



Atlantic Flooring, Inc.
Showroom:
502 Highway 64 East
in Manteo on Roanoke Island
Phone: 252.475.1811

Best Methods for Deep Cleaning Carpets

You know its time. Even though you have been religious about vacuuming your carpets, quickly attending to spots and spills, and varying traffic patterns to reduce soiling and wear, your carpets are ready for a freshening, and you have decided to hire a professional to give your carpets a deep cleaning. All carpets should be deep cleaned every twelve to eighteen months; a thorough cleaning not only revitalizes the look of your carpeting, it also reduces wear, extends its life and may be required in the terms of your warranty. But just how should your carpet for cleaned? There are five accepted methods for cleaning carpets, and one is right for you.

In most new carpets, your carpet manufacturer or retailer will recommend the best cleaning procedure for deep cleaning your carpets. Always follow these recommendations. If you are attempting the deep cleaning yourself, choose a carpet shampoo or cleaner and follow the directions for application and dilution. Never use soap, laundry detergent, dishwasher detergent or other household cleaners intended for use on other flooring surfaces. For the best results, be certain to vacuum the carpet thoroughly before cleaning, and apply a preconditioning solution before the deep cleaning process. These pre-cleaning solutions are mild detergents that begin loosening soil before the actual cleaning begins.

There are several ways to find the best professional for your job. You may simply ask for referrals from friends, family or even carpet stores or you may use the internet to do your own search. No matter which means you use, be aware of the five basic methods professionals use to clean carpets. Each has its own advantage and disadvantages; discuss with a professional which is best for your carpets before you begin deep cleaning your carpets.

Dry extraction cleaning use an absorbent compound containing special detergents and solvents that is infused in and around the carpet fibers with specially-designed machines and brushes. The compound acts as a tiny magnet, attracting dirt, oils, and soil in the carpet fibers, and then both the soil and the compound are removed by vacuuming. This method is recommended for sturdy fibers, including most synthetics, and is especially appropriate for natural fibers like wool and cotton that should not be exposed to excessive moisture.

The dry foam extraction method applies a special detergent solution that has been fluffed into a foam, and then applied to the carpet. This foam, which is less dense and much drier than a wet solution, is worked into the carpet by specially designed machines, and then removed by wet vacuuming. Some dry foam machines have their own extraction capabilities, while others need a thorough vacuuming after the carpet is dry.

The hot water extraction method, or "steam cleaning," as it is sometimes called, is the most common method for do-it-yourselfers and mobile professional cleaners. After preconditioning carpet areas that have experienced heavy use, the carpet cleaner uses hot water extraction equipment to infuse a pressurized cleaning solution into the carpet. Suspended soil and the cleaning solution are immediately extracted. Use caution with the hot water extraction system so



Atlantic Flooring, Inc.
Showroom:
502 Highway 64 East
in Manteo on Roanoke Island
Phone: 252.475.1811

that carpets do not become saturated, and accelerate drying in any way possible - using fans, air conditioners, dehumidifiers or additional drying strokes - to avoid possible damage and discoloration resulting from the moisture.

The rotary shampoo method is the classic home carpet cleaning technique. A machine with rotary brushes injects a cleaning solution into the carpet, and then removes the loosened soil and cleaning solution. And as with steam cleaning, be certain your carpet dries as quickly as possible. Never use a machine intended for hard surface flooring to shampoo your carpets - pile distortion and untwisting of fibers can occur, causing permanent damage to your carpet.

The absorbent pad method should be used by a trained cleaning professional. In the absorbent pad method, a special machine similar to a floor buffer with an absorbent spin pad is used to remove the soil. The pad absorbs soil on the carpet, and the soil is then rinsed off of the pad. The pad must remain saturated with the cleaning solution or damage to the carpet pile may occur. And regularly change the pad to prevent returning the soil back to the carpet face.

When choosing a deep cleaning method for your carpets, always check the recommendations of the carpet manufacturer, the equipment manufacturer, and your carpet cleaning professional. The match between your carpet and the right deep cleaning method will give your carpets added years of beauty and wear.

Carpet Stain Removal

Its inevitable, and everyone faces it sooner or later. A stain mysteriously (or not so mysteriously) appears on your carpeting, and it seems as if the entire room is focused on the spot. But with prompt action and some simple steps, most spots can be removed, and your carpeting returned to its original beauty.

If a stain occurs, quick action is essential. No carpeting is completely stain proof, although many are stain resistant. The stain resistant carpet allow more time for you to act, but the sooner you address the stain problem, the better your results will be.

First, remove as much of the staining material (food, wine, oil, etc) as possible by very gently scraping the spill with a teaspoon or a dull knife. Don't rub hard; you may damage the fibers, or force more of the stain into the carpet. If the spill is wet, absorb as much of it as possible by blotting the wet spot with clean white paper or cloth towels. Avoid using towels with synthetic fibers, as they are not as absorbent, and again may push the staining substance deeper in the carpet.

When blotting, work from the outside of the edge in toward the center. This will prevent the stain from spreading. And be careful not to rub, scour or scrape with the cloth; blotting



Atlantic Flooring, Inc.
Showroom:
502 Highway 64 East
in Manteo on Roanoke Island
Phone: 252.475.1811

will collect more moisture than scrubbing, and the vigorous action of rubbing may result in a fuzzy or worn looking surface.

When as much as possible of the stain has been lifted or blotted away, you can remove the rest of the stain with simple household solutions. A mild solution of a liquid detergent (no more than half tablespoon to one gallon of water) is recommended by most carpet manufacturers. Always test any cleaning solution on a discreet section of the carpet before treating the stain to make sure it will not discolor the fibers. Clear detergents are preferred over creamy or oily appearing ones, as they leave less residue. Using a clean white cloth again, dab the stain with the detergent solution, penetrating the stained carpet, and again blot the wet area with a clean dry cloth. Repeat this process until all the stain is removed. A solution of one tablespoon of ammonia in one cup of water can also be used on wool or wool blend carpets. Do not use any other household cleaners on the stain, especially ones containing bleach, since many contain chemicals that may permanently damage your carpet.

After the stain is removed, clean the spot again with clear water. This will remove any of the detergent residue that may remain on the carpet. If it is not removed, the residue may become sticky and cause a new spot in the same place.

When all that is left of the stain is a wet spot, place several layers of white paper or cloth towels over the spot, and weight the towels with something heavy that will not transfer color, such as a plastic water jug. This will help absorb all the moisture left in the fibers. Wool fibers will hold more moisture (and hold it longer) than synthetic fibers, so be patient with the process to get all the moisture out.

If the stain does not respond to the mild detergent, you can use any number of commercial spot removers for specific offenders, such as chewing gum remover, non-oily nail polish remover, or spot removers designed specifically for grease, oil, or tar. These are available in most hardware and home improvement stores; be sure to follow their specific directions carefully. If the stain persists, give us a call so we can advise you on certain types of professionally cleaners that might be able to rescue your carpet.