

How to Remove Coffee and Beverage Stains from Carpet

When it comes to caring for carpet, one of the biggest challenges is getting out spots and stains.

A very common and troublesome type of carpet stain comes from beverages, whether it is coffee stains, red wine stains, or others like tea or sports drinks. Often, those in charge of removing the stains often use a “general purpose” spotting chemical, which can make the job of removing beverage stains even harder.

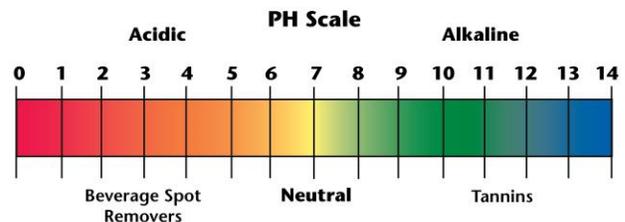
This technical bulletin offers guidance on how to remove stains caused by various beverages. Using the correct techniques and spotting chemicals can make the process easier.

Coffee, Tea, Cola contain Tannins: Removing these stains is all in the pH

Many beverages, including colas, coffee, tea, and wine, contain compounds called tannins. Tannins are naturally occurring compounds found in many plant materials, and are responsible for the dark color of these types of beverages.

The problem with tannins is that they can be difficult to remove if using the wrong spotting chemical. And of course, tannin based beverages can also contain sugar and dairy products.

The secret to removing tannins lies in understanding the acidity and alkalinity character of Tannins. Tannins have an alkaline pH, meaning they can be dissolved by an acidic pH and be easily removed. If you use a typical general purpose stain remover with a mildly alkaline or neutral pH, it won't be very effective at removing the tannins.



Getting Coffee Stains Out: Use an acidic stain remover.

A stain-removing chemical with a pH in the range of 3-4 will be highly effective on tannin-based stains like coffee or tea.

Follow these steps to remove coffee, tea or colas:

1. Apply spotting chemical to the stain. Do not over apply or saturate.
2. Use a spotting brush or bone scraper; gently tamp the area to work the spotter into the stain.
3. Wait 2-3 minutes, then blot with paper towels or extract using extraction equipment.
4. Allow to dry.



Soda and Sports Drinks: Man made dyes

A very effective stain remover for the synthetic dyes found in sodas and sports drinks is a spotter fortified with hydrogen peroxide. The hydrogen peroxide spotter serves multiple purposes:

- The peroxide provides color safe bleaching to oxidize the dye stains for easy removal.
- Other stain lifting detergents and solvents help remove sugars and other additives.



Natural Dyes: Wine and Natural Fruit Based Beverage Stains

Red Wine and grape juice stains are always the hardest to remove. A quick rule of thumb here, the faster you try to remove the stain, the better chance of success for complete removal. With naturally occurring dyes, a hydrogen peroxide fortified spotter can be effective, but once set in, you have to add one additional element: HEAT.

Heat Transfer Method:

In this procedure, indirect heat is used in combination with the spotting chemical to loosen the stain. Here is the procedure:

1. Apply a light to moderate amount of spotting chemical to the stain area.
2. Use a spotting brush or bone scraper to work in the chemical.
3. Wait 2-3 minutes.
4. Lay a white towel (folded over once) to the area. Then use a steam iron or steamer to apply moist heat to the stain area. The stain will begin transferring to the towel.
5. Continue repositioning the towel and applying heat until all of the stain is removed.



Dos and Don'ts of Stain Removal

1. Do not over wet stain area. This can cause the stain to reappear through a process called “wicking”.
2. Wait a few minutes to give the chemical time to loosen the stain.
3. Dry the areas as quickly as possible to avoid re-soiling or wicking.

Multi-Clean's X-Ray is a ready-to-use, mild acid, hydrogen peroxide fortified cleaner that is highly effective on all common beverage stains in carpet. The mild acidic pH of 3-4 helps loose the tannins found in coffee, tea and colas. The peroxide helps oxidize stains caused by sodas, sports drinks, red wine and other alcoholic beverages.



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