



mighty mac

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VACUUMING

Soil is the enemy of your carpet, rugs and upholstery. One of the most important aspects of proper maintenance is to vacuum often and to vacuum correctly. Most people do not vacuum their textile furnishings often enough. And even when they do, the vacuuming may still be done incorrectly or inefficiently. This fact sheet will explain how to vacuum correctly with effort saving tips and pointers.

Ground in dust, dirt, sand or grit are the enemy. They can cut carpet fibers and wear upholstered fabrics resulting in shorter life expectancy. Did you know excessively soiled carpet can hold up to one pound of dirt in each square yard? This can occur at entrance ways and in heavily trafficked areas that are seldom vacuumed properly or cleaned frequently enough. It is far better to vacuum only the heavy traffic areas much more frequently or repeatedly than it is to cover everything or everywhere with a light "once over".

For residential carpet and rugs, vacuuming should be done at least once every two weeks. This can go as high as twice a week depending on traffic, soils, pets, small children or homes with people with compromised bronchial conditions. The best way to vacuum is against the nap of the carpet. It removes soil and helps improve the carpet's appearance. A light vacuum would cover the same carpet areas with three or four overlapping strokes. A through vacuuming would be between six to eight strokes in heavily soiled areas. In higher soiling conditions or where there is higher soiling conditions or where there is heavy usage, vacuum more frequently. Commercial carpet should be vacuumed three to five times a week, with the heavy traffic lanes vacuumed daily. Keep in mind that the loose fibers that are vacuumed out of new carpet are normal, and no reason for concern.

Vacuums with HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Arresters) filters are great for trapping spores, dander and other allergens. When purchasing HEPA filtered vacuums, look for filters with the smallest trapping capacity (measured in microns). The filter should be large enough to be able to handle the air flow (CFM) generated by the vacuum. Too small a filter defeats the purpose of HEPA filtration. The filters should also be cleaned or replaced on a regular basis depending on soiling conditions.

Well maintained equipment helps both in soil removal and better long term appearance. Do not allow soil collection bags to get more than 1/2 full. This greatly reduces the suction power and vacuuming efficiency in most machines. Vacuums with cloth bags should be turned inside out every third emptying and swept off. This allows for better breathing of the bag and greater soil pick up.

We recommend upright or central units with a beater bar for carpet. The agitation provides for a much better clean. We recommend canister types for upholstery, draperies, blinds and for dusting. Commercial pile lifters and heavy duty dual motor vacuums are the best for maximum power and effectiveness in vacuuming carpet.

Some vacuums have height adjustments to match the pile height of the carpet. Higher pile and loosely textured carpet may show shading marks where the vacuum last passed over. For the most even surface appearance after vacuuming, keep the final vacuum strokes all in the same direction.



Beater bar on new vacuum. Note length of brushes & color.

Compare to beater bar of older vacuum below. Note strings wrapped which could indicate damage is being done to the carpet. Also note shorter length of brushes & discoloration. It is about time to get a new beater bar or a new vacuum.





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Good vacuuming is equally important for upholstery and draperies. There are special accessories and hand tools to vacuum these fabrics. Some machines come with suction lowering adjustments to keep the fabric from binding or being sucked into the nozzle during vacuuming. Do not let the dust and soil build up as this makes the soil removal harder.

You usually cannot vacuum too much. It is more likely that your furnishings are suffering from insufficient vacuuming. It is the ground in soil that dulls, discolors and damages your valuable textile furnishings, never the vacuuming.

Remember to vacuum often. It is well worth the effort.