

DESSO CARPET TILES / BROADLOOM CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

1. PRIOR TO INSTALLATION

1.1 Anti-Soil Treatment

An anti-soil treatment is a protective soil resistant treatment added to fibre or yarn at the time of production. When applied during manufacture it lasts well into the life of the product. Although its effectiveness will diminish with time it will still offer more protection than untreated carpet, and carpet treated with anti-soil treatments post production.

1.2 Colours and Constructions

It goes without saying that darker and duller colours, flecks and designs hide soiling better than light bright colours. Dense pile constructions help to minimise problems due to dirt ingress as soil is not allowed to penetrate and work into the base of the pile causing abrasion and premature wear.

2. DIRT BARRIER SYSTEMS

It is generally considered that at least 60% of dirt within buildings is brought in by foot traffic from outside. A good dirt barrier system is absolutely critical for maintaining the appearance and preserving the investment of interior carpeting. A barrier system should be installed from day one to offer maximum protection to floor coverings.

2.1 Barrier Matting - Primary

Barrier matting in front of entrance doors must extend over the full width of the door so that they cannot be bypassed. Primary mats are usually grid style with an open construction for trapping dirt. The gratings should be at least 2-3 paces long, i.e. approximately 200cm.

2.2 Barrier Matting - Secondary

Absorbent Textile style mats may also be used to wipe feet in entrance areas. They protect floorings from fine particles of dirt, dust and moisture, and are easy to clean.

The use of this matting style as a secondary system beyond entrance grid mats is particularly recommended. This reduces cleaning costs and considerably improves the appearance and life of the flooring.

Desso recommends Protect secondary matting - A Barrier Carpet Tile available as 50 x 50cm, supplied in boxes of 3m². The absorbent pile surface soaks up wet soil transfer and is supplemented by the “scrapers fibres” tufted into the construction.

3. RECOMMENDED MAINTENANCE SYSTEMS

3.1 Vacuuming

The heavy traffic areas must be intensively vacuumed daily to keep soiling to a minimum. Vacuuming should include all Dirt Barrier Systems. For best results we recommend heavy duty upright vacuums with a brushing action. Tub vacs will only extract surface debris and not the trapped soil and dirt that contributes to pile flattening.

Vacuuming should be carried out in slow sweeping movements. The vacuum cleaning schedule should be devised to create more time for cleaners to concentrate their efforts on the vulnerable areas which are exposed to heavy soiling and foot traffic.

Desso have extensively researched industrial vacuum models and the SEBO BS36 was found to be highly effective.

3.2 Daily Spot and Stain Removal

If spills are mopped up immediately this will prevent them becoming stains which cause unsightly marks on the carpet. When spills are left unattended, with time they become harder to remove.

As part of the maintenance programme, immediate daily spot cleaning should be carried out.

It is convenient to keep a spot removal kit readily available at all times. This encourages treatment of spills when they occur as there is a kit stored nearby. Special attention should be given daily to vending points, photocopier stations, staff restroom, entrances and doorways, in commercial buildings or the workplace.

4. PERIODIC OR RESTORATIVE CLEANING

There are basically two methods of cleaning carpet although there are several different methods used under the term "wet cleaning":-

- **Dry Extraction Carpet Cleaning**

Should be used for all our tufted products. (Tile and Broadloom.)

- **Warm Water Soil Extraction**

Should be used for all our needlepunch products and hair tiles.

4.1 Dry Extraction Carpet Cleaning (Tufted Construction)

Dry extraction powder compounds are made up of synthetic polymers or organic soil absorbent substances which have been impregnated with a small amount of solvent to tackle greasy marks and stains. Most products also include surfactants (mild detergent) water, light fragrance for deodorising, an anti-bacterial agent and synthetic resin dispersions to reduce re-soiling.

Although the powder is classed as "dry" it is in fact moist to the touch. The synthetic polymers or soil absorbent substances act as sponges which wipe and absorb dirt from the carpet fibres when used in conjunction with a cylindrical brush machine.

The Host dry extraction carpet cleaning system, or similar, is recommended.

4.2 How To Carry out a Dry Extraction Carpet Clean

- a. Thoroughly vacuum the entire area with a steady sweeping action using an industrial upright vacuum with a rotating brush action.
- b. Remove spots and stains with a spot removal preparation.
- c. Spray only the worst areas lightly with a heavy soil pre-spray agent to loosen dirt found in heavy traffic areas.
- d. Evenly sprinkle a dry powder compound product on to the surface of the carpet. Recommended dosage varies by product and depends on the degree of soiling.
- e. Brush into and through the pile with a cylindrical brushing machine. This machine has two contra-rotating brushes which work the powder into the pile.
- f. Allow powder to dry out completely (½ an hour minimum) before thorough removal by vacuuming with the industrial upright vacuum.
- g. Repeat application if necessary for heavily soiled areas.

Note Dry compound should always be tested in an out of the way location to determine colourfastness and to ensure no adverse effects occur.

4.3 Benefits Of The Dry Extraction System

- a. This is a controlled method of cleaning whereby the carpet surface and primary backing remain dry.
- b. The areas being cleaned can be walked over whilst the powder is drying. Normal use continues immediately the powder has been vacuumed up.
- c. Areas which are heavily trafficked can receive the greatest concentration of effort thus ensuring effective use of cleaning operatives time.
- d. There is no risk of mildew developing beneath the carpet.
- e. High traffic areas can be cleaned and blended into the surrounding clean carpet without streaks or watermarks.
- f. The cylindrical brush machine also lifts and revives matted pile during the cleaning process.
- g. Access panel installations remain safe as there is no danger of water (as water is not used) seeping through carpet tile joins and on to the access panels.
- h. Host dry powder has no detrimental effects on the environment and complies with European Health and Safety standards and UK COSHH regulations which class the product as non dangerous goods.

4.4 Warm Water Soil Extraction (Needlepunch Construction)

a. Machines

Warm Water Soil Extraction machines vary, but in simplified form, are tubs (or tanks, if larger) on wheels. They consist of a solution tank, a recovery bucket (for the soiled water), a carpet wand to spray on the cleaning solution and a pump and vacuum system to lift up the water, soil and detergent mixture from the carpet.

4.5 Benefits Of Warm Water Soil Extraction

- a. Most contract cleaning companies offer a Warm Water Soil Extraction service so this type of cleaning is readily available.
- b. Warm Water Soil Extraction is the most suitable method for carrying out a major clean on needlepunch carpets (except for methods used by the exhibition industry requiring tiles to be uplifted).
- c. Needlepunch carpets consist of thick fibres as opposed to the fine filaments used in yarns. When drying, any residue from the wet cleaning product will not be transported to the surface by capillary action, but will remain hidden in the fibre.
- d. Warm Water Soil Extraction correctly carried out means needlepunch carpet is cleaned well and appearance improves.

Note It is imperative that carpets cleaned by this method have the opportunity to dry thoroughly before usage recommences.

The Warm Water Soil Extraction method should always be tested on a small area to determine colourfastness and to ensure no adverse effects occur.

4.6 Problems Created by the Misuse of the Warm Water Soil Extraction System when used on Tufted Products and Fibre Bonded Products

- a. There is a tendency for inexperienced operatives to use too much water and/or detergent.
- b. A Warm Water Soil Extraction clean is often seen as a major clean and frequently carpet is very soiled before being tackled by this method. Operatives are often tempted to increase the concentration of the extraction detergent in badly soiled areas.
- c. Carpet cleaned by this method must be completely dry before being walked on. Often companies carry out this clean on a Friday night or Saturday morning assuming that the carpet will be dry by Monday morning.
- d. Depending on relative humidity, carpet could still be damp but may feel almost dry to the touch.
- e. If a carpet is allowed to get very wet and not allowed to dry out properly the result is that the carpet will initially look cleaner but this will be followed by rapid and noticeable re-soiling. The residue from the chemicals used will attract dirt particles as well as the wet carpet acting like a sponge on foot borne soil.

4.7 Conclusion

Warm Water Soil Extraction is a good cleaning system for some carpets if carried out **correctly** by competent operatives. The reason it is not usually openly recommended by Desso on tufted products is that it is open to misuse by poorly trained operatives, which often inadvertently results in the occurrence of the above mentioned problems.

In the hands of skilled professional cleaning and maintenance operatives however, the Warm Water Soil Extraction method is a useful process and will complement the Dry Extraction System.

5. APPLICATION OF SPOT AND STAIN REMOVERS

5.1 Spot Cleaning Kits

These vary from being somewhat cosmetic in content to well stocked kits with a variety of preparations and clear instructions for use.

Example Of Contents

- White kitchen roll material to mop up spills.
- Spot remover for eradicating fresh spills after mopping up and for removing aged stains.
- Cloths for applying spot remover.
- A packet of dry powder compound.
- A small stiff brush for working the dry powder compound into the carpet pile.

6. PLANNED MAINTENANCE SCHEDULES

A planned maintenance schedule should be devised to show what cleaning and maintenance to carry out and how often.

A typical maintenance plan would include the following:-

- Areas to be vacuumed daily
- Areas to be vacuumed every two days
- Areas to be vacuumed twice weekly
- Areas to be vacuumed weekly
- Daily spot and stain removal
- Spot and stain removal when required
- Monthly clean of very heavy traffic areas
- Quarterly clean of heavy traffic areas
- Half yearly clean of medium traffic areas
- Annual clean of light traffic areas
- As and when required (low use areas)

Every building is different and wherever possible a zonal plan should be drawn up with the assistance of a contract cleaning specialist.