

The Consumer's Guide to
Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning
by

The Birmingham Carpet Cleaning Company, a division of
The Sutton Carpet Cleaning Co. Ltd

Specialists in Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning in Birmingham.

Read this guide and you'll discover

- How to avoid four carpet and upholstery cleaning rip-offs!
- 6 costly misconceptions about carpet and upholstery cleaning
- What's lurking in your carpet?
- Which method cleans best?
- 8 mistakes to avoid when choosing a Midlands based carpet and upholstery cleaner
- The importance of value and price
- Do you want a clean, healthy carpet?
- 100% no-risk guarantee
- 4 steps to a fresh, clean, healthy carpet

Provided as an educational service by
The Sutton Carpet Cleaning Co. Ltd, 47 Ashfurlong Crescent, Sutton
Coldfield, West Midlands B75 6EN

Call Now On 0121 311 1893

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 "Consumer's Guide To Carpet & upholstery Cleaning".

In this fact-filled document, you'll discover how to avoid four carpet cleaning rip-offs, eight mistakes to avoid when choosing a carpet cleaner, and four steps to a fresh, clean, healthy carpet.

We wrote this document after our experience of being in the cleaning industry for over 9 years. Our aim is to help you better understand carpet & upholstery cleaning. Now with this information, you can make an informed, intelligent decision.

If you have any questions about carpet or upholstery cleaning, you're invited to call us on FREE on 0121 311 1893.

We've dedicated our business to educating consumers.

We'll be happy to help you in every way.

PS. You can be sure our company works to the highest standards – we are certified by the Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification – the only international body to set standards for the cleaning industry.

HOW TO AVOID FOUR CARPET CLEANING RIP-OFFS

RIP-OFF No. 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 cleaners use price as the bait for their false and misleading advertising. They offer a cheap price usually between £ 1.00 and £ 1.40 per m²- and then, once they arrive at your premises, they pressure you into buying "add-ons" It's as if you were buying a car and found that the dealer was charging extra for the tyres and steering wheel. Carpet cleaning is not as cheap as some unethical carpet cleaners would like you to believe.

RIP-OFF No. 2 BAIT AND SWITCH.

Dual process 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 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 chemical and they will not guarantee their work.

RIP-OFF No. 3: UNSUPPORTED CLAIMS. "THIS CLEANING METHOD IS THE BEST."

You'll read this in almost every ad. You'll hear this from virtually every carpet cleaner. 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 the best for you. So before you choose a carpet cleaner, identify your objectives. Then select the method that best reaches those objectives.

RIP-OFF No. 4 : OUTDATED BELIEFS. "HOT WATER DAMAGES YOUR CARPET."

Years ago people believed this was true because their carpets were damaged by "technicians" who didn't know how to properly clean using hot water. But today, we know it's false. By cleaning 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 his own method. And each method does have advantages. So I suggest you look to what carpet manufactures say.

FIVE COSTLY MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CARPET CLEANING

MISCONCEPTION No. 1

You should wait as long as possible before cleaning your carpet.

No. Dirt is abrasive- like sandpaper. Every time you step on your carpet, you grind dirt into the fibres. 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's 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 No. 2:

The only reason to clean a carpet is to remove dirt.

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

If you or your family have allergies or breathing problems the source could be in your carpets.

MISCONCEPTION No. 3:

One method of carpet cleaning is as good as another.

No. The dry cleaning methods- which are dry foam, dry chemicals, and dry compound- do not rinse your carpet in any way. Instead, they leave a dirty residue. You may say they clean the carpet half way. The most effective method is hot water extraction. Hot water extraction means hot water cleaning solution, under high pressure, is forced into your carpet and then sucked out of your carpet. Shaw industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, recommends truck mounted hot water extraction as the primary method of cleaning carpets, along with an IICRC approved firm.

Carpet cleaners use two types of hot water extraction. If they use an extraction unit mounted in a van outside it is known as a truck mount. If they use a machine they can bring into your premises, it is known as a portable machine.

MISCONCEPTION No. 4:

Having the right equipment is all a company needs to clean your carpets properly.

Not true. Many companies own hot-water extraction machines but very few companies teach their employees how to use them properly. This is why it is important that you choose your carpet cleaner very carefully. The best cleaning companies are those that have been certified by the Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration, known as the IICRC. Before you choose a carpet cleaner, ask to see written proof of the company's IICRC certification and also the certification of the technician who is going to do the job! If they don't have them -don't use them!

MISCONCEPTION No. 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, dust mites and tobacco residues removed as well.

2. The price you see advertised may not be the price you pay. Many home owners have learned that the low price they saw advertised only lasted until the carpet cleaner got into 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.)

WHAT`S LURKING IN YOUR CARPET?:

Asphalt, Bacteria. Car exhaust. Chemicals Dirt. Dust. Dust mites. Earth. Food particles. Fungus. Germs. Gravel. Grease. Hair. Industrial waste. Lint. Mud. Pet stains. Pollens. Pollutants. Smoke. Soot. Tar. Tobacco smoke. Urine. Vomit. Plus don't forget living creatures, such as dust mites, fleas, and other creatures that live, breed and hide in your carpet.

- Dust mites and their faeces are the biggest cause of asthma and allergic reactions affecting four million people in the UK
- Up to 25% of the weight of the average pillow consists of dead skin, dust mites and their droppings
- 85% of asthma attacks are triggered by dust mite allergens
- At best, vacuuming removes only 5-10% of the dust mite populations in your home.
- You cannot see them with the naked eye ... but they are there!

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 a shampoo to your hair, allowing it to dry and then removing the shampoo from your head with a vacuum?

This method leaves dirty residues in your carpet, which is one reason why dry foam is not very effective.

Dry, absorbent powder:

The dry-compound method spreads a moist, absorbent powder through the carpet. The powder is allowed to dry and then sucked up 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 also, is not very effective.

Dry Fusion, Bonnet cleaning.

This method cleans, stainblocks, heat dries and deodorisers in one process. This method is very effective on low profile commercial carpet and carpet tiles.

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 sucked out of your carpet.

In a recent technical bulletin, Shaw industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, "recommends the truck mounted hot water extraction system, which research indicates provides the best capability for cleaning".

8 MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN CHOOSING A CARPET CLEANER

MISTAKE No. 1:

Choosing a carpet cleaner based on equipment alone. No question, your carpet cleaner needs first-rate equipment. But he also needs something else. He needs employees who are skilled at operating that equipment.

MISTAKE No. 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 the phone call. But once the cleaner gets into your home, he pressures 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 No. 3:

Choosing a carpet cleaner who gives you an estimate on the telephone. Instead, invite the person to your home and ask for a specific written quotation or ask when you book the job if that is the

cost you will pay on the day. Then you'll know exactly what you have to pay the technician on completion.

MISTAKE No. 4:

Choosing a carpet cleaner who doesn't offer a money back guarantee. In our view every carpet cleaning company should be fully accountable for its work. And if you aren't satisfied that the carpet cleaner has done exactly what he said he would do, you shouldn't have to pay for it. Not all carpet cleaners offer a guarantee. Or, if they do, the guarantee may be "limited". Ask the carpet cleaner if he offers a money back guarantee and then make sure the cleaner includes it on his written quotation.

MISTAKE No. 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 he says 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 his work.

MISTAKE No. 6: Choosing a carpet cleaner who isn't certified by the Institute for Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC).

If your carpet cleaner isn't a close friend, you may not know whether he has the knowledge or experience to clean your carpet well. If you want to be sure you're hiring a competent professional, make sure he is IICRC certified and he works for an IICRC Certified firm. He must earn that certification through study, experience and formal written examinations.

MISTAKE No. 7:

Choosing a carpet cleaner who isn't a member of the National Carpet Cleaners Association (NCCA). NCCA is a trade association of carpet cleaners who are dedicated to:

- (1) honest, ethical business practices,
- (2) staying current on the latest methods for carpet and upholstery care,
- (3) the highest possible level of customer service,

You're making a wise decision when you have your carpets cleaned by a member of the NATIONAL CARPET CLEANERS ASSOCIATION (NCCA).

MISTAKE No. 8

Choosing a carpet cleaner who doesn't use a Truck Mounted high-powered hot water extraction system.

You might expect this from us, since our employees use this type of system. But there are several good reasons. They are the Rolls Royce of carpet cleaning machines; they use hotter water, higher pressure and stronger suction than any other method, so you get a far better job. For low profile office carpet our Dry Fusion cleaning system is usually the best option.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VALUE AND PRICE

Price is what you pay. The value is what you get in relation to what you pay.

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, recommend truck mounted high-powered hot water extraction cleaning.

Here's why:

(1) High-powered hot water extraction units heat the water to higher temperatures. Higher temperatures means better cleaning ability.

(2) It shoots the cleaning solution into your carpet at high pressures, which breaks up the dirt, bacteria, chemicals and pollens.

(3) The machine uses strong suction to draw the dirt, chemicals, bacteria, pollens and tobacco residue out of your carpet.

Not surprisingly, having your carpet thoroughly cleaned with high-powered hot water extraction costs more than renting a DIY machine.

If you bought the cheapest carpeting you could find, then renting a small shampooer might be all you need. No question, it will get some of the dirt out- but the key word is "some". It will not get out many of the pollens, chemicals, bacteria and dust mite residues. On the other hand- if you want your carpet to look good and give 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 once a year, as recommended by many leading carpet mills.

DO YOU WANT A CLEAN CARPET OR 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 only get out the dirt. Other methods will get out the 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 from around £30.00 per room - then we 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 staff and visitors from the countless bacteria, fungus, pollens and dust mites that reside in your carpet, then you're invited to call us.

The truck mounted hot water units we use is the most effective cleaning system available today. Likewise, they are the most expensive units on the market. But we bought these units for a good reason: More and more homes want the good-health benefits that come from having a fresh, clean carpet.

Have you seen how a little boy's trousers get when he plays outdoors? If you have, then you know you can brush off his trousers and make him 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 £30.00 to £35.00 who will "brush off " your carpeting and make you think it's clean. Or, if you want the job done right, we'll clean your carpets with hot water and eco friendly cleaning solutions using our state of the art cleaning machine and you'll know they're clean.

So if you want a thoroughly clean carpet- if you're willing to invest in your family's good health- you're invited to call us. You'll receive a written estimate, at no cost or obligation. And if you give us the go-ahead, you're further protected with our

Double 100% NO-RISK SATISFACTION GUARANTEE

We want you to be really pleased- in fact absolutely delighted- with every carpet & upholstery job we do.

So every job comes with our double ironclad, risk-free, guarantee.

What does this mean?

Simply this:

If you aren't happy with the standards of our work, we'll re-clean the whole area for free.

Many companies don't guarantee their work- but we feel nothing is more important than your complete satisfaction.

We stand behind every job 100%. If ever you have any questions or concerns about our work, please call us right away:

Call 0121 311 1893

4 STEPS TO A CLEAN, FRESH, HEALTHY CARPET

If you're thinking of having your carpets cleaned, we suggest you follow these four steps:

STEP No. 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 No.2:

List your objectives. Do you want only the dirt removed, or do you want all the bacteria, fungus, chemicals and dust mites removed, which will require a powerful hot water extraction cleaner, as we 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 No.3:

Ask questions. The way you learn about a company is to ask specific questions and listen carefully to the answers. Here are eight tough questions to ask a carpet cleaner before he begins to clean your carpet:

1. What method of carpet 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 a member of the NCCA (National Carpet Cleaning Association)?

7. Are you certified by the IICRC?

8. Are your cleaning technicians certified by the IICRC and can I see their certifications?

STEP No.4:

Once you're satisfied that you're working with an honest, competent professional company, either invite them to your home or ask them to send you 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 need to make an informed, intelligent decision. If you want a quick, cheap carpet cleaning job, many companies in the phone book will be able to help you, or you could do the job yourself.

But if you want your carpet & upholstery to be completely and healthfully cleaned- removing the bacteria, fungus, chemicals, pollens and tobacco products- then we invite you to call us.

We'll be happy to answer your questions- provide you with a quotation over the telephone or you can calculate the cost with our online quote calculator - or we can come to your home and give you a free written quotation- without obligation of any kind.

To reach us, call 0121 311 1893

THANKS AGAIN!

...for reviewing our new CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO CARPET CLEANING. We hope you found this information helpful.

If you have any questions or comments- or if you'd like us to give you an exact written quotation to clean your carpet or upholstery in Birmingham - please call us on 0121 311 1893.

or go to our instant online quotation page and calculate your price.

We've dedicated our business to consumer education and service.
We'll be pleased to help you in every way. We look forward to your
call.

Thanks!

The Sutton Carpet Cleaning Co. Ltd
Specialists in carpet & upholstery cleaning