

The Facts about Carpet Cleaning and Maintenance

For Architects, Designers and Green-builders

Making the right decisions about carpet starts with having the facts. That is why the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) sponsors scientific research and gathers data from independent sources to help professionals and the public make educated flooring choices. **Visit carpet-rug.org to learn more.**

Issue

Carpet is an economical choice for commercial buildings, schools, health care facilities government buildings and houses and will maintain its condition if kept clean and dry.

What You Should Know

- Carpet can be 65 percent less expensive to maintain than hard surface flooring. While buying and installing hard surface flooring appears less expensive than carpet in the short run, the true cost of labor, supplies, and equipment over an average 22-year lifespan makes carpet a more cost-effective choice.¹
- Hard surface floors require two-and-a-half times more cleaning than carpet annually. Hard surface cleaning supplies are about *seven times* more expensive than carpet cleaning supplies.²
- CRI created the **Seal of Approval** testing and certification program to help customers identify carpet cleaning products that clean effectively without harming the carpet. For a list of these products, click on Seal of Approval at carpet-rug.org.
 - Independent testing shows that many cleaning detergents and spot removers clean no better than water. Worse, they can leave a sticky residue that attracts soil at a faster rate. There also are big differences in the soil removal capability of vacuums and extractors.
 - Choose vacuums that bear the **CRI Green Label** to effectively remove soil while maintaining good air quality. Vacuuming is the single most effective means of keeping carpet clean; 90 to 95 percent of all dry soil by weight can be removed from carpet by following a routine schedule.
 - Carpet also requires periodic deep extraction cleaning. Seal of Approval deep cleaning extractors and systems (equipment and solutions) effectively remove soil and also recover most of the water or solution from the carpet.

¹ Bishop, J., & Institute of Cleaning and Restoration Certification. (2002). "A Life-Cycle Cost Analysis for Floor Coverings in School Facilities."

² Ibid.