

A photograph of an office interior featuring a carpet tile floor with a geometric pattern of light and dark grey tiles. A silver office chair is visible in the background, along with a desk and a window. The lighting is soft and even.

*Interface*FLOR

CARPET MAINTENANCE GUIDE

mission



Mission Zero:
*our promise to eliminate
any negative impact our company
may have on the environment
by the year 2020.*

January 2009

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INTRODUCTION

WHY IS MAINTENANCE IMPORTANT?

The implementation of a routine carpet maintenance programme preserves, maintains and extends the life of any carpet investment, making restorative cleaning unnecessary.

Restorative cleaning will only occur when a carpet has been neglected and its appearance has degenerated to such a point that cleaning is absolutely essential. Excessive soiling and staining may require many methods - or a combination of methods - to be utilised by the solution provider. Even then, restorative cleaning may not achieve the desired original beauty and appearance of the floorcovering. Routine care from the outset means a longer lasting product and improved long-term appearance.

THE INTERFACEFLOR MAINTENANCE SERVICE

As part of the overall image of a company, millions of pounds are spent on buildings and interior design concepts. Poorly maintained carpets can adversely affect a facility's image as well as wasting thousands of pounds through misdirected cleaning costs and reduced product performance, and accelerating the need for carpet replacement. InterfaceFLOR understands the need to maintain and extend the life of the carpet investment and offer a solution by providing a comprehensive maintenance plan.

The InterfaceFLOR Maintenance Service offers expanded levels of service tailored to meet any facility's needs. Maintenance providers offer customised programmes, undertaken by certified maintenance professionals using a suitable range of floorcare products. In addition, we can offer training and supplemental support for the in-house maintenance team.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

Maintaining the carpet's appearance means more than choosing the correct cleaning method. Selecting the right products from the start contributes greatly to the overall performance of the floorcovering. Our account managers, in conjunction with our Site Services experts, will work alongside you to assist in choosing the best floorcovering and the best maintenance plan for your facility's needs. We assess the building layout, traffic patterns and hours of operation, and then we develop recommendations for routine preventative care.

IDENTIFYING YOUR SPECIFIC MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Just as various areas of the interior are subject to different uses, each area demands an appropriate level of maintenance and care. Our teams will identify the overall needs and provide you with plans based on those needs. For example, heavily trafficked areas such as entrance lobbies and corridors require effective daily vacuum cleaning with recommended equipment, whilst areas around vending machines and desks need daily attention to spills and stains. From spot cleaning to monthly maintenance, we will offer advice on approved cleaning solutions and methods, frequency rates and programme monitoring and reporting. The InterfaceFLOR Maintenance Service is designed to extend the life of your carpet and protect your investment.



MAINTENANCE TECHNIQUES

The InterfaceFLOR Maintenance Programme is designed to prevent any soil from reaching the carpet and to remove it before it can cause damage. To keep your carpet clean and looking like new, this soil management programme uses a combination of methods, tailored to your facility's requirements. Cleaning frequencies must be based on the specific needs of trafficked areas within your facility.

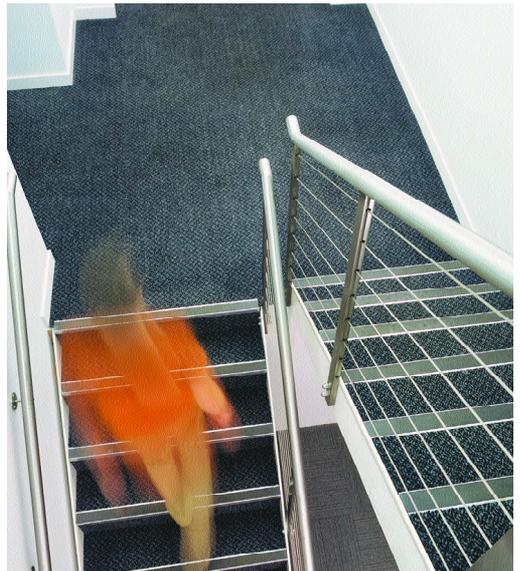
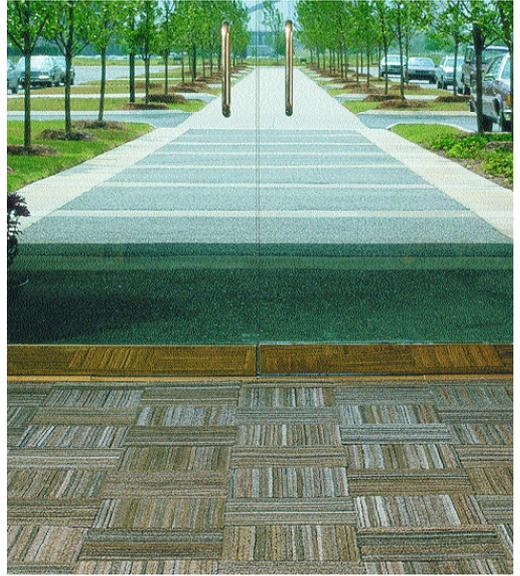
Barrier Mats

Barrier mats are an integral part of any maintenance system as they are designed to capture inbound soil at threshold points (e.g. lift lobbies, entrances/exits and vending areas). Through the use of an aggressive vacuum cleaning programme this soil can be removed, thereby preventing it from spreading to other areas. A minimum of 3-5 metres of barrier matting should be placed at the point of entry, based on the level of traffic flow and other factors. Ideally this should be a combination of primary and secondary barrier systems.

Vacuum Cleaning

An effective vacuum cleaning programme is essential to the success of any carpet maintenance plan. Daily vacuuming reduces the frequency of periodic maintenance procedures required to maintain a clean carpet. In addition to removing soil, vacuum cleaning also helps to enhance the appearance of the floorcovering by lifting and restoring the pile. The use of proper equipment and methods are critical to the success of any vacuum cleaning programme. Twin motor machines with independent motors for suction and brushing are preferred for this task, and should be set so that the cylinder brushes are in contact with the pile surfaces. Upright vacuum sweepers are recommended, whilst suction-only and backpack type machines are generally not recommended. Vacuums with top-loading soil bags are also highly recommended. The frequency of vacuuming is determined by visual inspection, but ideally this should be carried out daily. Heavy traffic areas such as lobbies, entrances/exits and barrier mats, particularly those exposed to various weather conditions, may require more frequent vacuum cleaning. Vacuuming these areas more than once a day will help prevent soil from being trafficked into other areas. For thorough cleaning be sure your movements are slow and methodical when vacuuming.

Note: For Flor S, Superflor, and any other needlepunched carpet with a pile or structure, a suction-only vacuum cleaner should be used.



Pile Lifting

Pile lifting is an effective method for lifting crushed pile and loosening dry soil. Heavily trafficked areas using a cut-pile product will particularly benefit from this being carried out on a weekly basis. Loop pile products require less intensity and can be pile lifted less frequently. Pile lifting should always be used to precondition carpets for general cleaning. For best results, apply the pile lifter machine against the direction of the pile.

Note: Pile lifting should not be carried out on Flor S, Superflor, or any other needlepunched carpet. Nor should it be carried out on Elevation, Paradox, Sabi, The Scandinavian Collection, Straightforward, Wabi, or any other flatweave product.

Spot/Stain Cleaning

Daily removal of spots and spills helps to maintain the carpet's appearance between scheduled cleaning. Taking immediate action against these also reduces the likelihood of a permanent stain. It is important to use solutions that are appropriate for the specific type of spot or spill being treated, whether it is water- or oil-based, or specifically for chewing gum. Spotting solutions should be used sparingly and, after any chemical treatment, the spot should be flushed out with water to remove any excess.

With all spot cleaning care is required to avoid excessively vigorous treatment which may create "clean spots" or lighter patches on the floorcovering.

Treating Water-based Stains

For liquid spills, blot up as much of the liquid as possible with a clean, white cloth. If the spill is semi-solid or has hardened, gently scrape it with a spoon or spatula and then blot the spot with a damp sponge. Always work from the outer edge of the spot towards the centre. Never rub across a wet spill in a manner that causes the stain or contamination to be spread from the original area. After blotting water-based spots, promptly remove the remaining residue with a small amount of dry compound such as Dri Powder Absorbant from Chemspec or Fibre Dri from Prochem. Sprinkle the compound over the spot and use a hand brush to gently agitate the compound. Allow the area to dry (about 15-30 minutes) and then brush the compound again. If the compound seems to stick to the carpet, gently brush the area again, and then vacuum. Repeat the application if necessary. Avoid aggressive brushing as this may damage the pile.

For difficult to remove coffee, tea, juice or soft drink stains, use Help Mate Coffee Breaker after spot cleaning. Apply the two-part mixture according to the instructions and leave to dry. Repeat the application if necessary.

Note: Help Mate Coffee Breaker must not be used on products which contain wool or which are susceptible to bleaching.

Treating Oil-based Stains

For the removal of oily stains such as paint, grease, tar, asphalt, etc., carpet spotters such as Professional Spot Lifter from Chemspec or Neutral Pro Spotter from Prochem are recommended. Colourfastness should always be checked by applying the solution to an inconspicuous part of the carpet. Spray the spotter onto a clean, white cloth and press it onto the carpet. Check for any evidence of dye transfer to the cloth. If colour transfer has occurred then do not use the solution. Otherwise apply the carpet spotter sparingly to a clean, white cloth and press the cloth onto the stain. Again, do not rub across the stain but wipe gently from the outer edge towards the centre of the stain. Repeat the procedure until the stain has been removed. Protect the freshly cleaned area until the carpet is completely dry. Follow with an application of dry compound (see above).

Note: Having a small extractor machine available can make it easier to flush out any spill.

Removing Chewing Gum

To remove chewing gum, Chewing Gum Remover from Chemspec or Prochem can be used. Lightly spray onto the affected area and allow the product to freeze the gum, enabling it to be gently scraped off using a blunt object such as a spatula. Care should be taken not to damage the fibre by using excess force or a sharp object. Any frozen particles should be removed as soon as possible either by gentle brushing or vacuum cleaning.

Dry Extraction

The low-moisture dry extraction method is a safe, easy and effective method for handling maintenance on a regular basis. The procedure does not leave the carpet wet and allows for immediate access and use.

Firstly, thoroughly pile lift or vacuum clean the carpet and pre-spray with a suitable traffic lane cleaner such as Chemspec One Clean Traffic Lane Cleaner or Prochem Pre Spray Gold. Then spread the dry compound onto the carpet and gently brush. Allow to dry for 30 minutes before vacuuming the particulate and soil from the carpet.

Note: 1) For Flor S, Superflor and other needlepunched products, vacuuming and hot water extraction are the only recommended procedures.

Note: 2) Dry extraction is not suitable for Elevation, Paradox, Sabi, The Scandinavian Collection, Straightforward, Wabi or any other flatweave product.

Crystalline Shampoo Application

The crystalline shampoo method of maintenance is a low-moisture procedure similar in some respects to the dry extraction method. Benefits include faster access to the area than with hot water extraction and reduced drying times.

Preparation should always include vacuuming and pile lifting before applying the crystalline shampoo such as Formula 161 from Chemspec or Fibre Shampoo from Prochem, using an electric sprayer, a simple pump-up garden type sprayer, or 3-head rotary machine. The carpet pile is then gently brushed so the solution is applied to all the fibres whilst dislodging and dispersing any accumulated soil. Time should be allowed for the solution to dry and form the encapsulating crystalline formations around the fibre which effectively trap any soils and other contaminants. Drying time will vary according to several factors including humidity, air flow and ambient temperature, but it can be expected to be anything from 60 minutes. Once it is dry the area can be vacuum cleaned and pile lifted.

Bonnet Cleaning

The bonnet cleaning method recommended in this guide has been developed specifically for situations that require a combination of systems to clean the carpet to a satisfactory level. **The hot water extraction method is generally most desirable;** however the bonnet cleaning method may occasionally be needed as a supplement to allow the earlier introduction of traffic.

As with all other maintenance methods, always prepare the carpet by vacuuming or pile lifting. Then apply a bonnet cleaner such as Roto Brite from Chemspec or Bonnet Buff from Prochem to the carpeted area. Before drying begins, agitate the area utilising a low speed (175 rpm maximum) rotary floor machine to which a 100% cotton bonnet has been attached.

Be extremely careful to cover the area thoroughly so that the carpet pile has the opportunity to be agitated in several directions to loosen attached soil and other contaminants. After approx. 15m² turn the bonnet over and clean the same area if necessary. As the area is covered soil and contaminants will accumulate in the bonnet, which should be rinsed in Textile Rinse from Chemspec or Fibre Fabric Rinse from Prochem before proceeding. After the area has dried completely, the carpet should be vacuum cleaned or pile lifted.

NOTE: The bonnet should be frequently checked for cleanliness as, once soiled, it will need to be replaced before proceeding. Care should be taken when using this method, especially on cut-pile carpets, as improper treatment can damage the yarn and fibre.

Hot Water Extraction

Periodic hot water extraction must be carried out. This is an effective method for removing soil and residue from carpeting. The system is based on injection of water and cleaning agents into the carpet, which suspends the soils and contaminants in the solution for easy removal by a built-in vacuum system.

Note: Although the method is termed “hot water extraction” it actually uses water which is closer to room temperature.

As with all other maintenance methods, always prepare the carpet by vacuum cleaning or pile lifting prior to treatment. This method uses a hot water extraction machine filled with extraction liquid such as Formula 90 from Chemspec or Extraction Pro from Prochem, diluted according to the manufacturer's instructions.

The recommended technique is to operate the floor wand or self-contained extractor by engaging the valve or button which releases the cleaning solution, and pulling or pushing the equipment for approximately 1 to 2 metres (or at a comfortable distance). The solution valve should be released before reaching the end of the pass to ensure that all of the solution is vacuumed up. The same area should be crossed two or three times again with the solution valve off to remove as much moisture from the carpet as possible.

To continue to clean the floor, overlap approximately 5 cms into the area already cleaned and proceed as described above. In extremely soiled areas it may be necessary to make two or three additional passes with the solution valve on. Then make several additional passes with the solution valve off to remove as much moisture from the area as possible, always being careful not to over-wet the carpet. To reduce drying times, fans may be placed on wet areas during cleaning. The carpet should be left and allowed to dry for as long as possible before use, and the procedure should be finished with a thorough pile lifting.

CAUTION: Water temperatures should never exceed 50°C (120°F) on the carpet. Foot traffic should not be allowed on the carpet until it is completely dry as it can cause fibre damage and rapid re-soiling.

NOTE: For Flor S, Superflor and other needlepunched products, hot water extraction and vacuum cleaning are the only recommended maintenance methods.

FLOORCARE SOLUTIONS

Some commercial carpet cleaning solutions are very harsh and can damage both the surface pile of the carpet and the backings. It is therefore important to select solutions that meet the basic standards outlined here and to evaluate each product before using it.

InterfaceFLOR modular flooring may be maintained using a number of widely recognised and readily available carpet cleaning agents. Generally, products with pH levels over 9.5 or which contain toxic, odorous or flammable solvents should be avoided. Products designed for use in hot water extraction equipment should not contain oil-based defoamers, and no product should include optical brighteners. Oil-based defoamers can leave oily residues causing rapid re-soiling, whilst optical brighteners can adversely affect the colouration of the carpet.

All cleaning solutions should be tested for sticky residues that may cause re-soiling. To test a solution, a small amount of concentrated detergent/cleaning solution should be poured into a small, clean glass dish. Allow the solution to air dry completely (24 hours minimum). Break up any hard residue on the surface of the glass dish and examine it. If the residue can be characterised as dry powder, dry flakes or dry crystals, the solution is acceptable. If the residue appears oily, greasy, sticky or in waxy flakes, the solution is not acceptable since it would be likely to contribute to rapid re-soiling.

Spotting solutions should be used as required and should always be flushed out with clean water after the spot has been treated.

Cleaning Solution Specifications

Maximum pH 9.5 in dilution preferred.

Solvents at a maximum of 10% by volume.

No optical brighteners.

FLOORCARE PRODUCTS

The products listed below are suitable for use on InterfaceFLOR products. Any products different to these may not be. If in any doubt please contact your local InterfaceFLOR sales centre.

Product	Chemspec
Bonnet Cleaner	Roto Brite
Bonnet Rinse	Textile Rinse
Carpet Spotter	Professional Spot Lifter
Chewing Gum Remover	Chewing Gum Remover
Coffee Breaker	Help Mate or Coffee Stain Remover
Crystalline Shampoo	Formula 161
Dry Compound	Dri Power Absorbant Compound
Extraction Liquid	Formula 90
Traffic Lane Cleaner	One Clean Traffic Lane Cleaner

Product	Prochem
Bonnet Cleaner	Bonnet Buff
Bonnet Rinse	Fibre Fabric Rinse
Carpet Spotter	Neutral Pro Spotter
Chewing Gum Remover	Chewing Gum Remover
Coffee Breaker	Coffee Stain Remover
Crystalline Shampoo	Fibre Shampoo
Dry Compound	Fibre Dri
Extraction Liquid	Extraction Pro
Traffic Lane Cleaner	Pre Spray Gold

MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT

Using the right equipment is as important as using the right cleaning solutions and the best techniques. These guidelines provide the technical specifications you need for key pieces of carpet maintenance equipment.

Note: For specific recommendations please contact your local Site Services team at InterfaceFLOR.

The following equipment specifications are the minimum requirements for use with InterfaceFLOR products.

Vacuum Cleaning Equipment

Twin Motor Upright Machines

Power Requirements:	8 Amps 220/240 Volts
Vacuum Motor	750 Watt
Water Lift	1700mm
Air Lift	38 Litres/Second
Filtration	Down to .3 Microns or lower (Hospital grade preferred)
Dust Bag Capacity	Minimum of 5 litre preferred
Brush Motor	150 Watt
Brush Strip	Replaceable
Brush Drive	Toothed Belt Drive (non-slip preferred)
Adjustment	Brush Height Adjustment essential
Working Width	325mm-460mm

Suction-only Vacuum Machines

Power Requirements	8 Amps 220/240 Volts
Vacuum Motor	750 Watt
Water Lift	1700mm
Air Lift	38 Litres/Second
Filtration	3 Stage preferred down to .3 Microns
Dustbin Capacity	Minimum of 5 litre preferred



Pile Lifting Machines

Drive Motor	1/2 Horsepower
Vacuum Motor	1 1/2 - 1 3/4 Horsepower
Brush Width	Approximately 100mm; Spirals, total width 400mm - Vegetable Fill or Nylon
Brush Adjustment	Self Levelling

Dry Extraction Compound Application Machines

Power Requirements	2-8 Amps 220/240 Volts
Motor	200 Watt
2 Brush System	Contra Rotating
Brush Width	250mm-500mm
Brush Speed	400 rpm

Hot Water Extraction Machines

Power Requirements	10-15 Amps 220-240 Volts
Vacuum Motor	1500 Watt
Vacuum Type	3 Stage by-pass
Vacuum Shoe	300mm-500mm
Water Lift	2.5m-3.5m at 100 CFM
Fluid Delivery	2 Litres/Minute at 50-100 PSI
Solution Tanks	15 Litres upwards for both solution and recovery
Brush Motor	90 Watt 1/8 Horsepower
Brush Width	250mm-450mm with 4 v-shaped rows of Nylon bristles

Crystalline Shampoo Systems

Dry Extractor and Crystalline Applicator	
Power	2-8 Amps
Width	305mm-559mm
Brushes (2)	250-500mm
Brush Speed	400 rpm

Bonnet/Rotary Floor Machines

Drive Motor	3/4 Horsepower minimum
Size	432mm x 508mm
RPM	175 rpm maximum
Brush Type	Pad driver
Notes	Do not exceed 175 rpm
Pads	Absorba 100% cotton

Note: All the above equipment must be CE approved and comply with EU regulations.

MISCELLANEOUS MAINTENANCE ISSUES

CARPET TILE REPLACEMENT

Carpet tiles that have become badly stained or damaged can be replaced from attic/spare stock. A damaged tile can be removed by slipping a knife edge under one corner and peeling it from the floor.

When damaged carpet tiles are being replaced, care should be taken to ensure that the face pile of the surrounding tiles is brushed upright and that the replacement tile is fitted carefully to prevent pile fibres from becoming trapped between joints.

Carpet tiles taken from attic/spare stock are likely to have a newer appearance than the ones being replaced. If InterfaceFLOR random designs are used, the recommended installation method is non-directional and old and new tiles are more likely to visually integrate completely into the floor design.

In other ranges, any new tiles can be noticeable. If this is the case the new tiles should be installed in less visible areas.

Any flooring product should follow InterfaceFLOR's recommended installation instructions.

ACCESS FLOORS

The relevant access floor manufacturer should be contacted for recommendations for carpet cleaning in relation to the methods and techniques recommended in this guide. Low-moisture methods and techniques are generally preferred.

Contact Us

For further information contact your local InterfaceFLOR sales centre or visit our web site at www.interfaceflor.eu