

Wool Rug Cleaning

Vacuuming

An area rug receives a lot of abuse from dirt, sand, dust, various spills and foot traffic. Vacuuming area rugs with a quality machine will go a long way towards prolonging the appearance and life of your carpet.

Vacuuming is the best way to remove everyday dirt and dust. In the first year, we recommend vacuuming at least two or three times a week to remove excess fuzz that accumulates on the rug surface. This fuzzing is perfectly normal and in no way shortens the life of your rug. It is merely the result of loose fibers created during the weaving process. "Pilling" (*A condition of the carpet face in which fibers from different tufts become entangled with one another, forming hard masses of fibers and tangled tufts. Pills may be cut off with scissors.*) can be caused by excessive heavy foot traffic or using powder cleaners or deodorizers that "clump" fibers together. If the beater bar of your vacuum slows down noticeably on the rug, raise the height of the vacuum/beater bar. Constant, heavy beater bars can also cause pilling.

Cut pile area rug:

Our hand-tufted wool area rugs are well constructed and durable. A vacuum with a rotating beater bar to agitate the area rug pile and strong suction to remove loose particles is well tolerated by the area rug. If your vacuum does not have a beater bar, it may remove surface dirt well but may leave embedded soil that can damage the area rug through abrasion. Remember, vacuuming is the best tip for **cleaning wool rugs**.

Vacuum Tips:

- Make sure that the beater bar is actually rotating when in contact with the area rug. A worn belt will reduce rotation when the bar contacts the area rug.
- Adjust the height of the beater bar so that it lightly vibrates the area rug, but will not cause the motor to slow.
- Check the vacuum bag regularly. A vacuum will become less efficient if the debris bag becomes too full (over half full for most machines).
- Vacuum across both directions of the traffic pattern to prevent matting.

Vacuuming removes most dry soil, but street grime, oily soils, and air pollution can

build up eventually and your area rug may require cleaning. The accumulation of these particles can cause gradual dulling.

Wool Rug Cleaning Methods

Dry Foam and Absorbent Pad

This is our recommended method. It uses little water to create a light detergent foam that is worked into the pile, then vacuumed out when dry.

Steam Cleaning

This method is most effective when performed by a professional, although many rug cleaning machines may be purchased or rented. The dangers of performing this method on your own involve using too much detergent or water. Some cleaning agents available with rented units leave a heavier residue, so use care or the advice of a professional when choosing a product. Test the product on a small area to check for residue or a sticky feel. Do not use if a residue exists, or if in doubt about a product. Finally, do not use laundry detergents to clean your area rug to avoid possible chemical brighteners.

"Oxy" Cleaners

Synthetic fibers - fine. Wool fibers - No! There are many oxygen cleaners on the market that are environmentally safe and work well for spot cleaning various stains on synthetic fiber area rugs. Most of these cleaners are biodegradable and form oxygen, hydrogen peroxide and soda ash when mixed with water. Soda ash is sodium carbonate and has alkaline properties. **Do not use this cleaning method on wool or silk and avoid prolonged skin contact.**

Dry Powder

We do not recommend using dry powders with plush or deep pile area rug, as the cleaning residue may be difficult to remove. Powder cleaners and deodorizers can cause "Pilling". If the area rug is heavily soiled, we recommend a different procedure or using a professional.

Area Rug Stain Removal

If an area rug becomes spotted or stained, work quickly. When possible, scoop up solids and blot liquids immediately after a spill occurs. Absorb as much liquid as possible with a white cloth or paper towel without scrubbing the area to prevent

matting or fuzzing.

Methods of Cleaning Various Area Rug Fibers

Natural fibers may require additional consideration before cleaning. **Do not use oxygen cleaners on wool or silk.**

Wool - Excessive agitation and heat should be avoided, but generally wool fibers may be cleaned with most cleaning methods. Wool should be cleaned with neutral detergents and dried quickly. Use special care around household cleaning products, as bleaches and other alkaline products such as bathroom cleaners easily damage wool.

Cotton/Rayon - Cotton and rayon are cellulose fibers and may be cleaned using all cleaning methods. To avoid shrinking and possible browning, avoid excessive drying and agitation. As with wool, take care with alkaline products.

Silk - Silk should be cleaned using a dry cleaning process. These fibers may be damaged by natural and synthetic acids (e.g. lemon juice), and sunlight. Consult a rug cleaning specialist for additional information about cleaning silk.