

Which Stains Are Removable From Carpet?

[Click Here to Print This Report](#)

3 Primary Categories of Stains:

Category 1. Petroleum based stains. Petroleum derivative- example: gum, grease, tar, ink, adhesive, oils, etc. 80-90% success rate.

Category 2. Synthetic based stains. Stains containing man made dye- example: kool-aid, fruit punch, colored candy, cough syrup, etc. 50% success rate.

Category 3. Organic stains. Stains from a plant or an animal source. Example: Wood, furniture stain, mustard, coffee, mold, tea, urine, blood, vomit, inks, etc. Unfortunately these have only a 75% success rate.

This will give you some idea. Keep in mind, the longer the stain has been in the carpet, the more likely it can be permanent. Fresh stains are easier to remove.

The percentage is the estimated likelihood of removal

Yellowing (50%) - Yellowing can be as simple as neutralizing the spot or area by spraying a solution on it, or it can be impossible to remove. There are many unknown causes for yellowing. We use a mild acid to attempt yellowing removal. Yellowing on light colored carpet is often difficult to remove.

Filtration soiling (70%) - (black lines around baseboard)- This is usually located in hallways around air conditioning units, or where the carpet meets the baseboard. We can usually get some of the filtration soiling out, but it almost never comes all the way out if it's bad. Filtration soiling is when carpet "filters" soil going through cracks and crevices. *There is an extra charge to do filtration soiling. We will do up to 6 feet for free. Filtration soiling requires very labor intensive work. The area must be manually scrubbed and extracted.

Urine Stain (70%) - When urine is fresh, the chances are good. If the urine has been there a long time, or attempted to be removed with an improper over the counter spot remover, the chances are slim. However, urine will continue to deteriorate the carpet, so it is extremely important to remove the urine deposits even if the spot does not come out. Every day we remove urine spots and every day we find urine spots that will not come out, so it's unpredictable. Very important to know however, is that our general prespotter is one of the best on the market to remove urine. It has a small amount of enzymes that will eat up urine. The ph is adjusted to counteract the stain for removal.

Vomit (50%) - Same as urine (If red from cat food, see red dye removal).

Blood (75%) - If blood has not been cleaned, and if hot water or alkaline cleaning products have not been used, chances are good, but no guarantee.

Rust (90%) - Chances for rust removal are excellent, however never a guarantee. We use oxalic acid.

Red dye (5%) - (wine, crayon, make up, kool-aid, cat food throw up, fiberglass insulation)

Red dye is almost impossible to remove unless conditions are exactly right. If the carpet is new, chances are better. In many cases the only way to remove red dye is with a heat transfer process in which we apply a product to the spot, lie over a wet cloth and apply an iron to it to cause the spot to transfer into the white towel. The spot is then rinsed thoroughly. This is a last resort procedure and may remove some of the carpet dye as well. We can perform a red dye removal heat transfer at a small additional cost.

Lipstick (50%) - Chances are good that we will be able to remove it with solvents, however some lipstick may be in the red dye category, which give it slim chances for removal.

Furniture stain (20%) - Almost impossible depending on the type of carpet.

Coke and Soda (95%) - Usually not a problem. Red or blue soda may be a problem.

Drink Spills in general (75%)-Unless it has a dye, it should remove. Drinks can go into the padding and resurface after the carpet dries if an entire glass was spilled.

Juice (80%) – Apple, orange, banana, and any non-red juice is usually no problem. Grape juices and other red juices can often be permanent.

Tea (75%) - Tannin spots can sometimes cause a permanent stain, other times they can be removed by a mild "bleaching solution" (not chlorine based).

Coffee (70%) - Same as tea, however, coffee is often spilled when very hot which can make it more difficult.

Food (80%) – Most food spots rinse out with no problem. However, there are a few that have dyes that can stain carpet if left in the carpet too long, including anything with a red, blue, or yellow dye.

Ketchup (75%) - Ketchup can go either way. Sometimes it comes out easily, other times it enters into the red-dye category.

Mustard (25%) - Can be very difficult at times. Not always impossible.

Paint (enamel) (20%) - Although we have removed a lot of enamel paint, there has also been a lot that we have not. Case by case basis, there is no guarantee. Large amounts may be impossible.

Paint (latex) (20%) - Usually fair results if in small amounts, however colored latex can permanently stain carpet, and hardened latex can be impossible. Can be impossible if large amounts are spilled.

Crayon (50%) - We carry excellent solvents, but can go either way.

Water rings (70%) – We use acid rinse for water rings, and have good success overall, but still sometimes doesn't come out.

Mildew (50%)- Sometimes can be removed, other times it is permanent. Often the mildew stain can be growing from the backing of the carpet, which makes it difficult to remove.

Ink (75%)- Most ballpoint inks are easily removed. Most non-permanent markers are easily removed. Permanent markers, toner, and some ink can be difficult.

Grease and Oils (90%) – Food, grease, motor oils, etc. Usually not too much of a problem unless there is a massive quantity. Very light colored carpets may leave a stain behind.

Dye or Bleach (1%) – Will often be permanent, however, spot dyeing is helpful if the carpet is wool or nylon.

Excessively Dirty Traffic lanes- (80%) If a carpet has gotten to the point that the traffic lanes look bad, there is damage already done to the carpet fiber. Carpet should be cleaned before it looks very soiled. If the fiber is light colored, there is a good chance that there will be some permanent discoloration. If the carpet is

IN THE EVENT OF SMALL EMERGENCIES

1. Keep a first aid kit for carpets handy consisting of:

Laundry detergent - liquid and granular (dry)

Oxygen bleach Like Oxyclean® (do not use chlorine bleach)

Grease solvent - dry cleaning fluid or spot remover

Nail polish remover

Rubbing alcohol

Turpentine

2. Act fast. Scrape or blot up all excess spill or blemish.

3. Pre-treat. When water is called for, use only lukewarm to avoid setting stain.

Greasy spills - sponge gently with grease solvent or apply granular (dry) detergent.

Non-greasy spills - sponge with solution of one teaspoon liquid detergent to one cup water. Do not use soap.

Animal stains - sponge freely with cold water. Apply solution of three tablespoons white vinegar to one quart water. Sponge with detergent suds and rinse.

Note: How to sponge.

- Work lightly
- Work from center to edges
- "Feather" area by sponging edges irregularly
- Blot damp/dry quickly to avoid rings

IN THE EVENT OF MAJOR MISHAPS

Call your Professional Carpet Systems Specialist for suggested remedy and action until help arrives.

TYPICAL EMERGENCIES -and treatment

Candle Wax - Scrape off excess wax with dull knife.

Sponge spot with grease solvent. If spot remains, use oxygen bleach. Sponge thoroughly with clear water.

Car Grease - Apply cooking oil sparingly and let stand 15 minutes. Blot up excess oil and sponge with grease solvent.

Catsup - sponge with cool water. If stain remains, work detergent suds into fabric, then rinse. If stain remains, use oxygen bleach and rinse thoroughly.

Cigarette burns - can be partially remedied by clipping off blackened ends with small sharp scissors-then working in detergent solution and rinsing well.

Coffee, tea - with cream, sponge with grease solvent first. Then sponge with detergent suds. If stain remains, use oxygen bleach and rinse thoroughly.

Crayon - moisten spot and rub in full strength liquid or granular detergent. Repeat if necessary. If color remains, use oxygen bleach. Rinse well.

Fingernail polish - sponge with acetone or nail polish remover. Blot up color and repeat as often as necessary.

Fruit-berry juice - sponge immediately with cool water. If stain remains, use oxygen bleach. Rinse well.

Glue, Eimer's household - blot with warm water. Sponge with detergent suds. Epoxy, contact, animal base, etc. - treat with solvent or thinner recommended on container. Blot up excess. Rinse well when finished.

Grass - same as for crayon. Or sponge with alcohol diluted with two parts water.

Grease - sponge with grease solvent. Work liquid or granular detergent into spot. Rinse thoroughly.

Gum - harden gum with ice cube, then scrape off with dull knife. Sponge with grease solvent. Rinse well.

Ice cream, chocolate - sponge freely with cool water. Work detergent suds into spot. Rinse. Treat with oxygen bleach if necessary. Rinse well.

Ink, washable - flush with cool water and blot up excess. Work in detergent suds. Rinse. Apply oxygen bleach if necessary. Rinse well.

Permanent - cannot be completely removed by spotting. Minimize stain by flushing with cool water and blotting.

Mimeograph - sponge with grease solvent or turpentine. Work detergent suds into stain. Rinse well.

Lipstick, rouge, eye shadow - rub liquid or granular detergent into dampened stain. Rinse and repeat until outline is gone. Treat with oxygen bleach if necessary. Rinse.

Liquor - same as for fruit/berry juice.

Mud - Let dry, then brush. Rinse repeatedly with cool water.

Mucus - sponge in solution of ¼ cup salt to quart of lukewarm water. Wash with detergent suds. Rinse well.

Mustard - rub full strength detergent into stain and rinse. Repeat, and use oxygen bleach if stain persists. Rinse well.

Oil, lubricating/cooking - same as for grease.

Paint - sponge with thinner, recommended on can, or with turpentine until paint disappears. Work full strength detergent into stain, then rinse well. Repeat if necessary.

Rubber cement - scrape off gummy excess carefully to avoid damaging fibers, then sponge thoroughly with grease solvent and rinse.

Rust - usually require professional cleaning service for removal, but fresh stain can be helped by working detergent solution into spot and rinsing with lukewarm water.

Soft drinks - sponge immediately with cool water. Work liquid detergent into stain, then rinse. Apply oxygen bleach if necessary. Rinse well.

Shoe polish, paste - treat with grease solvent. Blot and sponge with detergent suds. Rinse well. Repeat if necessary.

Shoe dye - sponge and blot repeatedly with cool water; call your Professional Carpet Systems Specialist.

Tar - sponge with turpentine. Work in full strength detergent solution and rinse thoroughly.

Urine - must be treated before spot dries to be successfully removed. Sponge repeatedly with cool water. Work liquid detergent into stain and rinse thoroughly. If still discolored, sponge with white vinegar and let stand 15 minutes before rinsing. Or cover with table salt and leave overnight.

Vomit - same as for mucus

NOTE: Dry carpet as completely as possible immediately after spotting to avoid other damage, especially mildew. Raise dampened area off floor when possible to improve circulation. Direct stream of air from fan, vacuum cleaner or hair dryer to hasten drying.