



### ***Vacuum the Carpets, Often!***

Vacuuming on a regular basis is essential to extend the life of your carpet. Even if your carpet does not visually appear to be in need of vacuuming, dirt and dust must be removed from the fibers before they are ground in and set causing permanent stains. The better your vacuum cleaner, the better job it will do. Most of today's vacuum cleaners are equipped with heppa filters and do a far better job than your grandmother's dust blower! Modern vacuums are lighter in weight and easier to maneuver. As a result there is a tendency to run the vacuum like you're driving a sports car. So slow down and allow the vacuum cleaner to do its job. Go slowly, your time will be better spent and your carpets will be cleaner!

### ***The Routine.***

For routine maintenance, a good rule of thumb is to vacuum once per week, per occupant. As an example, a family of 3 would vacuum 3 times per week. A single person with one pet may want to vacuum twice a week. If the pet is a long haired pet, vacuuming more often may be required. Routine vacuuming should include all the traffic areas and open carpeted areas.

Vacuum under the furniture to the extent you can without moving the larger furnishings.

Dust and dirt particles gather under furniture and are seldom visible to the eye. Pet hair and other debris becomes airborne and will travel everywhere. Once a month, be sure to use the edger to dust the top of baseboards and the crease between the carpet and the bottom of the baseboard.

About once a month make an effort to move or tilt larger pieces of furniture to get underneath and around legs. Once a quarter (3 months) actually move the furniture and vacuum every inch of carpet!

### ***Cleaning – Vacuum First!***

A couple of words about carpet cleaning; VACUUM FIRST!! Even if you are having your carpets professionally steam cleaned, do not fail to vacuum the carpets thoroughly first. I recommend vacuuming twice before they are cleaned. To fail this step is to waste your money and time on the cost of a professional carpet cleaning job. While most carpet cleaning machines utilize suction, the suction is designed to extract the water used in the cleaning process. If the carpet is not vacuumed first, small particles of dirt and dust remain and mixed with the moisture of the carpet cleaner the dirt and dust becomes a type of mud most of which remains at the base of carpet fibers. This is often why freshly cleaned carpets look totally clean but then stains “come up” in a fairly short time.

### ***Shoes vs. Feet***

It's become a trend for some homeowners to ask visitors to remove their shoes. For some it's an effort to keep carpets and floors clean, for others it's a lifestyle choice. For your carpet it's not a clear choice. Obviously, dirty or muddy shoes will track and grind in dirt to the carpets and that's to be avoided at all costs. However, bare feet are very detrimental to carpet. The natural oils in human skin attach to the carpet fibers. Long after the bare feet are gone the oils will attract and bind dirt to the fibers. Simply vacuuming will not unbind the dirt and oils from the carpet fibers. For the oils to be removed, the carpets will have to be cleaned. If shoes are to be removed a pair of reasonably clean socks will protect the carpets from bare feet. If faced with a choice of dry shoes or bare feet, shoes would be best for the carpet.

### *Drips, Stains & Errors!*

There's a million "how to" articles on the web about stain removal. Usually, the best method of removal depends on what it was that was spilled. Again as a rule of thumb, get it up before it sets and BLOT – don't rub! Once a spill has had a chance to set the odds of getting it removed is greatly diminished, so get to it ... at once!

### *The Final Stretch.*

Occasionally, carpet will stretch. The carpet will develop "ripples" or "bubbles". Some will blame the movement of furniture others will blame a poor installation job. Regardless of the cause, nothing can make a carpet look more worn and weary than being all stretched out! More importantly, once the carpet is stretched it will not wear well. For carpet to wear well it's important that the carpet moves as little as possible when walked on. [This is why it's always a good investment to buy an excellent carpet pad!] However once the carpet is stretched the "ripples" cause movement with every step so the carpet's life is greatly reduced. Simply hire a carpet installer to re-stretch the carpet. Carpet stretching is not a terribly expensive job and the carpet will look years younger and will last for years longer.

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