

## Cleaning and care of textile floor coverings

### Preventative measures

How susceptible a carpet is to dirt depends on its colour and structure. When selecting a carpet, this factor needs to be taken into account as well as the durability of the carpet. Due to the combination of coarse and fine fibres, dirt particles are not as visible on needed textile floor coverings as they are on other floor coverings. Furthermore, they are particularly easy to maintain and clean, making them a very economical choice.

Finally, suitable dirt catchment areas in entrances and corridors of buildings play a major part in the prevention of dirt being deposited on the floor covering. An effective dirt catchment area should be large enough so that it cannot be bypassed along the sides and everybody has to walk over it for several steps. Experience has shown that a dirt catchment area with a length of approx. five metres will catch around 80% of the dirt that is carried into a building. To ensure that it will fulfil its function long-term, it must be included in the routine and intensive cleaning operations at regular intervals.

### Routine cleaning

Routine cleaning keeps the carpet in a hygienic state. It is carried out as required, depending on the usage of the room this may be daily. Routine cleaning also determines at what intervals interim or intensive cleaning is required. This is carried out using a vacuum cleaner with a floor brush. Dirt catchment areas should be cleaned particularly thoroughly to ensure that they can absorb the dirt. In wet weather periods it may be necessary to let the floor covering dry first to ensure that the dirt can be removed by vacuum cleaning with a floor brush.

Routine cleaning also includes the removal of stains to maintain the representative character of the needed textile floor covering. If stains are treated while they are still fresh they are much easier to remove. Nearly all stains can be removed by dabbing or light rubbing towards the centre of the stain, using lukewarm water. If this method is not sufficient for more stubborn stains, seek advice from a cleaning expert. Please find below some hints on the treatment of particular stains:

Type of stain	Removal tip
Chewing gum	Ice with a special spray, then break it up by tapping it carefully with, e.g. a small hammer, remove with vacuum cleaner
Blood	Treat with detergent and lukewarm water. Pre-wash older stains in this way, let it soak overnight
Paint	Treat immediately, using a solvent on a white cotton cloth. Do not rub! Brush out after drying

Type of stain	Removal tip
Grease	Treat with pre-wash detergent
Coffee	Wash out with detergent and warm water or apply stain remover, dab and wash out in cold water
Red wine	Absorb immediately with absorbent paper
Wax	Peel off and iron out any residue at medium ironing temperature between two sheets of absorbent paper

### Interim cleaning

Depending on the usage and the degree of soiling, interim cleaning will be required at certain intervals. This is carried out in between intensive cleaning routines which take place at even larger intervals.

The purpose of interim cleaning is to remove any dirt that is sticking to the floor covering which could not be removed during daily cleaning using a vacuum cleaner with a floor brush. This will be limited to some areas with heavier soiling (e.g. walking areas in corridors and entrance areas or similar). If interim cleaning is carried out properly, the overall cleaning costs can be reduced.

Interim cleaning can either be carried out using pre-mixed foam, cleaning powder (for powder cleaning of textile floor coverings carried out manually and/or by machine, the application instructions of the powder manufacturer must be followed) or by using the pad method. Before commencing interim cleaning, the floor covering must be pre-cleaned with a vacuum cleaner with a floor brush.

### Intensive cleaning

In addition to daily routine and interval cleaning, all textile floor coverings require intensive cleaning at regular intervals, depending on the intensity of the soiling. It is required if the needed textile floor covering is soiled over a large area or to meet hygiene requirements.

Intensive cleaning should be carried out by an expert who has state-of-the-art machinery and tools available and who has the expertise to select a suitable cleaning method with regard to the degree of soiling, the make-up of the carpet, the carpet laying method and the floor underneath.

There are two methods for intensive cleaning:

1. Wet foam method/shampooing:  
With this method, the carpet is cleaned using cleaning foam and the rotating brushes of a single-disk or multi-disk shampooing machine. The cleaning foam is removed with a wet vacuum cleaner before it collapses.
2. Spray extraction method:  
With this method, a wash liquor is sprayed into the carpet pile at high pressure and vacuumed off immediately. By vacuuming it off immediately only the soiled carpet pile will get moist. This prevents the substrate (and potentially also the adhesive) from getting wet and, shrinkage during the drying process.

The best cleaning results can be achieved with the following combination: apply wet foam first and then use the spray extraction method. However, wetting the needled textile floor coverings must be avoided as it may affect the adhesion of the floor covering to the substrate.

With the intensive cleaning methods described above, carpets must be glued to the floor or stretched. Also, the carpet must not be walked on after wet cleaning and it must be completely dry before it can be walked on again.

It should also be noted that, with underfloor heating constructions, wet cleaning should only be carried out when the heating is switched off.

### **Special hints**

Before each interim and intensive cleaning procedure the moisture resistance of the way the carpet is laid and the floor must be assessed, as this can lead to the formation of bubbles or dents and/or changes to the shape within needled textile floor coverings.

If the moisture resistance cannot be determined from the construction details, a cleaning trial should be carried out on a small patch which is not too visible. In addition, it should be checked how the floor covering is attached to the floor underneath by trying to lift the needled textile floor covering in different places, in particular at the seams, using an awl.

The instructions by the detergent and stain remover manufacturers and any special directions of the false floor and adhesive manufacturers must also be followed.