

# Carpets Inter<sup>®</sup>

## Cleaning & Maintenance

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.



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(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.

### Improving Indoor Air Quality <sup>(1)</sup>

Dr. Michael Berry states in his book, *Protecting the Built Environment: Cleaning for Health*, "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 has an effective "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 re-circulating in the air continually, by using a high-power vacuum cleaner that has the "CRI Seal of Approval/Green Label (SOA/GL)" certification. Refreshing the indoor environment can be as easy as having a regular vacuuming and deep cleaning schedule.

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 204 Commercial Carpet Standard for Maintenance and Cleaning, 2019, page 21.

## 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 are designed to achieve optimum appearance levels and maximum useful life of the carpet (CRI 204 Commercial Carpet Standard for Maintenance and Cleaning, 2019, p. 10 and 17).

Traffic Level	Vacuum and/or power pile brushing entrance level	Vacuum and/or power pile brushing other floors	Spill, spot, and stain removal	Interim Maintenance System cleaning	Deep cleaning
Moderate	Daily vacuum.	2-3x weekly vacuum.	Daily or as needed.	1-2x annually, soil-prone areas as needed.	1-2x annually. Monthly in soil-prone areas.
Heavy	Daily vacuum and/or power pile brushing.	Daily vacuum and/or power pile brushing.	Daily or as needed.	6-12x annually, soil-prone areas as needed.	2-6x annually. Bi-weekly in soil-prone areas
Severe	Daily vacuum and/or power pile brushing.  2x daily in traffic areas.	Daily vacuum and/or power pile brushing.	Daily or as needed.	12-52x annually, soil-prone areas particularly.	2-26x annually. Weekly in soil-prone areas.

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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. **Dry Soil Removal** through vacuuming in three areas: **overall**; in **entries** to remove abrasive particle soils; along **edges** (perimeter of rooms) to remove dust and dirt buildup that can cause soil filtration.

To lift pile, prevent matting and crushing and buildup of embedded soil, an approved CRI's SOA counter-rotating brush cleaning system may be beneficial.

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. utilize low-moisture carpet cleaning technology with a goal of maintaining a carpet's uniform appearance and return the carpet to use quickly. Interim maintenance cleaning can postpone or limit the need for deep

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cleaning. The frequency of interim maintenance depends on traffic, carpet location, use and exposure to soiling.

## 7. Deep Cleaning

Deep carpet cleaning returns the carpet to a relatively clean condition and uses systems that extract accumulated soils and cleaning residues at a higher intensity to maximize removal of embedded soils.

- Always vacuum first.
- Follow directions for mixing solutions carefully.
- Apply pre-spray, following manufacturer's label instructions
- Agitate into the carpet's fibers.
- Allow pre-spray to dwell as necessary.
- Extract using a SOA-approved deep cleaning system. (In general, CRI-tested water extraction systems achieved the highest rankings on the SOA list.)
- Allow to dry.

## 8. Recommended Cleaning Method

Hot Water Extraction is the recommended method for cleaning all modular carpet tiles manufactured by Carpets Inter. Heat reduces the surface tension of water, and enables faster, more efficient cleaning than cold water. It is merely a matter of thermodynamics, or the ability of heat to accelerate the molecular activity of the solutions employed and thus aid in separation of unwanted matter from fibers.

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 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. Supply natural or mechanical ventilation during the cleaning and drying phases of deep cleaning. Adequate ventilation is necessary to speed drying time. The use of commercial air movers (drying fans), HVAC air handling systems, or dehumidifiers greatly reduce drying time.

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.

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.

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