



## RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL CARE GUIDE FOR CARPET TILE



This guide will explain how InstaCarpet's carpet tile will perform against heavy traffic and soiling. It will also help you understand the right methods of carpet tile care and maintenance to enhance the longevity of the product.



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## Difference Between Carpet Tile Cleaning & Carpet Tile Maintenance

You may be wondering what is the difference between carpet tile cleaning and maintenance? Are they not the same?

The answer is they are not the same. Here's how they differ to each other:

- **Cleaning** is the removal of visible soil.
- **Maintenance** is a well-planned, ongoing process of soil and stain removal to help a carpet retain its original appearance and performance attributes over time.

## Carpet Tile Maintenance — A Priority

Three (3) main reasons why you need to have a proper maintenance program in place.

- **Extending the life of carpet tile** — A consistent maintenance program can extend the life of carpet tile for several years depending on the facility and track patterns.
- **Cleaning** — Professional hot water extraction is required every 18-24 months depending on level and type of traffic. Warning: Non-approved cleaning products and topical treatments applied by you or a professional carpet cleaner may accelerate soiling that will not be covered by your warranty. Proof of cleaning is required in the event.
- **Proof of professional cleanings** are required in the event a claim is filed for wear, texture retention, or stains. Check sample for specific warranties.

In general, appearance of the carpets depends upon several factors- color, pattern, density and fiber. InstaCarpet's products appearance will get affected by below factors:

- Flattening or matting of the carpet tile fibers.
- Soiling or change in color on the carpet tiles



## Elements of an Effective Carpet Tile Maintenance Program

- **Soil Containment** — Moist soil is transferred to the carpets from foot traffic. The use of an effective dirt barrier matting will reduce the rate of soiling. All the external entrances, goods lifts, loading and offloading stations and adjoining hard areas should have the dirt barrier matting installed for first 10 steps. It is very important that the dirt barrier matting is maintained and serviced on daily basis, once the dirt barrier is full of soil, it ceases to be effective.
- **Vacuuming** — There should be a proper scheduled plan for vacuuming depends upon the area.
- **Spills & Soil** — Promptly remove stains/spills.
- **Interim Maintenance System Cleaning Systems** — By having the proper schedule based on the traffic areas, cleaning frequency should be scheduled.
- **Periodic Restorative Cleaning** — Scheduled frequent deep cleaning to remove residues and trapped soils.

## Maintenance Program Development

Developing a proper maintenance guide is really important for better carpet tile performance. Failing to do so will adversely affect the InstaCarpet's carpet tile.

- **Daily Maintenance** — Removing soils that enter your facility so that the damage they cause is reduced.
- **Interim Maintenance** — Maintaining the appearance of your carpet tile through the use of low-moisture and low-chemical use methods that promote faster dry times and return carpet tiles back to use quickly.
- **Restorative Maintenance** — Deep cleaning the carpet to remove deeply embedded soils and create a healthier environment. It's important that on Half yearly or annual basis your whole installation is cleaned utilizing a Hot water Injection and Extraction Method.

### SOIL CONTAINMENT

Identifying the type of stain or spill is important as this will help you deal with it in the correct manner as opposed to making it worse.

Moist soil is transferred to the carpets from foot traffic. The use of an effective dirt barrier matting will reduce the rate of soiling. Some preventive measures consist of using outside mats capable of removing dirt off shoes and have the capability to hold the material. Inside mats should remove smaller particles of dirt as well as oil and other liquid that can be tracked in from outside.

**Remember:** Keeping parking lots, sidewalks and entrances clean will cut down on the tracking in of debris.



## HOW TO USE MATS TO PROTECT YOUR CARPET TILES

- A walk-off area, normally doorways and or vestibules, must be at least 12-15 feet long to effectively scrape and/or dry the soles of shoes.
- Mat selection should consist of scraper mats located outside, scraper/drying mats in the vestibule, and drying mats inside.
- Using Walk off Mats in all restaurants/cafeterias, just inside the kitchen area, prevents staff tracking kitchen born grease onto the dining area carpet tiles.

### VACUUMING

Vacuuming is the most effective method of removing soil from carpet tiles, and the most economical. While vacuuming your carpet tiles sounds easy enough, there's actually a little more to it.

Vacuum method should be slow passes instead of several quick passes. Quick passes don't do much to remove the soil ingrained in your carpet. Heavily soiled areas will require multiple passes both east/west and north/south.

When buying or specifying vacuuming equipment for your facility, you should put yourself in the shoes of the person operating the vacuum. A common mistake is buying a vacuum cleaner that is not appropriate for the space being vacuumed.

**For Example:** If you are using a vacuum cleaner that only covers 12 inches in one pass (upright or backpack), how effective is it to clean a large area? It is not effective at all. If you are vacuuming properly, it will take a long period of time to effectively clean the area. In most cases, human nature leads to speeding up and/or vacuuming partial areas of the space. Large area vacuum cleaners should be purchased for large, open areas like corridors, aisles, and large rooms.

### MAKE SURE YOU'RE ON THE RIGHT FREQUENCY

AREA	TRAFFIC CONDITION	FREQUENCY
Entry	Heavy	Daily
Ground Floor Halls	Heavy	Daily
Above Ground Halls	Medium	Daily
Administrative Offices	Medium	3-4 Times per Week
Classrooms	Medium	Daily
General Office Areas	Medium	Daily
School Corridors	Medium	Daily
Boardrooms	Light	Weekly
Conference Rooms	Light	Weekly
Executive Offices	Light	Weekly





## **RECOMMENDED VACUUMS SMALL AREAS**

- Upright two-motor vacuum with rotary brush and beater bar HEPA filter
- Backpack vacuum with high performance power head
- Periodically check brushes for wear
- Dispose of vacuum cleaner bags when half full
- An 80% efficiency loss occurs after half full

## **SPOT & SOIL REMOVAL SYSTEM**

You also need a plan for removing spots as they happen. When it comes to spot removal, speed is definitely a factor. The quicker you get to a spot, the better. Act quickly to remove new spots using the method below.

## **HOW TO PROPERLY REMOVE A SPOT**

Follow these steps to quickly remove a fresh spot from your carpet:

- Identify the spill.
- Blot or scrape up the substance (DO NOT SCRUB).
- Rinse with a small of water thoroughly. Apply a cleaning solvent based on the type of stain. If the type of stain is not known, use a ph neutral, all-purpose spotting solution.
- Agitate gently using a nylon brush. Work from the outer edges and work inward to prevent the stain from spreading.
- Use a clean towel to blot or extract the stain.
- Final rinse with small amount of water.

There are some common spills at home or at office such as, water based spillages, oil-based spillages and gums. These include alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, food dyes, gravy, excrement, coffee, tea milk, cream, ink or wet or dry paint. These are the most common and are easily identifiable spills.

## **WATER BASED SPILLAGES**

If the spill is liquid, just blot the spot with the clean paper towels or clean cloth from the outside towards the center. If the spill is semi liquid, scrape with a spatula or spoon and then blot with a damp cloth or sponge. It's very important to never scrub the carpet tile, or you risk ruining the carpet tile fibers. You will simply be pushing it deeper in to the carpet fiber making it harder to remove. If the spills are extremely difficult to clean or remove than take advantage of InstaCarpet's carpet tiles and replace the tile from your attic stock. After following the above procedure, promptly remove the remaining residue with a small amount of water, repeat the process until you are not taking up any more spill or stain.



### **WATER BASED SPILLAGES (Cont.)**

In case stains doesn't go away with clean water then use a small amount of dry-cleaning solvent and a hand brush. Sprinkle the Solvent over the spot and use a hand brush to gently message the Solvent into the stain. Leave the area to dry for 15-30 minutes and then brush the solvent again. Solvent might get sticky on the carpet, brush again and then Vacuum. Repeat the application if it's necessary. Make sure not to rub the brush aggressively on the spot as it can damage the carpet.

#### **Note:**

- While changing the tiles, please expect to see the color difference from old to new until the carpet tile is walked in.
- Test a small inconspicuous area for possible discoloration prior to use and substances.

### **OIL BASED SPILLAGES**

To remove the oily stains such as paint, grease, tar, asphalt etc. solvent based spotter is recommended. Prior caution should be taken while using any type of penetrating spotter.

- Scoop up the excess paint, grease, tar, etc. on the carpet tile by using a spoon or spatula and carefully extracting it. For the small amounts of oil spill that you cannot remove using this way, get a clean sponge or a white cloth and then blot the oil spill until you are able to remove as much of it from the carpet.
- Next thing check the colorfastness, test on the inconspicuous area by applying the solution on to a white cloth and gently pressing onto the carpet, check the cloth if there is any evidence of dye transfer to the cloth. If it does not harm your carpet tile, then you are good to go. If yes, do not continue.
- If after doing this, the oil-based spill still remains, get some dry-cleaning solvent and apply it on an absorbent pad and then apply it onto the stain. Make sure you try it out again before using it as you don't want to damage your carpet accidentally. Put something heavy on top of the absorbent pad and then let it set for about thirty minutes. If after doing that some of the stain still remains, apply more solvent onto the pad and blot the area until you are able to remove it.
- Rinse the carpet tile with water to help eliminate any residue that could be left behind. Dry it using a clean rag or towel and then you're done.



## **GUMS**

Give this do-it-yourself method a shot the next time you're wondering how to get gum out of the carpet:

- Place a few handfuls of ice in a ziplock bag.
- Put the bag of ice directly onto the gum stain. This will harden the gum so it's easier to remove from carpet.
- Use a scraping tool to fully scrape the gum from the carpet.
- Sponge the gum stain directly with cleaning fluid.
- Cover the gum stain with a clean white towel or cloth to soak up any remaining liquid and continue patting dry.
- You can apply solvent based spotter directly on the chewing gum, leave for some time to allow the solvent spotter to soften the chewing gum and follow the rest of the steps listed above.

## **AN EFFECTIVE PREVENTATIVE CLEANING PROCESS**

A proper preventative maintenance program will include these steps:

- Remove soil and stains from the carpet.
- Deodorize and neutralize bacterial contaminants
- Pile lift carpet fiber to restore matted carpet and loosen embedded dirt.
- Move and replace furniture as needed.





## SUGGESTIVE PREVENTATIVE CLEANING SCHEDULE

Your preventative maintenance program should include a carpet cleaning schedule based on the traffic patterns and use of various areas in your business. More trafficked areas of your areas may only require cleaning once or twice a year. Every building is different. That's why you need a custom cleaning schedule to fit your unique needs. However, here is a suggested cleaning schedule to give you an idea of what your building might need:

AREA	TRAFFIC CONDITION	FREQUENCY
Entry	Heavy	12-24 Times per Year
Ground Floor Halls	Heavy	12 Times per Year
Ground Floor Halls	Medium	4 Times per Year
Above Ground Halls	Medium	4 Times per Year
Administrative Offices	Medium	2 Times per Year
Classrooms	Medium	4 Times per Year
General Office Areas	Medium	2 Times per Year
Boardrooms	Light	2 Times per Year
Conference Rooms	Light	2 Times per Year
Executive Offices	Light	2 Times per Year

## CHEMICAL REQUIREMENTS

The best preventative cleaning programs use a low-moisture system with chemicals that don't leave any residue behind. A low moisture system, will prevent microbial growth and reappearing stains that can occur with extraction cleaning. Here are the chemical requirements you should look for:

- Must have pH between 7.0 - 8.0 in diluted form No volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
- Does not leave a sticky or oily residue when dried (must dry in undiluted form, with no tackiness to the touch).
- Contains no optical brighteners. Must be safe and non-toxic.
- Meets or exceeds green cleaning standards CRI Approved Chemicals
- CRI Approved Service Provider (Outsourced Cleaning

Following these chemical requirements will give you the best possible preventative cleaning program for your carpet.

Visit the CRI website [Carpet-rug.org](http://Carpet-rug.org) for approved providers.



## KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

To have the effective maintenance program walk off systems are one of the major requirements at entryways, exits and any area next to the hard surfaces. Walk offs should be vacuumed daily or as needed.

### **Vacuuming**

- Light-to-medium traffic areas: vacuum as needed, but at least every 2-3 days.
- Heavy-traffic areas: vacuum daily – entrances, corridors/all areas, break areas, elevators, and work/copy rooms.
- When selecting a vacuum cleaner, choose an approved vacuum and follow the manufacturer's recommendations for use. Look for the Seal of Approval/Green Label Vacuum Cleaner label on vacuum cleaner packaging and merchandising.
- Spot Removal

## USEFUL CARPET TILE MAINTENANCE TIPS

To have the effective maintenance program walk off systems are one of the major requirements at entryways, exits and any area next to the hard surfaces. Walk offs should be vacuumed daily or as needed.

- Check for spots daily and treat immediately
- Most carpet today has a soil-resistant treatment, making spots easier to remove.
- Act quickly! The longer the delay, the higher the probability for a permanent stain.
- Blot liquids with a dry, white, absorbent cloth or plain white paper towels (without any print design). Do not scrub the area. Continue to blot until the area is essentially dry.
- Gently scrape p semi-solids (modeling clay, finger paint, etc.) with rounded spoon and vacuum. Do not add moisture.

***Spin bonnets, anti-static treatments, optical brighteners, carpet protection chemical and overly aggressive solvent based cleaners are not recommended for use with InstaCarpet's carpet tiles.***