

Golden Rule Dog Training

House Cleaning Tips for Carpet & Upholstery

For our convenience, there are many new products on the market that help clean and eliminate odors. After researching cleaning practices and product brands, we find both the old-fashion way of cleaning may be as effective as using a specific non-toxic product. The key to both is to find and remove the urine or waste as soon as possible. Below are a few methods you may find helpful.

Accidents are bound to happen with dogs even if they are trained. Doggie doors, watching for their signal to go outside are common ways most people prevent accidents inside the home. If your dog does have an accident **please never punish your dog!** If you can catch him in the act, take him outside and show him where he should go potty. Punishing after the fact or rubbing his nose in it is cruel and will not work. The dog will not understand why he is being scolded or punished. If you do not catch him within 3 seconds he will not link the incident to the punishment. Dogs do not potty indoors out of spite. If you do not catch him in the act, and discover the mess after the fact, just clean it up.

Do not let your dog watch you clean up the mess, since some dogs can get the mistaken idea that person cleaning up my mess is somehow a game. Put her in another room (that is, after you have given her a chance to finish her potty business if she might need to finish going).

If your dog suddenly has potty accidents, please see your veterinarian. Your dog may be trying to tell you he has a urinary problem such as a treatable bladder infection, worms or other easy-to-treat condition.

Newer products and cleaning urine from carpets and upholstery

1. Soak up urine with a white towel or paper towels. Blot, do not rub. Rubbing can damage carpet fibers. Clean starting with an area sufficiently outside of the stain ring, moving inward.
2. To dilute the urine, rinse the area with water.
3. Repeat the first step to blot up as much urine as possible. Move from the outside inward, use a towel to blot up as much urine as possible. *Absorb any remaining liquid with towels; - stand on the towels or place heavy books over them. Be patient; it may take 6 hours to dry. To hasten the process, extract moisture using a wet/dry vacuum. If the carpet or upholstery stays damp, trapped moisture can lead to mildew, mold and eventual crumbling.*
4. Apply an **enzyme solution*** to eliminate odors and marks/stains such as Nature's Miracle. Make sure to use enough of the enzyme solution to penetrate the carpet fibers, pad, and all areas the urine may have penetrated.

*What are enzymes and how do they work?

Enzymes are large protein molecules found in all living things. They are nature's workers, speeding chemical processes or creating chemical reactions. As catalysts, they speed up natural processes and create natural reactions that otherwise would not materialize. Enzymes work by rapidly biodegrading materials like grease, foods, oils and grime into their basic elements like carbon, oxygen and hydrogen, so they are both effective and safe. Enzymes clean better than toxic and non-toxic detergents, acids and alkaline products. In addition, enzymes completely remove (not just mask) odors by breaking down the organic materials that's causing the odor.

There are many brands, and now these cleaning products are available in "Green", environment friendly products as well. These cleaners can be found in pet supply stores and on the internet and are highly recommended to remove odor.

Newer Products and **cleaning waste** from carpet and upholstery:

5. If the dog waste is solid, pick it up with a paper towel.

6. If the waste is wet, spray with a product such as "Poop-Freeze" (poopfreeze.com), which solidifies the waste, and then pick it up. * *Unusual product may be worth a try.*

7. Apply an enzyme cleaner to the area to remove any remaining odors and stains. Allow area to dry, sprinkle baking soda and let sit for 2 hours, and then vacuum.

Basic Cleaning Tips

- If possible, turn the carpet upside down and clean any mess left there.
- If cleaning the carpet at a particular area makes it look shabby, steam-vacuum the entire carpet.
- You may use newspapers instead of paper towels. They are cheaper and absorb well.
- You may try foaming shaving cream or toothpaste to clean stains or ring marks on fabrics.
- The sooner you clean up, the better.
- Use newspapers to blot moisture after one or two paper towels. It is not only economical, but effective, too.
- Keep vinegar handy. White vinegar and water mixed in equal proportions can serve as a very effective cleaner and deodorizer.
- Avoid using any product on your wooden floor before testing it for colorfastness. If the product is hard on your varnish, it might cause it to fade. Test the product on a hidden corner of your floor. Avoid cleaning in front of your dog. It might appear like a game to him and he might be tempted to repeat it.
- Do not use ammonia based products to clean pet mess. It smells like urine to dogs and they might come to that place next time they want to urinate.

Key Clean-up Principles

Use nontoxic products that are specifically made for pet messes and pet odors. They are typically more effective, since they organically break down waste while neutralizing odors and they are safer for homes with animals. But always check the label to be sure.

There are nontoxic, inexpensive cleaning solutions you can make at home using standard ingredients such as baking soda, white vinegar and club soda.

Treat stains properly to avoid permanent damage to carpets and upholstery.

If a stain reappears on the surface of the carpet a few days later, dilute the stain with water and clean again. Steam-cleaning can be a last resort.

Note: Commercial cleaners usually advise that you test a carpet color fastness before applying a product to clean a spot. You can do this by applying a small amount on a hidden part of the carpet, then wait 24 hours to see if the carpet has changed color. Of course, you don't want to delay cleaning up urine, feces, vomit or other organic stain - so test products right after you buy them, instead of waiting until you actually need to use them.

Cleaning vomit from carpet and upholstery

The acid in vomit can stain fast, so immediately scoop up solid particles.

Add a bit of water to help loosen stuck particles, and then coat the area with baking soda or salt. Let it dry and then vacuum, repeat

Pour club soda on the area, and blot with paper towels (if the area remains discolored, try Oxy Clean or a nontoxic cleaner/stain remover formulated for pet stains. Remember to give cleaners adequate time to digest stains).

Regular vomiting of yellow bile can indicate impacted anal glands. This can be very uncomfortable for your dog. Your vet can gently express the dog's anal sacs to relieve the pressure.

In some dogs, vomiting results from lack of any food in the stomach. One solution is to give the dog a small biscuit or two before bedtime; also, feed the dog his first meal in the morning.

Removing pet hair from carpet

Tips

- If your dog has a favorite sleeping spot, place an easy-to-wash soft towel or blanket there to help absorb skin odors and catch the fur.
- Save those old rubber gloves. They are great for wiping dog and cat hair off furniture and clothes.
- Mix one part fabric softener to three parts water, put in spray bottle and spray on carpets and furniture. Wait two to three hours, and then vacuum.
- Spray upholstery with static guard then vacuum.

- Use a Bounce or other fabric softener sheet for picking up pet hair off furniture or clothing. But do not let your animals get a hold of these products; they can be dangerous.
- Roll some packing tape around your hand to remove fur from furniture, pillows and other surfaces.
- Brush your animal daily and you will have much less fur to clean up.
- Teach your dog or cat to tolerate the vacuum

Removing fleas from carpet and upholstery

Tips

Spread a thin layer of boric acid, borax or diatomaceous earth on carpets, then let stand for one day and vacuum. The powders kill fleas and help dry up their eggs.

Salt your carpets when winter ends, before flea season. Let the salt stay on 10 minutes, then vacuum up.

Use Frontline, Advantage or other flea repellants on your animal during flea and tick seasons. F

Removing blood from carpet and upholstery

Tips

For fresh stains, try soaking with cold water. Avoid warm or hot water, which can set the stain. It can also help to rub an ice cube over the stain, then rinse with cold water and clean or launder.

Hydrogen peroxide is one of the best ways to remove blood stains. Apply the hydrogen peroxide to the stained area, letting it bubble. Repeat this until stain is gone. Following by dabbing the area with water, then blot to dry. Keep in mind that hydrogen peroxide has a limited shelf life; you may need to replace your bottle annually.

Pour some milk over the blood stain to loosen the blood, and then blot it to remove excess moisture.

Mix corn starch and water into a paste, then apply it to the stained rug or fabric. Rinse with cool water and blot dry. Afterwards, use a brush or vacuum to remove the remaining corn starch.

Mix meat tenderizing crystals with cold water, then apply this paste to the area. Let stand for an hour, then rinse in cool water.

Cleaning supplies to have on hand:

- Paper towels and/or old cloth towels
Spatula, cardboard or sturdy disposable (paper or plastic plates). Useful for scooping and scraping up as much solid matter as possible before cleaning and treating.
- Baking soda or salt
- Club soda
- Pet odor cleaner/neutralizer
- Enzyme solution or stain remover formulated for pet stains
- Rug and upholstery cleaner
- Hydrogen peroxide (3 percent, and make sure it is fresh)
- Bucket of water and mitt, towel or washcloth by the door. Clean wet and muddy paws, salt and sand.
- Recommended: small steam-vac or a shop-vac.

Note: Since animals and humans can have reactions to most any commercial product, carefully read labels before using any product. Keep in mind that a crawling child or a pet could pick up residue off a floor, and then ingest it when licking hands or paws.

Many people are reducing their use of commercial cleaning products. Instead, they use commonly available, simple ingredients often recommended in Hints from Heloise, including water, baking soda, white vinegar, lemon juice, hydrogen peroxide, club soda and cornstarch. Properly used and combined, these products can clean just about anything. In addition, the natural cleaning alternatives as well as pet mess-specific products such as Simple Solution typically work quite effectively for a wide range of cleaning needs.

Widely available products:

Oxy-Clean Simple Solution
Natures Miracle
Odor Ban

Sources:

Wikipedia

PAW, Partnership for Animal Welfare website:

<http://paw-rescue.org/>

How to clean things:

<http://www.howtocleanthings.com>