

Spill Patrol

Preventing stains from spills is a major household problem. Here's some advice on cleaning them up, plus other tips for around the house.

Fix carpet crush marks

Furniture and other heavy objects can leave unsightly crush marks on your carpet. You can alleviate the problem by rearranging your furniture on a regular basis. When you do, here's a tip from Fabrizone to restore crushed, natural-fabric carpet pile. Use a warm steam iron over a damp white towel on the crushed spot for a few seconds, then use your hand to work the pile back up to its normal height. Don't use this method on acrylic carpet, though. It can't take the heat.

Removing spills on carpets

When something gets spilled in your carpet, the first thing to do is absorb the excess liquid with a white, dry paper or cloth towel. The experts at Fabrizone advise you apply pressure straight down. Do not rub! To soak up additional liquid that may have penetrated deep into the carpet pile, place a 1/2" wad of dry paper towels or cloth towels on top of the spot and tap it lightly with a hammer. With any spill, it's important to act promptly, before the stain sets.

Crayon marks

To remove crayon marks on vinyl or linoleum flooring, rub them with a bit of silver polish.

Housecleaning as fun

Did you know that vacuuming can burn as many as seven calories a minute? And, according to The Maids International Inc., you can make it family fun. To enlist the help of your children with chores, make the work into a game with these ideas.

■ **Musical chores:** Give each child a project – dusting, scrubbing, picking up toys –

and start the music. Every time the music turns off, the children switch chores.

■ **Puppet dusters:** Make sock puppets for dusting and start a contest to see whose puppet gets the dirtiest. The same goes for puppet shiners, ideal for cleaning windows. Make it a game to follow one another's hand movement as you clean the window.

■ **Dash for trash:** Get those clothes or toys picked up. Give each child a laundry basket and start a timer for 30 seconds. See which child can put the most in his or her basket before the timer goes off.

■ **Hide and seek:** Hide five spoons or other objects in various spots (on windowsills, under cushions) and see if your child can find all of them by the time the cleaning is finished. 🌿