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Treating Carpet for Pet Urine Stains

Even if you have the best-trained pet in the world, you will occasionally encounter pet urine accidents. You may not even discover the accident until long after the fact. Because urine content can change over the pet's life due to various reasons such as age and health, you may not be able to remove some urine stains.

If left unattended, pet urine can damage your carpet in several ways. Moisture can weaken the layers of carpet. This allows separation of the backing material. Seams particularly can be damaged and can separate.

To treat urine-damaged areas, try the following suggestions. Apply a solution of ¼ teaspoon of a liquid dishwashing detergent (non-bleach and non-lanolin) with one cup of lukewarm water. Do not use automatic dishwashing detergent or laundry detergent. Use paper towels to absorb the moisture, rinse with warm water and repeat application. Repeat until there is no longer any transfer to the toweling or there is improvement to the spot. After that is complete, follow up with a solution of two tablespoons of ammonia with one cup of water. Rinse with warm water and repeat. Blot area dry. Then, blot the area with solution of one cup white vinegar to two cups of water. Blot dry. Use a flat non-fading object to weigh down a ½ inch layer of paper towels. Change the paper towels until the area is completely dry.

Urine can affect the dyes used in carpet; however, not all occurrences will result in a permanent stain. Successful removal of stains depends on the following: content of urine, dyes and finishes used, and the time since the deposit. Even though some dyes may change color immediately, some urine spots may be undetectable for weeks or even months. By using a solution of two tablespoons of clear, non-sudsy ammonia in one cup of water, color can sometimes be restored. While this treatment may not always work, the ammonia can be effective in removing urine content and reducing the offensive odor.

Odor is yet another problem, especially with cats. If cat urine is not completely removed, the complete odor removal is unlikely. Check with your veterinarian or pet store to find the latest enzymes cleaners that work more effectively.

Check with your carpet dealer to find backings that resist spills and even prevent liquids from penetrating the carpet into the carpet cushion and subfloor.

Source: Carpet and Rug Institute