

Best Carpet Cleaning Methods

There are many misconceptions about carpet cleaning. One of them has to do with carpet cleaning methods. What's the best method? That depends. You have probably heard the terms "dry" or "steam". These are general terms that hint at different methods, but both terms are incomplete and inaccurate terms. Neither are technical terms that properly describe carpet cleaning methods.

There are 4 methods of carpet cleaning approved by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning, and Restoration Certification (IICRC), the world's most recognized body of certification for carpet and upholstery cleaners.

Method 1: Hot Water Extraction

Otherwise known as "steam cleaning", hot water extraction is the process that most are probably familiar with. Hot water extraction is the correct technical term, not steam cleaning. Actual steam is not used at all. A hot water solution is produced and immediately recovered, creating a "flushing" action on the carpet. There are many variations of hot water extraction. From the most powerful truck-mounted machine down to the small portable machine rented from the grocery store. What's the difference. Every machine has different capabilities. Mainly the pressure in which the water is produced and the recovery capability.

However, the biggest and most important difference is in the person cleaning the carpet. A trained technician will know what pressure to use, what cleaning products to use, and how to get maximum soil removal and maximum spot removal without over-wetting the carpet or leaving a sticky residue behind. The horror stories of carpet being wet for days is due to operator error, not because "steam" or "hot water extraction" caused it.

Hot Water Extraction done properly will remove more soil than any other method. Further, anything that has seeped into the backing such as urine, coffee, beverages or something can be "flushed out" with hot water extraction. It can also be used in lightly soiled and maintenance situations as it is very versatile.

Method #2: Absorbent Pad

Also known as bonnet cleaning, this method employs a round pad that spins across the surface of the carpet, absorbing the soil. A solution is applied to the carpet or the pad to aid in releasing soils. This is a method that some may classify as "dry cleaning" although water based products are used in almost all "dry cleaning" systems, therefore the term dry cleaning (cleaning with only a solvent based cleaner) is not technical and would not be desired. Absorbent pad cleaning is not a deep cleaning method. It should only be used in lightly soiled and maintenance situations.

Method #3: Dry Compound

This method uses a powder that has been treated with detergents, water, and solvents. The powder compound is sprinkled onto the carpet and a brush with cylindrical brushes is used to work the powder into the carpet pile. The solution that is in the powder releases the soil. The soil is then absorbed into the absorbent powder. This method should only be used in lightly soiled and maintenance situations.

Method # 4: Shampoo or Dry Foam

In this method, a shampoo or foam is generated and worked into the carpet with a rotary brush or cylindrical brush machine. The shampoo or foam releases the soil. The soil is then vacuumed with the machine or allowed to dry and removed with a conventional vacuum cleaner. This method should be used in only lightly soiled situations and maintenance cleaning. When using shampoo, great care should be taken to avoid leaving a sticky residue on the carpet.

Note: Dreyer's is experienced in ALL methods of carpet cleaning. We offer a 12 step cleaning program that gets maximum soil removal, maximum spot removal without over-wetting the carpet or leaving a sticky residue behind. Guaranteed or your money back!