

### What You Need to Know

The beauty and life of your carpet depend on the care it receives. Proper cleaning will not only keep your carpet looking great, but it will also help improve your indoor air quality and keep your carpet warranties intact. Properly cleaning your carpet is easier than you might think. All it takes is a little knowledge of how to select the most appropriate carpet cleaning products and methods. The Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval program helps you identify effective solutions, equipment, and service providers to clean your carpet right the first time, without the fear of faster re-soiling, stains reappearing, or damage to your carpet.

### Cleaning Essentials

#### 4 Steps for Proper Carpet Care

Carpet cleaning is all about developing a routine. If you get into a good routine and keep it up, you will see great results. Products that rate highly on The Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval (SOA) program are your assurance that you will clean correctly the first time. Here are four simple steps to keep your carpet clean and looking great:

1. Vacuum everywhere on a consistent schedule using a Seal of Approval-certified vacuum, and vacuum more frequently in high traffic areas.
2. Clean spots and spills quickly with products that do not damage the carpet or cause it to re-soil quicker. Visit [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org) to see a complete list of SOA-certified solutions to clean effectively and maintain the life of your carpet.
3. Professionally deep clean your carpets every 12 to 18 months to remove embedded dirt and grime, and to maintain the mill's warranty. SOA-certified cleaners are recommended (and sometimes required) by the manufacturer.
4. Stop dirt at the door by using mats outside and in, taking your shoes off when you enter the house, and changing your air filters to reduce airborne dust particles.

### Vacuuming

Proper vacuuming is the easiest and most effective way to keep your carpet clean. Regular vacuuming can also have the largest impact on the air you breathe by removing dust, dirt, allergens and particles.

To get the most out of your vacuuming regime, remember these few easy tips:

1. A quick once-over doesn't do much. Slow and steady does the trick.

2. When vacuuming, don't ignore those corners and crevices where dust builds.
3. Remember to replace or empty vacuum bags when they are about half to two-thirds full, as this improves the efficacy of the vacuum.

### How Often Should You Vacuum?

As a rule of thumb, you should vacuum at least once a week with a quality vacuum cleaner. However, the more foot traffic on your carpet the more you need to vacuum. The general formula is:

1. Vacuum daily in high-traffic areas.
2. Vacuum twice weekly in medium-traffic areas.
3. Vacuum weekly in light-traffic areas, using attachments at carpet edges.

### Cleaning Spots & Spills

#### A Two-Step Solution

With today's stain-resistant carpet, treating spots and stains has never been easier. Still, no carpet is completely stain proof. The key is to act quickly! So, to knock out spots, give them a one-two punch.

#### Step One: Absorb the Spill

- Blot liquids with a dry, white absorbent cloth or plain white paper towels; using a printed or colored material may transfer ink or dye to your damp carpet. Continue until the area is barely damp. Semisolids, like food spills, may need to be scooped up with a spoon. Solid, dried bits can be vacuumed up.
- Warning: do not scrub or brush the spot. Bristles and scrubbing can damage carpet, causing fraying and texture change.

#### Step Two: Treat the Spot or Stain

- Use a CRI Certified Seal of Approval carpet cleaning product. Though these have been laboratory tested, you should still pretest any cleaner on a scrap of carpet or in a non-visible area of your carpet.
- Follow the product's directions carefully. More is not better. Apply a small amount of the cleaner to a white cloth and work in gently, from the edges to the center. Blot; don't scrub. You may need to do this several times to remove the spot. After the spot is gone, blot the area with clear water to remove any remaining product.

For a complete and updated list of the Carpet and Rug Institutes certified cleaners, vacuums, tips for homes with pets and other resources visit [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org)