

Floor care pays for itself.

A carefully planned care and cleaning program creates the correct conditions for maintaining the aesthetic and functional advantages of a needlepunch carpet in the long term. This program should be created as early as when selecting the carpet or at the latest prior to installing the carpet. A good, well cared for synthetic needlepunch carpet creates an appealing, attractive environment and with it a beneficial working environment from which everyone gains. In addition, professional and correct care will pay for itself in long-term preservation of value and by ensuring that a new carpet will not be needed until later. So that the quality of the needlepunch carpet is not impaired, care must be taken when choosing the care and cleaning process to ensure that the material composition, the carpet floor design, the carpet backing and also the installation method are taken into account. Needlepunch carpets are easy to clean and therefore extremely economic.



1. General Information

These care and cleaning instructions are based on our latest level of knowledge, incorporating the experience of the Textiles & Flooring Institute GmbH (TFI) and the leaflet "Cleaning processes for textile floor coverings and their associated work steps" of the working group AWT/FDT as well as the Cleaning Instructions 991 A3, and do not claim to be complete. The information given in this manual only covers the material composition of our needlepunch carpets. Damage to the carpet or unsatisfactory cleaning results, which are associated with improperly performed cleaning or stain removal, cannot be acknowledged as a complaint by us and do not constitute a defect under the terms of the warranty. The same applies if the following recommended care and cleaning cycle is not adhered to.

2. General Cleaning Characteristics

To make the correct choice when selecting carpets, it is first of all important to consider the factors that directly affect its subsequent care. For example, the dirt sensitivity depends on the colour, the fibre type and the structure of the wear layer.

Lastly, appropriate dirt-trapping zones in the entrances and corridors of buildings play a vital role in preventing dirt deposits on the floor covering.

2.1 Colour Selection

The visibility of dirt deposits on a textile floor covering depends on its colour and the type of the dirt. Mottled and patterned coverings generally behave better than single-colour ones. A comparison of the susceptibility of different colours serves as an example:

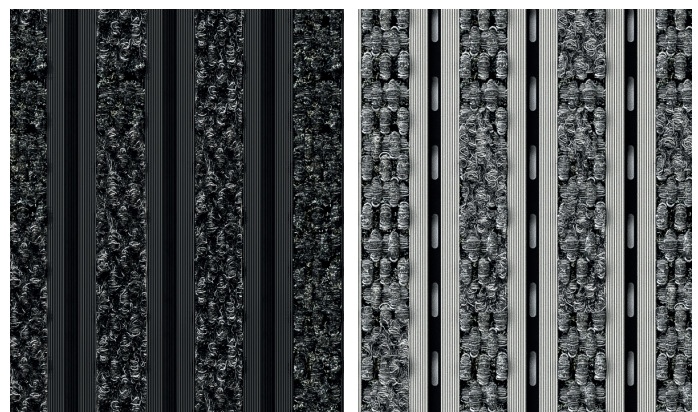
- ➔ Highly dirt-sensitive colours: white, yellow, light grey, medium grey, light beige, all pastel colours.
- ➔ Less dirt-sensitive colours: blue, violet, red, dark beige, light green.
- ➔ Dirt-insensitive colours: dark, covered mottled tones, anthracite, dark brown, olive and other green colours.

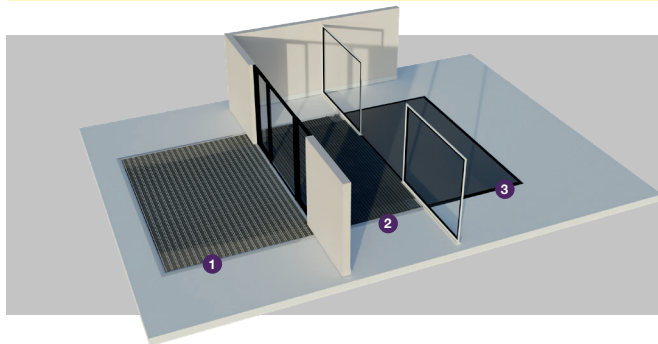
2.2 Fibres

An important factor for the quality of needlepunch carpets is the fibre selection. Polyamide is the best type of fibre in the manufacture of needlepunch carpets and has unique properties such as high resistance to wear, pressure, scuffing, matting and dirt. Here it must be pointed out that high-quality needlepunch carpets have a high quantity of coarse polyamide fibres, which further reinforce the mentioned positive factors. If cleaning is necessary, the correct treatment will ensure the fibres look like new again.

2.3 Structure

The ease of care of a textile floor covering also depends on its surface condition. Needlepunch carpets primarily have a two-layer structure (wear layer + backing layer). Only the wear layer is of particular interest for cleaning. Due to the loop-type design, a large part of the dirt which occurs is hidden in the depth of the needlepunch carpet structure. Single-layer needlepunch carpets primarily comprise fibre blends with varying proportions of polypropylene, polyester and polyamide. This defines the service performance and useful life of such needlepunch carpets.





Zones

We recommend a zoning system when choosing your entrance matting. Whether your entrance extends outdoors or is fully covered, creating three zones delivers optimum dirt barrier performance, ensuring interior floors are kept clean and hazard free.

2.4 Cleaning Zone

Immediately after installation, a carpeted floor must be protected against the ingress of dirt by setting up sufficiently large cleaning zones in entrance areas and problem zones (change from hard floors to textile covering/from production to the administration area, etc.). Optimum success will be achieved by installing coarse and fine dirt-trapping mats. It is advisable that users take at least two to three steps on the dirt trapping zones. Experience has shown that about 90% of the brought-in dirt is retained by a dirt trapping zone with a length of about five metres.

2.5 Prophylaxis

A daily cleaning interval is essential so that these cleaning zones do not themselves become a source of dirt. This “ink pad effect” can also arise if wax products used to clean adjacent hard surfaces are not used professionally.

2.6 Cleaning on Building Completion

If possible, cleaning on building completion should be carried out as a “dry cleaning” operation using a powerful brush vacuum cleaner (with a mechanically rotating, soft brush). We advise against “spray extraction cleaning”, because the moisture penetrating into the carpet would lead to clumping of fine construction dust, which then can only be removed with great difficulty! A suitable stain remover must be used in a concerted manner. The for example, “pad cleaning process” which is subsequently used has the following advantages:

- ➔ very little moisture is deposited in the carpet;
- ➔ no long drying times are necessary;
- ➔ the cleaned surface can be walked upon again within 1-2 hours;
- ➔ no danger of over-drying or increased changing of the dimensions of the carpet;
- ➔ possible to use as intensive cleaning during normal operations.

3. Daily Maintenance Cleaning

Regular vacuum cleaning is without doubt the most important component of an optimum care program for needlepunch carpets. Dust removal separates the pigment dirt from the surface and the spaces between fibres by means of mechanical action (brushing and suction brushing) and sucking up of the released pigments. Brush vacuum cleaners with a powerful brushing and suction action (with a soft brush) achieve optimum care provided the brush height setting is correct and a systematic and thorough working method is employed. Thanks to a rotating and height-adjustable brush, the cleaners not only suck and brush up loose dirt from the surface but also dirt particles from the entire depth of the wearing layer to maintain the quality of the needlepunch carpet. Although vacuum cleaning is technically a very simple process, some codes of practice must be observed:

- ➔ The brush vacuum cleaner must be suitable for the needlepunch carpet and the height of the brush may need to be adjusted accordingly.
- ➔ The brush vacuum cleaner must not be moved too quickly over the traffic area of the carpet, otherwise the suction effect will not be effective.
- ➔ The best method is a double pass both along and across the carpet. In this way an optimum cleaning effect is achieved. Regular maintenance is essential for the functioning of the brush vacuum cleaner, in particular of the brushes, filter (optimally: micro filter) and bag.

It is essential that consistent cleaning intervals are maintained:

- ➔ High-traffic areas such as in entrance halls, reception areas, restaurants, lifts, corridors and cleaning zones should be cleaned daily with a brush vacuum cleaner.
- ➔ Medium-traffic areas such as conference rooms, offices, secondary rooms should be vacuumed as required, but vacuumed at least every other day. It is only in this way that premature visual damage to the fibre wear layer in traffic areas and areas where there are castor-equipped office chairs can be avoided.

Traffic Level	Frequency of Cleaning			
	Vacuum	Pile Lift	Spot Clean	Hot Water Extraction
Light	Every 2-3 Days	As Needed	As Needed	Annually
Medium	Daily	Quarterly	As Needed	Every 6 Months
Heavy	Daily	Monthly	As Needed	Quarterly

4 Treatment of Stains (Stain Removal)

The sooner staining is treated, the greater is the probability that it can be removed! Stain removal involves the localised treatment of stains and soiling. This work step forms an essential part of daily maintenance cleaning. If stains are treated immediately with suitable cleaning agents, complete removal will normally be trouble-free. Here, an exception are staining substances with a bleaching or colouring effect; these cannot be completely removed without physically damaging the surface. Light dirt spots and stains can be removed in most cases with hand-hot water and an absorbent cloth (white cotton). In doing so, rather than rubbing, the stain should be washed out by a rotating movement from the outside to the inside. Here a microfibre glove can be a useful mechanical aid. Solvent-containing staining substances (chewing gum, paraffin-based materials, etc.) can be removed when dry without damaging the fibre floor area with a non-sharp-edged object (spoon, etc.). The residual substance is removed with a stain remover. Please ensure that you test the stain remover you are using in a non-visible or hidden location prior to actual use. The manufacturers accept no liability for improper handling. All chemicals introduced into the carpet must be removed again without leaving any residues to prevent areas quickly becoming dirty again.

Do not use bleach or bleach-containing products as they will cause the textile fibres to fade or discolour. Detergents should always be kept out of the reach of children and animals! If none of our tips listed above are effective, we recommend that you call our technical support team who are always happy to help.

4.1 Work Steps for Treating Stains

1. Remove solids, liquids and compacted substances with a spoon. In doing so, always work inwards toward the centre of the stain.

2. Dab on liquid with a clean, white cotton cloth or kitchen towel.
3. Remove the stain with a cloth or sponge and cold water; in doing so, always work inwards toward the centre of the stain. Repeat the process as necessary.
4. Always dab the surface of the needlepunch carpet, do not rub! Repeat the process until no more dirt adheres to the cloth.
5. Rinse off with clear water. Mop up the remaining moisture with a cloth or kitchen towel.
6. Cover the treated area with several layers of kitchen paper, weigh down and allow to dry.
7. Then vacuum with a brush vacuum cleaner.

5 Intermediate Cleaning

Depending on the traffic and the resulting degree of soiling, periodic intermediate cleaning will be necessary. These actions are performed in between intensive cleaning, which is performed at greater intervals. It should be carried out in an object-orientated manner but in any event at least once a year and solely by a specialist company. The purpose of intermediate cleaning is the removal of sticky dirt that cannot be removed during daily cleaning by brush-vacuuming. This cleaning is limited to the more heavily soiled areas (e.g. high-traffic routes in corridors and entrance areas). If intermediate cleaning is correctly performed, cleaning costs can be lowered and unnecessary interruptions to the normal operating schedule in the building are avoided. The intensive cleaning achieves the best possible dirt removal and restoration of the original wear behaviour and appearance. Intermediate cleaning can be performed manually or mechanically. Intermediate cleaning can be carried out either with ready-to-use foam, or using the pad method, or using granulate cleaning. Prior to intermediate cleaning, pre-cleaning by brush vacuuming must be performed.



5.1 Cleaning with Ready-to-Use Foam

In this cleaning process, a standing layer of foam is massaged into the carpet by roller or single-disc machines. After a drying time of about five hours, the carpet must be thoroughly vacuumed again.

5.2 Granulate Cleaning

The advantage of this cleaning method is that needle-punch carpets require scarcely any drying time before they can be walked on again almost immediately. The moist cleaning granulate is scattered uniformly by hand on the carpet and then massaged in with special brush roller machines. The released dirt is absorbed by and bound to the cleaning powder. After drying of the granulate, the carpet must be vacuumed with a brush vacuum cleaner. In this way the dirt and the granulate residues are largely removed. This process can be used to partially clean away staining and clean high-traffic areas.

5.3 Intensive Cleaning

In addition to daily cleaning and interim cleaning, every carpet requires intensive cleaning, depending on the intensity of the soiling. For example, it is necessary when the needle-punch carpet is soiled over a large area. The intensive cleaning achieves the best possible dirt removal and restoration of the original wear behaviour and appearance. The intervals at which intensive cleaning must be carried out are largely dependent on correct maintenance and intermediate cleaning. Dependent on the level of soiling of the carpet, the systems used must be combined with each other. Important for selection of the cleaning process are the properties of the floor, the subfloor design, the method of installation and the available drying time. Intensive cleaning should be carried out by a specialist who has available state-of-the-art cleaning machinery and tools and will select the appropriate cleaning method based on their knowledge of the level of soiling, properties of the floor, method of installation and subfloor.

5.4 Cleaning Using the Pad Method

After pre-cleaning of the entire surface with a brush vacuum cleaner, the needle-punch carpet is “damp” sprayed with a spray solution matched to the system using a pressure sprayer. After a short dwell time, the surface is uniformly processed with a disc-type floor machine with an underlying “fibre pad” in overlapping runs. The needle-punch carpet can be walked on again after just a very short drying period.

5.5 Spray Extraction

After thorough pre-cleaning with a brush vacuum cleaner, the needle-punch carpet is cleaned with a (wet) carpet cleaner using a

cleaning solvent. In wet carpet cleaning (spray extraction), water with a cleaning agent is sprayed on in one work step and then immediately sucked up again via a nozzle. Dependent on the level of soiling, it is recommended that the carpet be subsequently rinsed several times with clean water, to avoid cleaning agent residues and the resulting fixing effects caused by them which could cause renewed dirt deposition. Subsequent cleaning with the vacuum nozzle of the spray extraction unit without further application of liquid. It is possible to combine this process with shampooing. After spray extraction, the needle-punch carpet requires enough time to dry under good ventilation conditions. Only then will it be possible to use the cleaned spaces again. Soaking of needle-punch carpets must always be avoided because otherwise their adhesion to the floor could be impaired.

5.6 Shampooing

Shampooing is performed after brush vacuuming using a single disc or multi-disc cleaning machine with a shampooing brush. In this cleaning, the needle-punch carpet is cleaned by intensive mechanical brushing with a suitable shampoo solution. To achieve optimum results, the carpet surface should be run over in overlapping circles using the shampooing brush. The resulting foam absorbs the dirt into it and should then be directly sucked up with a powerful wet/dry vacuum cleaner. The use of shampoos whose dry residues are crystalline is recommended. In this way the deposition of grease-containing particles on the fibres can be avoided. After drying of the carpet, it must be thoroughly vacuumed in all directions using a brush vacuum cleaner so that any possible cleaning agent residues are completely removed.

5.7 Combination of Both Processes

To achieve maximum cleaning effectiveness, the use of shampooing and spray-extraction in combination is recommended. After shampooing, in which the mechanical processing and chemical action has released and removed the dirt particles, thorough spray extraction is performed. After drying of the carpet and subsequent brush vacuuming, the result is an optimum visual surface appearance. Please note the following limitations:

- ➔ Do not add any additional cleaning product to the spray extraction cleaning machine.
- ➔ Multiple rinsing steps with clean water removes dirt particles and cleaning agent residues.
- ➔ Drying normally takes at least 20 hours. The carpet structure must not be walked on when wet.
- ➔ Completely unsuitable for water-sensitive floor designs such as carpet tiles and removable systems.

6 Cleaning Instructions for Raised Floor Designs with Carpet Tiles

A raised floor design comprises a multitude of not connected individual panels, than can be taken up independently of each other. As a result there are joints and gaps where there is a much greater chance for cleaning water to ingress than with conventional floors with laid-out rolls. Designs with tiles can be taken up again are also moisture-sensitive designs. Therefore, soaking of the floor surfaces in such cases should be prevented. In these cases, a dry cleaning or pad cleaning process should always be used.

Accordingly, wet cleaning methods are unsuitable for this purpose and flooring cover design! The adhesive joint or the rear-coating of the carpet must not be negatively influenced by any of the cleaning methods used. Floor panels with cut-outs, built-in components or ventilation panels must be treated especially carefully. Penetration of moisture must always be prevented.

Note: After intensive or maintenance cleaning of the needlepunch carpet, it must always be ensured that the carpet is sufficiently dry before it is used again.



7 Special Notes

If office chairs are used on textile floor coverings, they must be equipped with hard castors (type H according to DIN EN 12529) of the specified dimensions. This must be considered when using office chairs. We recommend using Chairmats, which can also be ordered from cobaeurope.com

Underfloor heating systems should be adjusted so that the needlepunch carpet does not change colour or change in any other way during the cleaning measures and the drying-off phase.

This care and cleaning recommendation is based on our current experience. It does not replace the cleaning information for the respective cleaning agents used. In the event of contradictions and lack of clarity between our care and cleaning recommendations and those of the manufacturer of the respective cleaning agent, the Applications Technology Department must be contacted in all cases.

The same applies to stains that can not be removed without difficulties in spite of our care and cleaning recommendations. We expressly point out that our care and cleaning instructions are not a legally binding assurance and therefore we cannot provide any warranty or guarantee that the care and cleaning will be successful. We must therefore exclude any liability for any damage or consequential damage if the care and cleaning are not successful.

The instructions of the cleaning and stain removal equipment manufacturer and the information of the raised floor and adhesive suppliers must be observed. The usability and compatibility of the resources is the responsibility of the respective manufacturer, who will be happy to provide information.

Please note that these cleaning and care instructions must be handed over to the end customer.

With the publication of this issue in May 2023, all previous issues lose their validity.