

CARPET CARE

In recent years we have used carpet manufactured by Shaw Industries, Inc. Much of the following is found on the Shaw website.

Preventative Maintenance

A walk-off mat should be used at the exterior of the entrance door to absorb soil and moisture. It can help trap the excessive dirt, sand, grit and other substances that would otherwise be tracked into the motor home. The mat should be cleaned on a regular basis so it doesn't become a source of soil itself.

If you use area rugs on your carpet, be sure to clean them regularly. Clean and restore the pile of the carpet underneath as well. Also, be sure to check area rugs for colorfastness before placing them on carpet because the color in some rugs may bleed through. After cleaning your carpet, allow it to dry completely before replacing rugs.

Protect your carpet from prolonged periods of direct sunlight by closing blinds and shades in the motor home.

Carpet Care: Vacuuming

The most important step in caring for your carpet is vacuuming. Vacuum carpet thoroughly and frequently, particularly in high-traffic areas. Realize that walking on soiled carpet allows 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 carpet fibers. Frequent vacuuming removes these particles from the surface before problems occur.

For rooms with light traffic, vacuum the carpet traffic lanes twice weekly and the entire area once weekly. In areas with heavy traffic, vacuum the carpet traffic lanes 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.

Shaw recommends using vacuums with a rotating brush or combination beater/brush bar that agitates the carpet pile and mechanically loosens soil for removal.

Replaceable paper vacuum bags do a better job of trapping small particles than cloth bags. With cloth bags, the particles pass back into the room. High efficiency vacuum bags, also called

micro filtration bags, trap even smaller microscopic particles such as mold and mildew spores and dust mite byproducts, which are often found to be a source of allergies. All vacuum bags should be checked often and replaced when half full.

Carpet Care: Overall Cleaning

Vacuuming alone won't protect your carpet.

Even though vacuuming can remove most soil, it is also necessary to clean your carpet on a regular basis to remove the oily, sticky soil that vacuums don't remove. These soils result from cooking vapors, air pollution and tracked-in dirt from outside. The particles of oily soil deposited on carpet fibers can cause gradual but significant dulling of colors. The color isn't lost, but is hidden under the film. If this type of soil is allowed to accumulate, it begins to attract and hold the dry soil.

If carpet is cleaned before it becomes too unsightly, the cleaning chore will be easier and more successful. Carpet typically should be cleaned every 22 to 18 months, depending on the number of residents and amount of activity.

Choosing the proper cleaning system is important. Some systems may leave residue, which accelerates re-soiling and defeats the whole purpose of cleaning. The recommendations below represent the best current knowledge and should help prolong the time between cleanings.

Research indicates that the hot water extraction system 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 spraying a solution of water and detergent into the carpet pile and recovering the water and soil with a powerful vacuum into a holding tank. This can be done from a truck-mounted unit outside the home with only the hose and wand brought inside or by a portable system brought into the home.

It is to your advantage to use professional carpet 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 individuals, and the carpet should dry more quickly. True professionals also understand the

proper cleaning agents for the situation at hand, and recognize the differences in fibers and carpet construction. One way to locate a professional carpet 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 carpet, and be sure to ask for a cleaner near you who uses the "hot water extraction system."

If you prefer tackling the job yourself, check these do-it-yourself guidelines before you begin.

No carpet is stain proof, but since many are stain resistant, you have time to act. You can use the following general guidelines to remove most spills:

1. Remove as much of food spills as possible by scraping the carpet gently with a spoon or a dull knife.

2. Absorb wet spills as quickly as possible by blotting repeatedly with white paper or white cloth towels. Always blot, never rub or scrub abrasively, as a fuzzy area may result. When blotting, work from the outer edge in toward the center of the spot to avoid spreading the spill.

3. Remove the stain using one of the cleaning items from the checklist below.

4. Rinse the cleaned carpet area with water to remove detergent residue that may become sticky and cause rapid resoiling.

5. Absorb any remaining moisture by placing several layers of white towels over the spot and weighing them down with a heavy object. This step is necessary even when the carpet doesn't seem particularly damp.

You should use the following items for handling spills on your carpet. It's important to use only the items listed, because many other household cleaners contain chemicals that may permanently damage your carpet.

- White cloths or white paper towels
- Detergent solution – Mix mild liquid detergent with water (no more than ¼ teaspoon of detergent to 32 ounces of water). A clear, non-bleach liquid dishwashing detergent such as Dawn, Joy or clear Ivory is recommended. Do not use detergents that are cloudy or creamy because they may leave a sticky residue.
- Vinegar solution – Mix 1 part white vinegar to 1 part water.
- Ammonia solution – Mix one tablespoon of ammonia to one cup of water.
- Non-oily nail polish remover
- Chewing gum remover (freeze or solid type)

- Spot Remover – Use spot removers designed specifically for grease, oil or tar, such as Carbona or Energine.

For tough stain removal, we recommend you call the Shaw Information Center at 1-800-441-7429 for assistance.