

MAINTAIN

**COMMERCIAL
MAINTENANCE
GUIDE**



An **Interface** Company

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Introduction

Why is maintenance important? By implementing a routine carpet maintenance program, you preserve and maintain your floor covering and extend the life of your carpet investment. Routine care can prolong the need for restorative cleaning. Restorative cleaning is needed when carpet has been neglected and its appearance has degenerated to a point where cleaning is an absolute necessity. However, even restorative cleaning typically will not achieve the desired original beauty and appearance of the floor covering if the carpet has been neglected. Routine care means a longer lasting product. What is important is to implement a maintenance program from the beginning. An effective maintenance program is carefully planned and executed on schedule. There are many factors that can affect the appearance of carpet including color, pattern, yarn fiber, and maintenance.

COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE PLAN

An effective maintenance program consists of four (4) key elements:

- (1) **Vacuuming** – regular vacuuming is the single most important part of a maintenance program. Vacuuming is designed to remove dry soil matter.
- (2) **Spot and Spill Removal** – quick response to spills is key. The faster spills are dealt with the less chance that they will leave a stain.
- (3) **Interim Cleaning** – several different methods can be utilized. If used regularly, interim cleaning can prolong the need for restorative cleaning.
- (4) **Restorative Cleaning** – deep cleaning designed to remove trapped soils. Wet extraction is the most effective method and the only restorative method recommended by FLOR.

IDENTIFYING YOUR SPECIFIC MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Just as various areas of your home, office, or building are subject to different uses, each area demands a different level of maintenance and care. Heavily trafficked areas such as entrances, hallways, or corridors require more frequent vacuuming and cleaning. Areas around doorways or desks may need daily attention to spills and stains. Also, certain areas may require different types of equipment to be used. Having a well-designed and comprehensive maintenance plan will add years of useful life to your carpet investment.

Carpet Cleaning Frequency Chart

TRAFFIC SOIL RATING	CARPET OWNER/MAINTAINER		PROFESSIONAL CARPET CLEANER/ RESTORER*	
	Vacuuming Spot Cleaning	Spot Cleaning	Interim Maintenance (between restorative cleaning)	Restorative Maintenance
LIGHT <500 foot traffics per day	1 to 2x per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	1 to 3x annually	1 to 2x annually
MEDIUM (moderate) 500-1000 foot traffics per day	Daily in traffic areas. Overall 3 to 4x per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	3 to 5x annually	2 to 4x annually
HEAVY 1000-2500 foot traffics per day	Daily in traffic areas. Overall 4 to 7x per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	6 to 12x annually	3 to 6x annually
VERY HEAVY >2500 foot traffics per day	1 to 2x daily in traffic areas. Overall 7x per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	12 to 52x annually	6 to 24x annually

*Recommended frequency guide per IICRC S100 (Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification)

Maintenance Techniques

The maintenance program is designed to prevent soil from reaching the carpet and to remove soil before it causes damage. To keep your carpet clean and looking like new, this soil management program uses a combination of methods. These methods are tailored to your space's needs. Cleaning frequencies are based on the specific needs of trafficked areas in your space.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

Maintaining your carpet's appearance means more than choosing the right cleaning method. Choosing the right products up-front contributes greatly to the overall performance of your floor covering. The use of mats (indoors and outdoors) helps keep soil from entering your space. Interior mats should extend a minimum of six feet inside the entrance. At 15 feet, these mats can effectively remove 80% of soil and moisture before it reaches the carpet. Mats can also be effective in other interior areas in commercial settings, like elevators, around water coolers, etc. Walk-off mats should be maintained the same way as interior carpet using the frequency guidelines for "Very Heavy" based on the chart on pg. 4.

CHAIR PADS

Chair pads are NOT required with any FLOR tiles.

VACUUM CLEANING

A good vacuuming program is essential to the success of your carpet maintenance efforts. Effective routine vacuuming reduces the frequency of periodic maintenance procedures required to maintain clean carpet. In addition to removing soil, vacuum cleaning also helps to add life to and restores pile/fibers, particularly for cut-pile styles. Proper equipment and technique are critical to the success of a vacuuming program.

Machines with cylindrical brushes should be used and set so that the brushes are in contact with pile surfaces. Twin motor machines with independent motors for suction and brushing are preferred for this task. In most cases, upright vacuum cleaners are advised; canister and back-pack type machines without brushes and riding sweepers with rotary brushes are generally not recommended. Vacuums with top-loading soil bags and HEPA filters are highly recommended as are those that are Green Label certified by the Carpet and Rug Institute. For a list of these certified vacuum cleaners, see the CRI website (carpet-rug.org).

NOTE

For FLOR style House Pet, a suction only vacuum is recommended; or, if equipped, use the suction only setting on a standard upright.

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Maintenance Techniques, cont.

The frequency of vacuuming is determined by visual inspection, and should be done regularly. Heavy traffic areas such as entry ways, kitchens, or utility rooms may require more frequent vacuuming. Vacuuming these areas more than once a week may help prevent soil from being tracked into other areas. The procedure for thorough vacuuming is using slow, overlapping strokes making sure that the entire carpet surface is covered.

SPOT CLEANING (NYLON CARPETS ONLY)

Daily removal of spots and spills helps maintain the carpet's appearance between scheduled cleanings. Immediate action against spots and spills also reduces the probability of a permanent stain. It is important to use solutions that are appropriate for the specific type of spot or spill—water-based, oil-based, or solids, including gum. Use spotting solutions sparingly and always try to remove the spot with water only before using a spotting solution. If available, using a portable extractor will significantly improve the ability to remove spots.

(1) TREATING WATER-BASED SPOTS

For liquid spills, blot up as much of the liquid as possible with a clean, white cloth. If the spill is semi-solid or has hardened, gently scrape it with a spoon or spatula and then blot the spot with a damp sponge. Always work from the edge of the spot toward the center. Never rub across a wet spill in a manner that causes the stain or contamination to be spread from the original area.

If the spot remains after using water, refer to our Spot Removal Guide on pg. 13 and choose the appropriate solution. Apply a minimal amount of solution and gently agitate the solution. Rinse with water and allow the area to dry completely, then vacuum. Repeat the application if necessary. Do not brush aggressively on the spot.

(2) TREATING OIL-BASED SPOTS

When removing oily stains such as paint or grease, always check for colorfastness by applying your cleaning solution to an inconspicuous area of the carpet. Spray or pour the solvent onto a white cloth and press it onto the carpet. Check the cloth for any evidence of dye transfer to the cloth. If color transfer is evident, do not use the solution.

NOTE

If available, a small portable extractor makes the task of flushing spots and removing excess moisture much easier.

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Maintenance Techniques, cont.

If colorfastness is not a problem, apply your solution to a clean, white cloth and press onto the spot.

Again, do not rub across the stain, but wipe gently from the outer edge toward the center of the spot. Repeat the procedure until the spot has been removed. Rinse with water and allow the area to dry completely, then vacuum.

INTERIM CLEANING

(1) DRY EXTRACTION

The low moisture, dry extraction method is a safe, easy, and effective method for handling maintenance on a regular basis. The procedure uses moist compound (powder) that does not leave the carpet wet and allows for immediate access and traffic once the procedure is complete.

Follow this process for dry extraction: thoroughly vacuum the carpet. Spread extraction compound on the carpet and then gently agitate using a low-moisture applicator with counter rotating brushes to carefully brush the moist compound into the fiber, dislodging, and dispersing accumulated soil. Allow 30 minutes for drying before thoroughly vacuuming compound and soil from the carpet. For best results in removing particulate matter, use a commercial-grade upright vacuum with a HEPA filter.

(2) CRYSTALLIZING APPLICATION (DRY FOAM OR ENCAPSULATION)

The crystallizing method of maintenance is a low-moisture procedure similar in some respects to the dry extraction method; but, instead of using powder, a liquid encapsulation solution is used. Benefits include immediate access to the area without the necessity of extended drying time.

Follow this procedure for crystallizing application: thoroughly vacuum the carpet. Apply the encapsulation solution using an electric sprayer or a simple pump-up garden type sprayer. Gently agitate the carpet pile using

NOTE

For FLOR style House Pet, wet extraction is the only recommended cleaning method.

Continued on pg. 8

Maintenance Techniques, cont.

a low-moisture applicator with counter-rotating brushes to carefully brush the solution into the fiber, dislodging and dispersing accumulated soil. Allow time for the solution to dry. Drying time will vary according to several factors including humidity, air flow, and air temperature but can normally be expected to be 30-60 minutes. Finish with vacuuming.

BONNET CLEANING

Use of bonnet or any other type of rotary machine for cleaning or drying is not recommended and may void all warranties.

WET EXTRACTION

It is recommended that water temperature range is between 110° AND 130°F (43.3° AND 54.4°C).

As with all other maintenance methods, always prepare the carpet by vacuuming.

Wet extraction is an effective method for removing heavy soil and residue from carpeting. Start by applying a detergent pre-spray appropriate for carpet using an electric or pump type sprayer. Gently agitate the pre-sprayer with a low-moisture applicator. Using only clean water in the extractor, thoroughly rinse the carpet. For heavily soiled, high-traffic areas, the addition of a minimal amount of detergent designed for extractors can be added to the clean water tank. The wet extraction method injects water into the carpet. The injected water suspends the soil and contaminants in the solution for easy removal by the built-in vacuum system.

The recommended technique: operate the floor wand or self-contained extractor by engaging the solution valve or button and pulling or pushing the equipment for approximately three to five feet (or at a comfortable distance). Release the solution valve before reaching the end of your pass to assure that you vacuum up all of the solution. Cover the same area two or three times with the solution valve off to remove as much moisture from the carpet as possible.

Overlap approximately two inches on the area already cleaned and proceed, as described, above. In extremely soiled areas, it may be necessary to make two or three additional passes with the solution valve on. Make several additional passes with the solution valve off to remove as much moisture from the area as possible, always being careful not to over-wet or saturate the carpet.

NOTE

Make sure to use fans or other types of air movers on wet areas during and after cleaning to allow the carpet to dry completely. Complete the procedure with a thorough vacuuming.

Drying times will vary based on internal and external environmental conditions. Plan on a minimum of 3 hours under normal conditions. Do not allow foot traffic on the carpet until it is completely dry.

Cleaning Solutions

Some carpet cleaning solutions are very harsh and can damage carpet fibers. It is important to select solutions that meet the basic standards outlined here and evaluate each product before using it.

FLOR carpet tiles may be maintained using a number of widely recognized and readily available carpet cleaning agents. For a list of Carpet and Rug Institute certified cleaning solutions, see the CRI website (carpet-rug.org).

Always follow the manufacturer's recommended guidelines for using any cleaning solution. Avoid products with pH levels over 9.5 and products that contain toxic or flammable solvents. Do not use oil-based defoamers of any kind. Detergents designed for use in wet extraction equipment should not contain an oil-based defoamer and caution should be used with the amount of detergent added. Oil-based defoamers have the potential to leave oily residues and adding too much detergent could leave excess detergent on the carpet. Both scenarios will lead to rapid re-soiling and the need for more frequent cleanings. In addition, cleaning solutions containing optical brighteners should not be used. Optical brighteners can adversely affect the coloration of carpet and lead to premature aging or yellowing of the carpet.

Cleaning solutions used for interim and/or restorative cleaning should be tested for sticky residues that may cause re-soiling. To test a solution, pour a small amount in a clean, glass dish. Allow the solution to air dry completely (24 hours minimum). Break up any hard residue on the surface of the glass dish and examine it. If the residue can be characterized as a dry powder, dry flakes, or dry crystals, the solution is acceptable. If the residue appears oily, greasy, sticky, or in waxy flakes, the solution is not acceptable since it would likely contribute to rapid re-soiling.

Spotting solutions should be used as needed and should be flushed out with clean water after the spot has been treated.

Maintenance Equipment

Using the right equipment is as important as using the right cleaning solutions and the best techniques. These guidelines provide the basic technical specifications you need for key pieces of carpet maintenance equipment.

VACUUM (for twin motor uprights)

Power	8 amps
Filtration	Down to .3 microns or lower
Vacuum	60" water-lift motor or better @ 90+ cfm
Brush	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Toothed belt drive preferred• Brush speed 2,500 - 5,000rpm• Brush diameter 2" - 3½"• Brush height adjustment essential; self-adjusting design preferred
Working Width	15" - 30"
Dust Bag Capacity	300 - 400 cubic inches

NOTE

Vacuum cleaner should have the Carpet and Rug Institute's seal of approval through their Seal of Approval/Green Label certification program. Top-loading dust bag machines with HEPA filters are strongly recommended. Battery powered vacuum cleaners are not recommended.

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Maintenance Equipment, cont.

LOW-MOISTURE APPLICATOR

Power	2 - 8 amps
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Width	12" - 22"
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Brushes (2)	10" - 20" counter rotating
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Brush Speed	400 rpm
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WET EXTRACTION

Power	10 - 15 amps
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Fluid Delivery	(minimum) ½ gallons/minute 100 psi
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Tanks	• 8 - 20 gallon solution • 8 - 20 gallon recovery
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Vacuum	100" - 140" water lift at/around 90 - 100 cfm
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Vacuum Shoe	11" - 18" wide for wand and portable extractors
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Wheels	Non-marking 4" - 10" diameter
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Water Temperature	Minimum of 120°F (48.9°C)
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NOTE

Although truck-mounted units generally give optimal performance, high-quality self-contained units are equally as effective and are the preferred method for most commercial accounts.

Miscellaneous Maintenance Issues

INDOOR AIR QUALITY: ANTIMICROBIAL PROTECTION

Microorganisms have been identified as a major cause of common indoor air quality issues. Although all FLOR products have the patented antimicrobial treatment Intersept®, regular maintenance of your floor covering can assist in the reduction of microorganisms in your floor covering.

TILE REPLACEMENT

Tiles that become badly stained or damaged can be replaced. Tiles can be removed by carefully using a sharp blade, like a carpet knife, to cut through each FLORdot releasing the tile. Remove FLORdot from any tiles that remain. Do not try to pull or rip the tiles apart. Doing so could result in damage or tears to the tile itself. Replace the tile and use a new FLORdot. Be sure that the face fibers of surrounding tiles are brushed upright and that the replacement tile is installed carefully to prevent pile fibers from becoming trapped between joints. Replacement carpet tiles will likely have a newer appearance than the ones being replaced. If new tiles stand out in sharp contrast to surrounding existing tiles, you may want to shuffle them around. Place the new tile(s) in less visible areas and place existing tiles in a more visible area.

ACCESS FLOORS

Where applicable, contact should be made with the relevant access floor manufacturer for recommendations for carpet cleaning directions in relation to the methods and techniques recommended herein. Low moisture methods and techniques are generally preferred.



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