

# Carpets Inter<sup>®</sup>

## Maintenance Guideline

Modular Carpet Tile

**Note:**

Failure to read this Maintenance Guideline and the recommendations contained within this document may result in issues arising that may null and void the product warranty.



June 2019

(Supersedes all previous Guidelines)

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## 1. Maintenance Plans

Long term performance and appearance retention begins with effective maintenance. Improper maintenance may reduce the useful life of the modular carpet tile. A proper maintenance program is important for long-term performance and improved Indoor Air Quality. Test results show that carpet fiber entraps airborne contaminants from the breathing zone. Utilizing approved vacuum cleaners, cleaning chemicals and cleaning methods, the Indoor Air Quality of the facility is greatly improved. Soil prevention with entrance barrier walk-off matting, vacuuming and spot removal should be included in the regular maintenance plan.

### Clean and Dry - Improving air quality and environment <sup>(1)</sup>

To promote a healthy environment Dr. Michael Berry states in his position paper "Protecting the Built Environment: Cleaning for Health", that *"a clean environment is sanitary. When a sanitary condition exists, an adverse health effect is unlikely. Manufacturers' recommendations for cleaning provide adequate guidelines, calling for frequent vacuuming and periodic professional deep cleaning that emphasizes removal of foreign substances and minimizing residue. In the long run, these measures protect the carpet and promote environmental health."*

Carpet pile has a unique, positive "filter-like" or particle trapping feature that tends to trap and hold particles to the floor that would otherwise become airborne. Matter being held by the "filter-like" feature of carpet can be removed from the environment instead of recirculating in the air continually, by using a high-power vacuum cleaner that has the "CRI Seal of Approval/Green Label". Refreshing the indoor environment can be as easy as having a regular vacuuming and deep cleaning schedule.

Keeping the environment dry is a very important process. To help prevent the growth of bacteria and mold, one should immediately attend to liquid spills and fix sources of excess moisture and humidity. Air movers, HVAC handling systems and dehumidifiers will assist in the drying when hot water extraction has been utilized.

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<sup>(1)</sup> CRI Carpet Maintenance Guidelines For Commercial Applications, August 26, 2014, Page 4.  
Berry, Michael, Ph.D., Protecting the Built Environment: Cleaning for Health, Tricomm 21st Press, Chapel Hill, NC, 1993, Page 108.

## 2. Preventative Maintenance

Effective carpet maintenance begins outside the structure. Areas around entryways must be kept clean and free of any contaminants that may be transferred underfoot into the facility.

The best way to prevent or decrease carpet & rug soiling is to not allow soil into the facility. Up to 94% of the soil found inside of a building comes from the outside. The most effective way to control unwanted soil is to utilize control or walk off “barrier” mats at all hard surface entryways. It has been determined that at least six footsteps (18-20 feet) are required for efficient soil transfer onto the entry mats.

Walk off mats also help prevent slip/fall accidents from occurring on the hard surface areas. Studies show that 80% of all slip/falls occur on hard surfaced flooring, with 80% of those resulting in injury.

Daily maintenance of entry mats is required. Soiled mats should be removed or replaced to eliminate the tracking of unwanted soil onto the carpet.

## 3. Cleaning Frequency

The following guidelines have been established by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC). They are to serve as guidelines on recommended cleaning frequencies for carpet from a public health perspective in addition to a traditional aesthetic concern for appearance retention.

Carpet Owner/Maintainer			Professional Carpet Cleaner/Restorer	
Traffic Soil Rating	Vacuuming	Spot Cleaning	Interim Maintenance (Between Restorative Cleanings)	Restorative Cleaning
Light <500 Foot Traffics per day	1 to 2 per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	1 to 3 Times annually	1 to 2 Times annually
Medium (moderate) 500-1000 foot traffics per day	Daily in traffic areas Overall 3 to 4 X per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	3 to 6 Times annually	2 to 4 Times annually
Heavy 1000-2500 foot traffics per day	Daily in traffic areas Overall 4 to 7 X per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	6 to 12 Times annually	3 to 6 Times annually
Very Heavy >2500 foot traffics per day	1 to 2 X daily in traffic areas Overall 7 X per week	Daily or as soon as spots are noticed	12 to 52 Times annually	6 to 12 Times annually

Note: Although these are the recommended traffic-rating guidelines, users of this information should be aware that the condition of every building differs in traffic, soiling rates and usage. Common sense, experience and good judgment help dictate the best carpet maintenance program. Each individual facility should be assessed based on use, climate and desired appearance level.

#### 4. Vacuuming

Routine vacuuming is essential for the proper maintenance of any carpet. This is best accomplished through the regular use of an upright vacuum with dual motors. The brushes and suction are driven by separate motors. Vacuums with beater bars are not recommended.

- Vacuuming should be performed at a rate of two feet per second for three to five passes over the same area.
- Vacuuming takes time and commitment, but is the most cost-effective way of preserving your carpet's appearance.

Note: All vacuums must be approved by the Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval (SOA) Testing Program. A list of approved manufacturers and products can be found on the CRI website at [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org) or contact Carpets Inter for further information.

#### 5. Spills and Spots Cleaning

Spills and spots are inevitable, but they don't have to be permanent. There should be an immediate reaction to remove incidental spills, mud, oil, tar, etc., from the surface of the carpet. These contaminants should be removed as quickly as possible to prevent the spill on the carpet from becoming a permanent stain.

Food spills should be removed as much as possible by scraping gently with a spoon or dull knife.

Liquid spills should be blotted with as dry, white, absorbent cloth or plain white paper towels. Do not scrub the affected area as this creates friction and heat thus forcing the spillage deeper into the base of the pile. Continue to blot until the area is completely dry.

It is recommended to contact a CRI SOA Service provider or follow recommended guidelines from the manufacturer or the supplier that sell cleaning and spot treatment products to professional carpet cleaners. Be sure to always check with the carpet manufacturer to make sure what type of cleaning solutions can be safely used on the carpet. See CRI approved cleaning solutions at [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org).

## 6. Interim Maintenance

Interim maintenance is a high-production, fast drying process used between restorative cleanings. The frequency of interim maintenance depends on traffic, carpet location, use and exposure to soiling.

## 7. Restorative Cleaning

Restorative cleaning is the process of extracting or removing entrapped soils and residues. Higher moisture levels, lower production rates and slower drying are characteristic of deep cleanings.

## 8. Recommended Cleaning Method

Hot Water Extraction is the recommended method for cleaning all modular carpet tiles manufactured by Carpets Inter. Sometimes referred to as "steam cleaning", there is actually only hot water sprayed onto the carpet fibers. The hot water and soil are then extracted from the carpet.

A pre-spray is recommended prior to the extraction process. The pre-spray is applied with a common pump up sprayer at the recommended application rate. Agitation using hand brushing or mechanical brush action is followed with hot water extraction.

In-tank cleaning solutions should never be mixed in excess of the recommended dilution rates. When using a box & wand or truck mount Hot Water Extractor, one pass with spray and two dry passes are recommended.

**Caution:** The rotary action of the Spin Bonnet or any rotary brush cleaning equipment may distort the pile yarn when and if the equipment is used improperly. Therefore Carpets Inter does not recommend the bonnet method for cleaning and maintenance and as such will void all warranties.

Note: For all cleaning methods, follow the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) S100 Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Carpet Cleaning. [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org) or contact your Carpets Inter representative.

## 9. Recommended Cleaning Products, Equipment and Maintenance Systems

Carpets Inter requires that all Carpet & Rug Maintenance Cleaning Products, Maintenance Equipment and Maintenance Systems be certified through the Carpet & Rug Institute (CRI) Green Label and Seal of Approval Programs.

The products and systems approved by the CRI have undergone rigorous testing to assure that our carpets & rugs will receive the care demanded by our customers and in turn provide the long-term performance and appearance retention expected of our products. All maintenance product

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categories are covered in the testing programs. Failure to use these products will void all performance warranties.

### **CRI Green Label/SOA Programs**

Please refer to the carpet and rug institute website – [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org) for data on:-

- Vacuum Cleaners
- Cleaning Agents (Spotters, Pre-Sprays and In-Tank)
- Interim and Deep Cleaning Equipment
- Deep Cleaning Systems
- Service Providers

### **Cleaning Agent**

The Synthetic Face Fiber used in Carpets Inter modular carpet tiles are solution dyed Nylon type 6, type 6,6 and PP BCF which require a pH in the 5.5-10.0 range. As with any fiber/cleaning agent, pretest an area to test for colorfastness.

### **Drying**

The key to cleaning and maintaining all carpets is clean and dry.

It is imperative that the carpet be allowed to dry before foot traffic is allowed on the newly cleaned carpet. Utilization of the HVAC system, in conjunction with portable air movers is a must.

All cleaning agents must be approved by the Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval (SOA) Testing Program. A list of approved products can be found on the CRI website at [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org) or contact Carpets Inter for further information.

It is important to understand that while a particular product or system has received the Seal of Approval, there are three levels of certification; GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE. This tiered system may be helpful in selecting the appropriate products for your facility.

Carpets Inter requires Silver or Gold certified products, equipment and systems.

If the services of an outside maintenance source are required, Carpets Inter highly recommends that the services of an Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) Certified Firm, employing IICRC Certified Technicians be utilized for the cleaning and maintenance of our carpets & rugs.

#### 10. Carpet/Hard Surface Transitions

Carpet adjacent to hard surface areas is susceptible to abuse from the harsh cleaning agents typically used to clean the hard surface. This is particularly true at kitchen or food preparation areas.

The hard surface cleaners and cleaning equipment must not be allowed to come into contact with the carpet. Walk off mats are highly recommended.

#### 11. Carpet Tiles Warranties

Carpet Tiles which have been surface treated with materials not recommended or approved by Carpets Inter, or which have been subjected to abnormal use or conditions or to cleaning agents or maintenance methods not recommended or approved by Carpets Inter are not covered under our standard warranties. All carpet & rug maintenance cleaning products, maintenance equipment and maintenance systems must be certified through the Carpet & Rug Institute (CRI) Green Label and Seal of Approval Programs. Approved products are listed on the CRI website at [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org).

#### *Sources*

*The Carpet and Rug Institute*

*IICRC*

If there are any questions concerning the care and maintenance of your carpets, please your local Carpets Inter representative.