

If this type of soil is allowed to accumulate, it begins to attract and hold the dry soil. This is the reason cleaning is so important when dulling of the color is first noticed; if allowed to remain too long, it becomes gummy and difficult to remove.

If carpet is cleaned before it becomes too unsightly, the cleaning chore will be easier and more successful. It is a myth that cleaning the carpet before it is absolutely necessary will cause it to get dirty faster. Carpet in a typical household should be cleaned every 12 to 18 months depending upon the number of residents and amount and type of activity. Choice of the proper cleaning system is important. Some systems may leave residues which promote re-soiling and defeat the whole purpose of cleaning. The recommendations below represent the best current knowledge and should help prolong the time between cleanings.

## The cleaning system —

**Shaw Industries recommends the hot water extraction system**, which research indicates provides the best capability for cleaning. This system is commonly referred to as "steam cleaning," although no steam is actually generated. The process consists of applying a cleaning agent onto the pile and using water in the extractor to recover the used solution and soil. This can be done from a truck-mounted unit outside the home with only the hose and wand brought inside or, where a truck-mounted unit cannot reach, by a portable, self-contained system brought into the home.

**Carpet cleaning equipment and cleaning products used as spotters, pre-sprays, and in-tank solutions should have certification in the Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval Programs. These products are listed at [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org). Contact Shaw's Technical Service department at 1-800-441-7429 for additional cleaning product recommendations.**

**Professional carpet cleaners** - It is to your advantage to use professional cleaners because their experience enables them to do a better job than you can do yourself. Their equipment has more extraction power than the rental units available to you, and the carpet should dry more quickly. True professionals have also made the investment in training to understand the equipment, to know the proper cleaning agents for the situation at hand, and to recognize the differences in fibers and carpet construction.

One way to locate a professional cleaner is to contact the **Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration**

**Certification (IICRC) at 1-800-835-4624.** This organization maintains a national directory of independent professional cleaners who are trained and certified in a variety of cleaning specialties. Call and explain that you have purchased a Shaw Industries carpet, and be sure to ask for a cleaner near you who uses the hot water extraction system.

**Do-it-yourself systems** - If you decide to rent a steam cleaning machine and do it yourself, check several cleaning systems before making a selection. **Recommended carpet cleaning equipment and cleaning products should have certification in theCRI Seal of Approval Programs.** Most rental units available do not adequately clean and may actually damage the carpet. Consider the following:

1) Some rental companies have cleaning equipment that is similar to what the professionals use. The cleaning equipment should have enough vacuum power to allow the carpet to dry within 6 to 12 hours after cleaning. Avoid rental units found in many retail and grocery stores that do not have enough power to extract the cleaning solutions from the carpet adequately and which may actually damage the carpet due to overwetting.

2) Avoid overwetting the carpet. Prolonged dampness may promote growth of mildew and bacteria in the carpet or cause separation of the backing. A carpet that is wet for more than 24 hours could develop a growth of mold and mildew. This is controlled by a combination of proper equipment and operator training. Most problems in do-it-yourself cleaning are due to overwetting and use of excessive detergent.

3) Use a cleaning solution with a pH less than 10, preferably near 9, and with a minimum of nonsticky residue. The attraction between the detergent and the particles of soil and oil is critical during the cleaning process. However, the detergent residue continues to attract the particles after cleaning. Increasing the amount of cleaning solution beyond the recommended level does not greatly increase cleaning performance, but makes the removal of detergent more difficult. Because buildup of detergent residue is the most common cause of accelerated re-soiling complaints, do not use extra cleaning solution. Shaw Industries recommends applying the cleaning product as a pre-spray and using clear water in the extraction unit to minimize residue.

4) Carpet with stain resistant treatments must be cleaned with products formulated for this purpose, or the stain resistance will be impaired and the warranty voided. Do not use cleaning or spotting solutions that contain bleaches or optical brighteners because they can discolor the carpet.

5) Do not use any silicone-based anti-soil treatments on carpets produced by Shaw Industries.

6) Reduce drying time by using several fans to move air across the carpet in combination with a dehumidifier or air conditioner to pull moisture out of the air. Carpet should be dry within 12 hours; even less is better.

### Bonnet cleaning systems -

Bonnet cleaning systems employ a rotating bonnet of terry cloth or other absorbent material to agitate the carpet pile and absorb soil. A detergent solution is sprayed onto the pile and then worked with the bonnet attached to a rotary floor polisher.

**Shaw Industries does not recommend this cleaning system.** The bonnet system has very limited capability for soil removal and leaves much of the detergent in the pile since it employs no real extraction. As a result, rapid re-soiling often occurs. Another disadvantage is that the spinning bonnet may distort the fibers of cut pile carpet, fuzzing the pile and leaving distinct swirl marks.

## CARPET PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

**Sprouting** - If loose ends or "sprouts" extend above the rest of the pile, clip them off even with the pile surface. Never try to pull them out. After clipping, smooth the area with your fingers. Sharp edges on your vacuum cleaner, a child's toy, high heels, or animal claws can cause this condition.

**Pile Crushing** - All carpet fibers will crush under heavy stationary loads. Crushing can be reduced by shifting furniture regularly. Crushed areas can usually be improved by covering the area with a damp, clean white cloth and then applying heat to the cloth with an electric iron on the *lowest* setting. To ensure that the iron does not damage carpet fibers, test carpet in an inconspicuous location such as a closet. Remove the cloth and restore the pile while it is still hot by brushing it lightly. Keep traffic off the carpet until it is dry.

**Shading** - After certain carpet styles have been subjected to traffic, you may notice areas that appear lighter or darker than other areas. Don't be alarmed. Shading is the result of the change in direction of the pile due to pressure from footsteps and vacuuming. Brushing the pile all in one direction may temporarily correct shading; however, shading is part of the carpet styling and should be expected in varying degrees. Do not mistake shading for color fading.