

GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CARPET

New carpet represents a substantial investment and, like your other fine furnishings, requires proper care to keep it attractive over the years to come. Carpet rarely wears out in terms of fiber wearing away, but its appearance deteriorates over time and becomes less attractive. You can protect your investment, prolong the life of your carpet, and improve the quality and beauty of the indoor environment by establishing a regular maintenance schedule. Please reference your residential warranty for specific care requirements.

THE CARPET CARE PROGRAM

A comprehensive carpet care program consists of four elements:

- 1) Preventive maintenance.
- 2) Regular vacuuming.
- 3) Removal of spots and spills.
- 4) Overall cleaning on a regular basis.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

- 1) Walk-off mats should be used at all entrances to absorb soil and moisture, and mats should be cleaned on a regular basis so they don't become sources of soil themselves, especially during inclement weather. Try to keep your sidewalks and entrances free of excessive dirt and substances which can be tracked into the home.
- 2) Use a quality pad under your carpet, particularly on stairs. Good pad not only gives better resilience underfoot, but it can also add to the life of your carpet. Some carpets carry warranties with specific density and thickness requirements. Before purchasing your carpet pad, review your warranty.
- 3) Move heavy furniture occasionally to avoid excessive pile crushing. Put coasters intended for use with carpet under the legs of tables, chairs, and other furniture to help distribute the weight and prevent crushing the pile. Do not use chairs or appliances with rollers or casters on carpet without a chair pad designed for carpet. Continued use without a chair pad can cause damage to the carpet.

- 4) When moving heavy wheeled furniture (pianos, buffets, etc.), prevent damage by placing a protective barrier of heavy cardboard or plywood between the wheels and the carpet.

- 5) If you use area rugs over your carpet, be sure to remove and clean them regularly. Clean and restore the pile of the carpet underneath. Be certain to check area rugs for colorfastness before putting them back over carpet, as the dyes in some rugs may bleed through to the carpet. **After cleaning your carpet, remember to allow complete drying before replacing rugs.**

- 6) Protect your carpet from prolonged periods of direct sunlight with blinds, shades, or awnings.

PLEASE NOTE: NO CARPET IS ABSOLUTELY STAIN PROOF. MOST CARPETS HAVE STAIN RESISTANT TREATMENTS TO IMPROVE YOUR ABILITY TO CLEAN UP STAINS. NOT PREVENT STAINS. CARPETS WITH SOIL RESISTANT TREATMENTS REDUCE THE RATE OF SOILING, BUT ALL CARPETS REQUIRE REGULAR CARE AND MAINTENANCE.

Stain Versus Soiling

It should be noted that there is often confusion about the difference between soiling and staining, and the majority of stain complaints are actually soil-related. For example, many sugar-based spills, such as soft drinks and coffee, leave a sugar residue after removal; this sticky residue readily attracts soil from ordinary shoe traffic, and the resulting discolored area appears to be a stain. The same thing happens when spills are cleaned with a detergent solution and the area is not sufficiently rinsed with plain water, leaving a sticky detergent residue. It is important to rinse thoroughly with water and blot dry after removing any spill.

VACUUMING

The most important step in caring for your carpet is vacuuming. Vacuum thoroughly and frequently, particularly in high-traffic areas. Bear in mind that walking on soiled carpet permits the soil particles to work their way below the surface of the pile where they are far more difficult to remove and can damage the fibers. Frequent vacuuming removes these particles from the surface before this happens.

For rooms with *light traffic*, vacuum the traffic lanes

areas with *heavier traffic* require that the traffic lanes be vacuumed daily and the entire area twice weekly. Up to *three* passes of the machine will suffice for *light soiling*, but *five to seven* passes are necessary for *heavily soiled* areas. Change the vacuuming direction occasionally to help stand the pile upright and reduce matting.

Vacuum cleaner recommendations:

To ensure that your vacuum will conform to the highest industry standards, make sure that your vacuum cleaner certified through the **Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) Seal of Approval/Green Label Vacuum Cleaner Program**. Visit www.carpet-rug.org for details and listings.

- 1) A good vacuum cleaner is vital to prolonging the bear and life of your carpet. An inexpensive machine can remove surface dirt but will not effectively remove the hidden dirt and particles embedded in the pile.

- 2) For most carpet styles, Shaw Industries recommends the use of vacuums with a rotating brush or combination beater/brush bar that agitates the carpet pile and mechanically loosens soil for removal by the vacuum

Note that carpets with thick loop pile construction, particularly wool and wool-blend styles, may be sensitive to brushing or rubbing of the pile surface and may become fuzzy from use with a beater/brush bar vacuum. In addition, shag (or cabled) styles have seen a resurgence in popularity, revitalized by the "California casual" design trend, and the long yarns of these products tend to wrap around the beater bars; the brushes may then damage the yarn. For both the wool and wool blend and shag products, Shaw recommends the use of a suction-only vacuum.

- 3) Replaceable paper vacuum bags do a better job of trapping the small particles that pass through cloth bags back into the room. High-efficiency vacuum bags, also called microfiltration bags, trap even smaller microscopic particles such as mold and mildew spores and dust mite byproducts, often found to be a source of allergies. All vacuum bags should be checked often and replaced when half full.

- 4) Make sure the belt is in good condition and that the brush or beater bar rotates when in contact with the carpet. To adjust the vacuum to the correct height adjust the roller on the front of the brush bar to the correct height