

A Word About Natural Fibers

Installed wool carpet and wool area rugs make up less than 1% of all the carpet in the USA. But, it is a very important 1%. Wool is the gold standard of carpet. When you are cleaning wool, you may be working for large hotels, casinos or other properties in the hospitality industry or influential residential clients with quality carpets or Oriental rugs. You may also encounter some cotton fibers.

- The surface of the wool fiber helps to hide soil. This means the volume of soil present may be considerably more than is apparent from just looking.
- Wool is a very absorbent fiber. It can hold up to 30% of its weight in liquid. Cotton is also very absorbent. So coffee, soft drinks or any other liquid can really saturate wool, penetrating deeply into the fiber.
- Wool is a staple yarn. Depending upon the quality of the wool, individual filaments may be from 4" to 7" long. Excessive agitation can cause short fibers to be pulled from the yarn and result in a fuzzy appearance.
- Wool is sensitive to some cleaning chemicals. Excess alkalinity can make wool brittle and yellow. It also contributes to felting and color bleeding. Oxidizers can also yellow wool, weaken or even dissolve the fibers. Strong reducers can also weaken the fiber. Both oxidizers and reducers may damage some dyes used for Oriental rugs. Oxidizers and reducers also weaken cotton.

Just as with upholstery fabric, you can master spot and stain removal on wool with a little training, experience and most importantly patience!

Let's look at some guidelines.

1. Inspection for pre-existing conditions is important, especially for rugs. For example mold growing on a rug may have done more than produce a stain. Since mold loves to feed on cellulosic material it may have eaten away and weakened cotton foundation yarns.
2. Test for colorfastness. Dampen a clean white cotton towel with the cleaning agent you want to test. Place this on the rug and hold it in place with a weight. If the face yarns also appear on the backing, do the testing on the back. After several minutes, check the towel for any color transfer. For rugs with multiple colors of dye, be sure to test each color.
3. Check for shrinkage issues. Any sign of ripples or curling along the edges of a rug indicate shrinking is possible. Installed wool needs to be firmly adhered to the tackles strip.
4. Be careful of excessive agitation.
5. Alkalinity – Wool is sensitive to alkalinity. Products with pH above 8.5 should be rinsed and neutralized. Be cautious with highly buffered alkalines that maintain their pH.
6. Oxidizers can weaken wool as well as cotton fringes on rugs. They may also produce a yellow tint that is easily seen on white or cream colored wool. Use oxidizers such as Stain Zone only as a last resort for restoration and only with the client's informed consent. Consider diluting an oxidizer to 1/3 the suggested strength. Testing in an inconspicuous area is essential.
7. Reducers are safer on wool than oxidizers, but they can still cause problems and potentially weaken natural fibers. Use Red Zone or other reducers cautiously. Consider diluting them to one half the usual strength. Always test in an inconspicuous area first.



Spot & Stain Guide

Free spotting app at interlinksupply.com/app.



Stain Removal Guide



There are 5 primary categories of stains. For more precise detail on specific stains refer to Bridgepoint.com, Interlinksupply.com, or the Bridgepoint Systems Stain Guide for Smart Phones and tablets.



Synthetic Color & Dye Stains

Kool Aid, childrens red medicine, fruit punch, decaffeinated coffee, etc.

PROCEDURE

1. Apply Red Zone Ready to contaminated area – apply enough to thoroughly wet the stained area but not enough to soak into the backing.
2. Apply a wet cotton towel (usually double thickness) over stain. Apply heated iron at lowest steam setting. Do a quick check for color removal every 20 - 30 seconds.
3. When the color is gone a yellow cast is usually left. Rinse thoroughly.
4. Mist Spot Stop and work in with the Handi Groom.



Organic Stains & Natural Dyes

Urine, coffee, mold, wood, etc.

PROCEDURE

1. Apply Stain Zone to contaminated area.
2. Lightly agitate and allow to dwell until stain is gone.
3. If stain is gone then extract rinse, otherwise Stain Zone will self-neutralize with no re-soiling issues and continue to work until it dries.



Oil, Resin or Pigmented Based

Ink, grease, cosmetics, adhesives, etc.

PROCEDURE

Ink and Marker

1. Apply Avenge Pro directly to the stain, agitate and allow to dwell for 30 seconds.
2. Dry extract with vac tool and repeat.
3. Apply All Solv Extreme – agitate – Avenge Pro – agitate.
4. Rinse and mist with Spot Stop.



Fingernail Polish

1. Apply Avenge Pro around the contaminated area to guard against aggressive wicking of All Solv Extreme and dissolved pigment from moving into the backing and surrounding fibers. Tests reveal that virtually all oil/resin/pigmented stains can be removed by putting the Avenge Pro on first and then the All Solv Extreme. Avenge Pro will not "set" stains.
2. Apply All Solv Extreme, lightly agitate and absorb colored pigment into a white towel. Repeat until most of the pigment is gone.
3. Apply Avenge Pro and agitate lightly.
4. Rinse and mist Spot Stop, working it in with the Handi Groom.



Gum (chewing)

1. Poke holes in gum surface with Gum Getter.
2. Apply Gel Break to surface of gum and let dwell for 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Agitate and remove gum with the Gum Getter. Pick up the spent gum into a towel and repeat as necessary. Apply a small amount of Gel Break and agitate with towel to remove any remaining residue and thoroughly rinse with water.
4. Mist Spot Stop and work it in with the Handi Groom.



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Protein and Most Food Spills

Blood, egg, chocolate sauce, etc.

PROCEDURE

1. Remove excess contaminant.
2. Apply Avenge Pro and agitate. If stain is hard, allow Avenge Pro to dwell and soften the contaminant.
3. Rinse and repeat if necessary.
4. Mist Spot Stop and work in with Handi Groom.



Note: Some food stains contain synthetic or organic dyes which may not be completely removed with the above procedure. If some stain remains, depending on the origin (synthetic or organic) follow the steps using Stain Zone (Category Two) or Red Zone Ready (Category One). Vacuum to get the stained area as dry as possible before proceeding.



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Specialty Stains

Rust, yellowing, water stains, etc.

PROCEDURE

1. Apply T-Rust.
2. Lightly agitate and allow to dwell until stain disappears.
3. Rinse thoroughly.



Note: Some yellowing and water stains may respond well to treatment with Stain Zone.

Unknown Stains:

- Apply Avenge Pro – agitate – If stain is releasing continue and then rinse.



If some stain remains

- Apply All Solv Extreme – agitate - If stain is releasing continue, apply Avenge Pro, rinse.

If some stain remains

- Apply Stain Zone or Red Zone Ready. Since the origin of the stain is unknown, testing will determine which to use.



A Word About Upholstery

Upholstery fibers and fabrics present stain removal challenges that are quite different than carpet.

- Upholstery fabrics are made from both natural and synthetic fibers. They are often blended and it may be difficult or impossible to ascertain the exact fabric makeup.
- Upholstery fabrics are much thinner than carpet – there is less fiber with which to work. The pile won't hide a spot. Mistakes will be readily apparent.
- Upholstery fabrics are generally more delicate and subject to damage.
- Upholstery fabrics have the backing and pad material much closer to the surface.
- Upholstery fabrics are more prone to bleeding or color loss.
- Upholstery fabrics are more prone to texture change.
- Upholstery fabrics are more prone to shrink.
- Some upholstery fabrics are not compatible with water based products.
- Generally the more expensive the upholstery the more prone the piece is to one of the previously mentioned problems.

SO WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS??

With a little training and practice, you can become proficient and handle the most delicate of fibers. This leads to opportunities for higher income as you can take care of designer type fabrics for high end clients who will gladly pay higher prices.

Let's go over a few guidelines for upholstery spotting. Keep in mind this is not an exhaustive study for upholstery stain removal but a general guideline.

1. Testing is paramount. Always test on an inconspicuous part of the upholstery, such as around the zipper on a cushion, to make sure the products you are using are compatible with fiber.
2. Less is more with upholstery. Start with just a small amount of the spotting agent. You may want to apply it to a towel first and then gently blot on the stain. Even consider applying solution to small stains with a Q-tip. This will keep the solution on the stain only.
3. Know what is in the backing and filling material. Most upholstery will have zippered cushions. Unzip and look to see if the fabric is stabilized with latex or similar backing. This could change the solution you use. Check the filling or foam cushion. If it has polyester batting, this gives you some wiggle room in what you can use on the face fiber. If the fabric sits directly on the foam pad, you should restrict the use of solvents or place a barrier between the filling and fabric before the spotting begins.
4. Take extra care with agitation. Some woven fabrics or others with a raised pile can lose their stability and structure if over agitated.
5. Test for shrinkage. Some fabrics with multiple fiber types can exhibit uneven shrinkage – one fiber will shrink while another will not. This is quite unusual but worth checking for. When doing the testing, look for puckering or texture change. This may indicate uneven shrinkage.
6. Dry Clean Only. While often cleaning instructions on upholstery tags are wrong or misguided, you will run into fabrics where, because of potential bleeding, shrinkage, or manufacturing techniques, water based products should not be used. In this case it is good to have Solvent Clean (a 100% volatile solvent spotter) in your spotting kit. This is a companion product to All Solv Extreme.
7. Some fibers are not compatible with oxidizers and reducers. If the stain type calls for the use of Stain Zone (an oxidizer) or Red Zone Ready (a reducer), then testing in an inconspicuous area is essential. Also consider diluting these products with ½ part water to decrease the chances of causing color loss or weakening the fabric.

Bridgepoint Systems Professional Stain Removal Kit

This kit contains the tools and chemical solutions to take care of 99% of known spots and stains.

Contains:

Stain Solutions:

- Avenge Pro - most versatile, water based
- All Solv Extreme – gelled solvent based
- Gel Break – gelled solvent for gum and adhesive
- T-Rust – rust remover
- Stain Zone – organic stain remover
- Red Zone Ready – synthetic stain remover
- Spot Stop – encapsulating, anti-wicking agent

Tools:

- Large insulated carry bag – big enough to carry extras
- White cotton towels
- Gum Getter – agitation tool
- Nitrile Disposable Gloves - 3 pair
- Spot and Stain Removal Guide



For more information, visit Bridgepoint.com, Interlinksupply.com, or the Bridgepoint Systems Stain Guide for smart phones and tablets (www.interlinksupply.com/app).