

Carpet Cleaning

Commercial

Question: *What steps should I take to maintain carpet in a high-traffic area on a daily basis, and to deal with spills and stains?*

Answer: The following steps should be taken when dealing with carpet in a high-traffic area:

- It's a good idea to keep sand, grit and grass clippings off walkways outside entries to prevent inward tracking of these abrasive soils.
- Purchase a properly sized entry mat (the bigger the better, but there must be room for at least two steps to sufficiently wipe soil from feet before encountering the installed carpet). Nylon face, vinyl back for better moisture and oils absorption, combined with the resiliency necessary to collect a quantity of particle soil. The IICRC suggests a rental mat, since that guarantees frequent maintenance. Place entry mats on hard surfaces rather than on carpet where they can trap moisture or cause plasticizer migration.
- Vacuum, vacuum, vacuum; daily, especially after major events. The sooner you collect soils from the surface, the easier it is to remove them. For most carpet, you should use an upright vacuum with brush agitation, unless your canister vacuum is particularly well designed. The wider the head, the more efficient.
- Use high-efficiency double-lined poly-fiber collection bags. This reduces periodic maintenance such as dusting of furniture, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) filter exchange.
- Typically, deep cleaning should be accomplished on at least a semi-annual basis, with no more than two entry and high-traffic area "rinse" cleanings between the deep cleaning. This is dependent on traffic and daily maintenance as well. At a minimum, some attention should be given to primary entry areas on a quarterly basis.
- If spots are treated immediately, most will respond with plain warm water and very little mild detergent added.
- Make sure the HVAC system is slightly positively pressurized as well (air going out when doors are opened, rather than being sucked in). Proper air exchange rates can be calibrated according to ASHRAE regulations for the building with a trained HVAC contractor.
- Ensure proper air filtration through the HVAC System. High-efficiency pleated filters, rather than inexpensive fiberglass filters, are recommended.

Question: *What is the best method of carpet cleaning: dry foam method or steam extraction?*

Answer: Various methods of cleaning have different functions, both in interim maintenance and restorative cleaning.

According to a survey conducted by Cleanfax, a cleaning industry magazine, some 88.6% of the professional carpet cleaners are using hot water extraction as their primary cleaning method. Dry foam cleaning was used by 1.5% of the professionals surveyed.

Second, both Shaw Industries and Mohawk, who together manufacture over two thirds of the world's carpet, recommend hot water extraction cleaning.

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