

SPECIAL CONSUMER REPORT:

The Consumer's Inside Guide To Carpet Cleaning

Dear Homeowner,

Choosing a carpet cleaner isn't easy.

Why? Because you're bombarded with misleading advertising, confusing claims, and simply bad information.

From super-low prices and high-pressure sales— to unqualified technicians and near worthless methods— how do you ever find a qualified, competent, professional carpet cleaner?

You start by reading this special report. In this fact-filled report, you'll discover

- how to avoid four carpet cleaning rip-offs,
- 6 mistakes to avoid when choosing a carpet cleaner, and
- four steps to a fresh, clean, healthy carpet.
- You'll also find information about Stainmaster Carpets that will save you thousands of dollars.

This report will give you better understanding of the importance carpet cleaning, not just for appearance, but to insure your family's health as well. You'll now be able to make more informed, intelligent decisions.

HOW TO AVOID 4 CARPET CLEANING RIP-OFFS

RIP-OFF #1 : UNBELIEVABLY LOW PRICE. To some degree, all of us are attracted by low price because we want to work within a budget. But some carpet cleaners use price as the bait for their false and misleading advertising. They offer a cheap price--usually between \$3.95 and \$9.95 per room--and then, once they're in your home, they pressure you into buying "add-Ins." It's as if you were buying a car and found that the dealer was charging you extra for the tires and steering wheel. Carpet cleaning is not as cheap as some unethical carpet cleaners would like you to believe.

RIP-OFF #2: BAIT AND SWITCH. Dual process carpet cleaning describes the process of shampooing or heavy preconditioning, followed with hot water extraction cleaning. Unfortunately, unethical carpet cleaners often use dual process as a bait and switch technique. Here's how it's done: First they "bait" you with a basic cleaning (single process) at an unbelievably low price. Then, when you call, they try to "switch" you to the more expensive dual-process cleaning. If you don't fall for their switch and choose their basic service, you'll likely receive poor workmanship using little or no chemicals, and they will not guarantee their work.

RIP-OFF#3: UNSUPPORTED CLAIMS,"THIS CLEANING METHOD IS THE BEST." You'll read this in almost every ad and hear this from virtually every carpet cleaner. But remember this; the method that's best for you is the method that achieves your goal. If you want a method that dries quickly, then a method that takes a long time to dry isn't for you. So before you choose a "carpet" cleaner, identify your objectives. Then select the method that best reaches those objectives.

RIP-OFF #4: OUTDATED BELIEFS, "HOT WATER DAMAGES YOUR CARPET." Years ago many people believed this was true because their carpets were damaged by "technicians" who didn't know how to clean properly using hot water. But today, we know it's false. By washing and then rinsing your carpet with hot water, your carpet is thoroughly cleaned-in the same way that a person who showers and then rinses off the dirt and soap will be much cleaner than the person who takes only a sponge bath. Obviously, each carpet cleaner will be biased toward their own cleaning method. And each method does have advantages. So I suggest that you look at what the manufacturers have to say. Shaw Industries, the largest carpet manufacturer in the world, recommends hot water extraction for cleaning carpets. Many of the other manufacturers are now making the same recommendation. See what the warranty for your particular carpeting requires in order to keep the warranty in effect.

6 COSTLY MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CARPET CLEANING

MISCONCEPTION #1: You should wait as long as possible before cleaning your carpet.

No. Dirt is an abrasive--like sandpaper. Every time you step on your carpet, you grind dirt into the carpet fibers. This cuts your carpet, just as if you had used a knife. This cutting causes your carpet to wear out faster. A dirty carpet will not last as long as a clean carpet. And while vacuuming helps--by itself, it is simply not enough. The longer you wait to have your carpet cleaned, the more damage you do to your carpet and the faster it wears out.

MISCONCEPTION #2: The only reason to clean carpets is to remove the dirt.

No. As you probably know, outdoor air contains pollens, fungus, bacteria, air pollution, cigarette smoke, and car exhaust--and hundreds of other chemicals. When you come into your home, you carry those pollens, bacteria, and chemicals in your hair and on your skin, clothing, and shoes. Not surprisingly, all those chemicals and toxins wind up in your carpet.

If you have allergies, asthma, emphysema, or other breathing problems--one major source of your problem could be the pollens, fungus, smoke, and chemicals in your carpet.

MISCONCEPTION #3: One method of carpet cleaning is as good as another.

No. The dry cleaning methods--which are dry foam, dry chemical and dry compound, don't rinse your carpet in any way. Instead, they leave a dirty residue. You might say they clean your carpet only half way. The most effective cleaning method is hot water extraction.

Hot water extraction means a hot water cleaning solution, under high pressure, is forced into your carpet and then drawn back out of your carpet. This allows the dirt, bacteria, and pollens to be broken up and extracted from your carpet. Shaw Industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, requires hot water extraction as the primary method of cleaning carpets.

Some people believe that hot water damages your carpet, but this isn't true. By washing and then rinsing your carpet with hot water, your carpet is thoroughly cleaned.

MISCONCEPTION #4: Having the right equipment is all a company needs to clean your carpets properly.

Not true. Many companies own hot water cleaners but very few companies teach their employees how to use them properly. This is why it's important that you choose your carpet cleaner carefully. The best cleaning companies are those that have been certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification, known as the IICRC. Before you choose a carpet cleaner, ask to see written proof of the company's IICRC certification.

MISCONCEPTION #5: The company that offers the lowest price is the company you should hire.

No. I've seen so many problems arise from lowest-bid companies that I suggest you NEVER hire a company that quotes the cheapest price. The two most common problems are:

1. The price may not be for the services you want performed. The company may be equipped to remove only the dirt from your carpet. But you may want bacteria, fungus, pollens, and tobacco residues removed as well.

2. The price you see advertised may not be the price you pay. Many homeowners have learned that the low price they saw advertised lasted only until the carpet cleaner got to their home. Then they were pressured into paying a lot more for a variety of add-ons. Some carpet cleaners even break the law by using illegal bait and switch tactics.

MISCONCEPTION #6: Any honest carpet cleaning company should be able to give you an exact price quote over the telephone. I wish this were true, but it isn't.

Honest, reputable carpet cleaning companies almost never price carpet cleaning by the room. Instead, carpet cleaning is usually priced by the square foot. So if you'd like me to tell you the exact cost of cleaning your carpet, I need to know the exact number of square feet that you want cleaned. To get an accurate measurement, I

use an electronic measuring device to calculate the exact size of the carpeted area.

WHICH METHOD CLEANS BEST?

Dry foam: The carpet cleaner applies shampoo to your carpet, allows it to dry, and then, without rinsing, sucks the dried shampoo into a vacuum. Can you imagine applying shampoo to your hair, allowing it to dry and then removing the shampoo from your head with a vacuum? This method leaves a dirty residue in your carpet that causes it to re-soil quickly. This is the major reason that dry foam is not too effective.

Absorbent pad (bonnet cleaning): This method is similar to dry foam, except that the company sets a large cotton bonnet on your carpet. The rotating motion causes the bonnet to absorb dirt from your carpet. Bonnet cleaning is like trying to use a large cotton towel or mop to rub the dirt out of your carpet. It's not very effective because there's no extraction process. And if the bonnet isn't changed out with a clean one frequently enough, it just smears soil around the carpet.

Dry, absorbent powder: The dry-compound method spreads a moist, absorbent powder throughout your carpet. The powder is allowed to dry and then sucked into a vacuum. This method leaves dry sponge particles at the base of the carpet yarn. And because the carpet is not rinsed, this method is not very effective.

Hot water extraction: This is a fancy way of saying that a hot water cleaning solution under high pressure is forced into your carpet and then drawn out of your carpet.

In a recent Technical Bulletin, Shaw Industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, "recommends the hot water extraction system, which research indicates provides the best capability for cleaning."

No question, the most effective way to clean carpeting is with hot-water extraction equipment. It's the most powerful cleaning equipment on the market, and the only equipment that cleans your carpet of dirt, harmful bacteria, fungus, chemicals, pollens, and tobacco residue.

Some people believe that hot water damages your carpet, but this isn't true. By washing and then rinsing your carpet with hot water, we clean your carpet completely-sin the same way that the person who showers and then rinses of the dirt and soap will be much cleaner than the person who takes only a sponge bath.

SIX MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN CHOOSING A CARPET CLEANER

MISTAKE #1: Choosing a carpet cleaner based on equipment alone. No question, your carpet cleaner needs first-rate equipment. But they also need something else. They need technicians who are skilled at operating the equipment. Many companies own hot-water extractors, but very few companies teach their employees how to use them properly. The best way to know that the carpet cleaner's employees have been properly trained is to make sure the cleaner has been certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC). Before you choose a carpet cleaner, ask to see written proof of their IICRC certification.

MISTAKE #2: Choosing a carpet cleaner based on low price. Low price could be a problem in three ways: (1) Low price can be the bait that attracts your phone call. But once the cleaner gets into your home, they pressure you into a much more expensive job. (2) Low price can be for single-process cleaning. Rarely does the consumer know what this means and, when told, asks for dual-process cleaning instead, which costs much more. (3) Low price means the carpet cleaner has cheap equipment, which will not effectively clean your carpet.

MISTAKE #3: Choosing a carpet cleaner based on a single telephone call. Instead, invite them to your home and ask for a specific price quotation. Then you'll know exactly what the carpet cleaner recommends-and you won't be the victim of high-pressure sales tactics when the technician steps into your living room.

MISTAKE #4: Choosing a carpet cleaner who doesn't offer a money-back guarantee. In my view, every carpet cleaning company should be fully accountable for their work. And if you aren't pleased with the job, you shouldn't have to pay for it. Period! Not all carpet cleaners offer a guarantee. Or, if they do, the guarantee may be

"limited." Ask the carpet cleaner if they offer a complete money-back guarantee.

MISTAKE #5: Choosing a carpet cleaner without getting comments from his other clients. Any carpet cleaner can say anything about his past jobs. And, sadly, some of what they say may not be true. Make sure you ask for references or read comments from current customers so you can depend on the carpet cleaner and their work. Any carpet cleaner that does quality work should be able to provide you with comments from their clients.

MISTAKE #6: Choosing a carpet cleaner who isn't certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC). If your carpet cleaner isn't a close friend, you may not know whether they have the knowledge or experience to clean your carpet well. If you want to be sure you're hiring a competent professional, make sure they are IICRC certified. The carpet cleaner must earn that certification through study, experience, and the successful completion of formal, written examinations. In effect, cleaners who are certified by the IICRC have earned a college degree in carpet cleaning.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VALUE AND PRICE

Price is what you pay. Value is what you get. When you select a carpet cleaner, you'll choose from a wide variety of cleaning methods and prices.

Shaw Industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, recommends hot water extraction by certified technicians. And here's why hot water extraction is recommended:

1. It uses hot water. For every 18 degree increase in temperature above 118 degrees F, you double the water's cleaning ability. So, if the water temperature is 136 degrees F, it will clean twice as well as water that is 118 degrees F and 154 degree water will clean four times as well I 18 degree water, and so on.
2. It shoots the cleaning solution into your carpet at a high pressure, which breaks up the dirt, bacteria, chemicals, and pollens.
3. The equipment uses strong suction to draw the dirt, chemicals, bacteria, pollens, and tobacco smoke residue out of your carpet. Not surprisingly, having your carpets cleaned thoroughly by a qualified and certified technician that uses hot water extraction, costs more than renting a shampooer at the corner grocery store.

If you bought the cheapest carpeting you could find, then renting a small shampooer might be all you need. No question, it will get out some of the dirt--but the key word here is "some." It will not get out many of the pollens, chemicals, bacteria, and tobacco smoke residues.

On the other hand, if you bought high quality carpeting--if you want it to look good and give you years of dependable service--then you need to take extra good care of it. This means you need to have it cleaned by a skilled, qualified technician at least every six months to one year, depending on the amount of soiling and foot traffic it receives. And you need to have it cleaned thoroughly, as only a hot water extraction machine can do.

DO YOU WANT A CLEAN, HEALTHY CARPET?

Which is more important to you: a clean carpet— or a clean and healthy carpet? Yes, I assure you, there is a big difference.

Each carpet cleaning method has advantages and disadvantages. Some methods will get out only the dirt. Other methods will get out dirt and grease. Still others will get out virtually everything. And, to be sure, some are more

expensive than others.

If all you want is a cheap, rinse-the-dirt-off-the-top cleaning-which you might find for around \$3.95 per room-then I respectfully ask that you call another company. But if you want to protect your health--if you want to protect your investment in carpeting--if you want to protect your family from countless bacteria, fungus, pollens, and tobacco smoke residues in your carpet, then you're invited to call my company.

The steam extraction, hot water equipment that I use is the most effective cleaning system available today. Likewise it's one of the more expensive units on the market. But I bought this equipment for a good reason: More and more families want the good-health benefits that come from having a fresh, clean carpet.

Have you ever seen how dirty a child's pants get when they play outdoors? If you have, then you know you can brush off their pants and make them think they're clean. Or, if you want the job done right, you can machine wash them in hot water and detergent and you'll KNOW they're clean.

The same is true for your carpet. You can hire someone for \$25 to \$50 who will "brush off" your carpeting and make you think it's clean. Or, if you want the job done right, we'll wash your carpets with hot water and detergent using our state-of-the-art cleaning equipment and you'll KNOW they're clean.

So if you want a thoroughly cleaned carpet--if you're willing to invest in your family's good health— you're invited to call me. You'll receive an exact written price quote, at no cost or obligation. And if you give me the go-ahead, you're further protected by my ...

100% NO-RISK GUARANTEE

I am Joseph Lanyon, of GLORY CARPET CLEANING SERVICE, I want you to be super pleased -- in fact, absolutely delighted-- with every carpet and upholstery job we do. So every job comes with my iron-clad, risk-free guarantee. What does this mean? Simply this: If you're not happy, you don't pay! Not one cent. Many companies don't guarantee their work. But at GLORY CARPET CLEANING, nothing is more important than your complete total satisfaction. I stand behind every job 100%. If you have any concerns about our work, please call my office right away: the number is 860-528-7208.

Not one cent. Many companies don't guarantee their work. But at Glory Carpet Cleaning, nothing is more important than your complete and total satisfaction. I stand behind every job 100%. If you ever have any questions or concerns about our work, please call my office right away: The number is (860) 528-7205.

4 STEPS TO A FRESH, CLEAN, HEALTHY CARPET

If you're thinking about having your carpets cleaned, I encourage you to follow these four steps:

STEP # 1: Make a commitment to yourself to get your carpets cleaned. The longer they remain dirty, the sooner they'll wear out Plus the longer you have to breathe all the pollens, fungus, and chemicals that hide in your carpet

STEP #2: List your objectives. Do you want only the dirt removed, something you could do with a rented shampooer. Or do you want all the bacteria, fungus, and chemicals removed, which will require hot water extraction cleaner such as I use. Do you want to work with an honest, reputable company--or are you willing to risk working with the company that offers you the lowest price-knowing that the company might not be in business tomorrow.

STEP #3: Ask questions. The way you learn about a company is to ask specific questions and listen carefully to the

answers. Here are seven to ask a carpet cleaner before they clean your carpet:

- I. What method of cleaning do you recommend?
2. What type of equipment do you use to clean carpet?
3. What will your equipment remove from my carpet?
4. How often should I get my carpets cleaned?
5. What training have you had in cleaning carpets?
6. Are you certified by the IICRC and can I see your certificate?
7. Do you have a 100% no-risk guarantee?

STEP #4: Once you're satisfied that you're working with an honest, competent professional, invite them into your home and ask for a specific quotation in writing. A written quotation gives you the assurance that you know exactly what your job will cost--no surprises.

By following these four steps, you'll gain all the information you'll need to make an informed intelligent decision. If you want a quick, cheap carpet cleaning job, many companies in the phone book can help you. Or you can rent a shampooer from the grocery store and do the job yourself.

But if you want your carpet to be completely and healthfully cleaned-removing the bacteria, fungus, chemicals, pollens, and tobacco products- then I invite you to call my office.

I'll be happy to answer your questions- provide you with a cost estimate over the telephone- or come into your home and give you a free written quotation--without cost or obligation of any kind. To reach my office, call (860) 655-9000.

In the last few years I've run across many situations, one of the most critical being the problem that people are having with Stainmaster carpets. Because consumers are totally uninformed about this important issue, I've now added this additional information.

— C. Pat Lanyon. Master Textile Cleaner, IICRC - The Clean Trust.