neutral detergents (pH 5.0 - 8.0) and dry quickly to limit yellowing or browning. Products tested and approved by both CRI and WoolSafe are listed on the CRI website.

Silk should be cleaned using a dry cleaning process. These fibers may be damaged by high temperatures, high pH (>9), and sunlight, and will lose strength when wet. **The cleaning of silk fibers is best left to carpet-cleaning professionals.**

Plant fibers, including sisal, jute, coconut (coir), pineapple, ramie, and hemp, are specialized products that require specific cleaning procedures. **For these fibers, it is best to use a carpet cleaning professional.**

DO-IT-YOURSELF CLEANING

For any do-it-yourself cleaning method, the following points are critical:

- Always vacuum first to remove as much dry soil as possible.
- Follow instructions carefully!

Fluffing or Shedding - The balls of fluff found on carpet or in the vacuum cleaner bag, are merely loose bits of fiber left in the carpet from the manufacturing process. Removing these loose fibers does not affect the carpet life or quality. Because of the large micron size (>90 microns), these particles are too large to become airborne or respirable (<.4 microns). With proper vacuuming, using a quality vacuum cleaner, most shedding gradually disappears within the first year after installation.

Matting - Matting, the untwisting of the fiber and intermingling of the yarn tips, is usually the result of concentrated foot traffic and possibly inadequate maintenance. But other factors, including improperly specified cushion or cushion failure, can also be the cause. Matting is not considered a manufacturing defect unless specifically cited in the manufacturer's warranty. Manufacturers' definitions of matting may vary.

Moth and Beetle Control - Wool and wool-blend carpet made in the United States is treated to be permanently moth resistant. Carpet and rugs made of man-made fibers are naturally resistant to insects. Synthetic carpet fiber is resistant to beetles, commonly called "carpet beetles," because it is not a food source. However, beetles already in the home may lay eggs in the carpet pile, and hatch in eight to fifteen days. For assistance in removing carpet beetles, contact a professional pest control specialist.

Odor - During and immediately following the installation of new carpet, there may be a slight odor. This is harmless and may result from the removal of your old carpet and cushion, or from the new carpet, cushion, adhesives, or seaming tape. Ventilation with fresh air is recommended. Open windows or doors and run the fan of the HVAC system for up to 72 hours.

Restorative Cleaning - Scheduled frequent deep cleaning to assist in the removal of residues and trapped soils.

Ripples and Buckling - Carpet installed over separate cushion must be power stretched. Improper installation procedures may contribute to rippling and buckling. A carpet installer can usually solve the problem by re-stretching the carpet with a power stretcher.

Shading, Pile Reversal, Watermarking, or Pooling - Shading is not a change in color, but a change in pile direction that sometimes randomly appears in a carpet or rug. It may look darker or lighter from different directions. Shading may be more prevalent in a solid color cut pile carpet than in patterned and textured styles. This is not considered a manufacturing defect and is usually permanent and has no known cause.

Soiling - The secret to maintaining the beauty of your carpet is to vacuum often and conduct restorative cleaning regularly before it becomes excessively soiled. Excessive soiling has a tendency to dull the original color which may be restored after cleaning. In addition to tracked-in soil, greasy, sooty, environment pollutants may be deposited on carpet, causing dulling. Oily soil may be very difficult to remove after it has been on the carpet for a long time, and may be absorbed into the fiber, causing them to take on a yellow cast. Frequent cleanings are important to avoid this difficulty. Entry mats that trap soil at exterior entrances, combined with routine cleaning, provide extra protection for all floor coverings.

Sprouting - Occasionally a yarn tuft will rise above the pile surface of a carpet. Just snip these tufts off level with other tufts. Do not pull them out.

Entry Mats - Entry mats are valuable to limit soil from the outside. For full benefit, it is recommended to clean them frequently. To remove dry soil from entry mats, vacuum regularly. Remove embedded soil weekly by shaking or striking with a brush. For a thorough cleaning, wash entry mats with a brush and mild detergent solution, rinsing thoroughly. Allow them to dry completely before vacuuming.

Outdoor Carpet - Maintain outdoor carpet installed indoors in the same manner as other carpet in your home. When the carpet is used outdoors, sweep surface litter with a broom or deck brush. For a thorough, overall cleaning, wash outdoor carpet with a good carpet cleaning solution. Follow dilution instructions carefully. Spread solutions over outdoor carpet with a garden sprayer. Using a scrub brush, work the solution into the pile. Rinse thoroughly with a garden hose, and allow carpet to dry completely before vacuuming.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Following carpet installation, questions may arise pertaining to common characteristics of carpet. These characteristics are usually for a short duration or are easily remedied. Further questions can be directed to the carpet retailer or the carpet manufacturer.

Appearance Retention in Heavy-Use Areas - Carpet in heavily traveled areas receives the most abuse. The use of small rugs in front of heavily used chairs or furniture may reduce wear. Remove and clean these while vacuuming the primary carpet or rug. Move furniture and reverse area rugs to change the traffic flow.

Crushing - Crushing is the loss of pile thickness due to foot traffic. It is not a manufacturing defect unless specifically cited in the manufacturer's warranty. Regular vacuuming can help reduce crushing. Manufacturers' definitions of crushing may vary.

Depressions - The weight of heavy pieces of furniture can put indentations in carpet. Use furniture glides or cups under the legs of heavy pieces, or move your furniture a few inches backward or sideways so that the weight is not concentrated in one place. If depressions do occur, spritz the indentations with water in a spray bottle. Hold a hair dryer, set on medium, a few inches above the indentation. As the spot is drying use your fingers to gently work the pile upright and in the opposite direction.

Fading or Color Loss - Give carpet the normal protection from direct sunlight that you give any colored fabric. Fading can be caused by emissions from heating fuels or chemicals, such as pesticides, household cleaning agents, and other household items.

Filtration Soiling - Filtration soiling may appear as dark or grayish lines on carpet along walls, stairways, around vents, and under doors. It is caused by airflow over and through the carpet that allows fine, airborne soils to settle on the carpet surface, and sometimes may be attributed to an improperly balanced ventilation system. This type of soiling, while sometimes permanent, requires special treatments for effective removal. Contact a carpet-cleaning professional for assistance.

Consider the following precautions with a wet-cleaning method:

- Remove furniture from the room before cleaning or place plastic film under and around the legs of chairs, tables, and other furniture to prevent rust or furniture stains from developing on the carpet.
- Use only the recommended cleaning solution strength. Stronger solutions may cause accelerated re-soiling. Be sure to rinse all detergent from the carpet to prevent accelerated resoiling.
- Do not overwet the carpet. Overwetting may cause separation of the backing, separation of the seams, shrinkage, discoloration, and odor.
- The carpet should be dry within 12 hours. Provide proper ventilation or use fans to accelerate the drying process and exhaust any existing solution-related fragrances.
- Allow the carpet to dry completely before walking on it.

SPOT CLEANING

Stain-resist treatments provided on most carpets are designed to repel most acid-based dyes in many, but not all, foods and beverages. With proper patience and prompt attention, most common household spills can be removed.

For successful spot removal, the following suggestions should be followed. It may be necessary to contact a carpet-cleaning professional for assistance with stubborn stains that require a great deal of extra effort to remove.

Spot Removal Procedures

Act Quickly! Most carpet available today has been treated with a stain-resist treatment, so many spills can be removed if immediate action is taken. The longer the delay, the higher the probability of a spill becoming a permanent stain. Remember, staining is influenced by many factors, and no carpet is completely stain proof.

Complete removal of many common spills may require repeated use of a single solution, or the use of a combination of solutions. Always use the solutions in the concentrations recommended. Continue using each solution as long as there is noticeable improvement or transfer of the spill. Follow the simple steps carefully, in sequence.



SPOT REMOVAL STEPS

Blot liquids with a dry, white, absorbent cloth or white (no printing) paper towels.

Do not scrub the area! Scrubbing can cause pile distortion in the affected area. Continue to use a dry cloth or paper towels until the area is completely dry. For semi-solids, gently scrape up with a rounded spoon. Solids should be broken up and vacuumed until completely removed.

Pretest any spot removal agent in an inconspicuous area to make certain the solution will not damage the fiber or the dye in carpet. After applying several drops to the testing area, hold a white cloth on the wet area for 10 seconds. Examine the carpet and cloth for color transfer, color change, or damage to the carpet. If a change occurs, select another cleaning solution.

Apply a small amount of the selected cleaning solution to a white cloth, allow to sit for about 10 minutes and work in gently. Work from the edges of the spill to the center to prevent the spill from spreading. Do not scrub! Blot, absorbing as much as possible, and repeat if necessary. Continue using the first cleaning solution as long as there is a transfer of the spill to the cloth. It is not necessary to use all of the cleaning solutions if the first solution removes the spill. Complete removal of the spill may require repeating the same step several times.

After the spill has been completely removed, rinse the affected area thoroughly with cold water, and blot with a dry cloth until all of the solution has been removed. Some cleaning solutions will cause rapid soiling if the solution is not completely removed. Apply a one-half inch layer of white paper towels to the affected area, and weigh down with a flat, heavy object that will not fade. Continue to change paper towels as needed.

Note: Areas of soiling that appear after spot cleaning are most often caused by inadequate removal of spot removal solutions or spills that leave a sticky residue.

Many fiber manufacturers provide a toll-free number for cleaning assistance and advice (consult your warranty for more information).

DESCRIPTIONS OF SPOT REMOVAL SOLUTIONS FROM HOME ESSENTIALS

Always use cleaning solutions in the recommended concentration. Select a spot removal solution that does not contain optical brighteners that can bleach or discolor fibers.

Nail Polish Remover - Use a nail polish remover without conditioners.

Detergent Solution - Mix 1/4 teaspoon of a clear (nonbleach, nonlanolin, no optical brighteners) dishwashing liquid with 1 cup warm water. Allow the detergent solution to remain on the affected area for 10 to 15 minutes to lift the stain. It may be necessary to rinse with warm water several times to completely remove residues.

Also, never use an automatic dishwasher detergent because many contain bleaching solutions that can destroy the carpet color and damage fibers. Never use a laundry detergent of any type, because laundry detergents may contain optical brighteners (fluorescent dyes) that dye the fiber.

Warm Water Rinse - Warm water should be used in most cases for rinsing.



White Vinegar Solution - Mix 1 cup white vinegar with 1 cup water.

Ammonia Solution - Mix 1 tablespoon of household ammonia with a cup of water. **Be aware that ammonia, if used improperly, can cause a color change.** Be sure to test a hidden area.

Spot Removal Solutions - Some available carpet cleaning solutions may have a pH higher than 10 and/or optical brighteners which may distort the carpet color voiding out manufacturers warranties. Also, some available carpet cleaning solutions may leave a detergent residue causing carpet to quickly resoil. CRI certified spot removers are listed on CRI's website.

Call a Professional - A certified cleaning professional will be able to consult and provide solutions for help.

Vacuum - All dry spills should be scraped up with a blunt object and then vacuumed to lift and remove as much of the remaining substance as possible. Pouring any liquid onto a dry spill can create additional problems.

WHAT ABOUT DIFFICULT SPOTS?

Unusual spots and stains may require specialized removal procedures to avoid permanent damage to fibers or dyes. A carpet-cleaning professional may be able to restore the original appearance with special treatments, re-dye the affected area, or replace the damaged area.

CLEANING RUGS, MATS, AND OUTDOOR CARPET

From the modest welcome mat to the antique treasure, all rugs require regular care to prolong life and appearance. Dry soil, environmental pollutants, and spills can also damage the fibers of rugs and reduce their useful life. To properly care for your rugs, vacuum regularly to remove dry soil, taking care with fringe and edging. Restorative cleaning should take place at regular intervals to remove embedded soils.

Most cleaning methods can be used on synthetic fibers; however, natural fibers sometimes require specialized care. Contact a manufacturer or professional for assistance in these instances. Do-it-yourself cleaning of area rugs containing natural fibers other than cotton is discouraged.

Bath Mats and Small Rugs - Many bath mats and small rugs can be cleaned in a washing machine. Wash them in warm water (90°F - 105°F) using a neutral (mild) detergent. Rinse thoroughly, and tumble dry using the lowest possible heat setting. Larger bath mats and rugs may be spread in a shaded area and brushed lightly to facilitate drying.