



a guide to floor care  
maintenance and restoration



PHS Interclean are the experts in the cleaning and maintenance of all types of floor coverings, ranging from carpet and vinyl, to wood and stone. With over ten years' experience of maintaining and restoring flooring for commercial premises, we've put together a comprehensive guide with key information to help you:

- understand clearly how to maintain your floors
- know when you will need professional restorative care
- understand what each process entails, and whether you are getting the right service for your flooring needs

## introduction

Flooring is a key element to the look and feel of any commercial premises, from hotels and shopping centres, to schools and train stations. To ensure that visitors to your building are left with the best impression, your floors need to look as clean and maintained as they did the day they were laid.

By adopting the right maintenance programme for your flooring, you'll not only ensure a clean and professional site image, but you'll also prolong the life expectancy of your flooring, giving you maximum value for your investment.



carpet care

# the essential facts

The number of carpets laid in commercial premises has increased over the years, however, ignorance on how to care for carpets properly is not uncommon. A cleaners' knowledge and practical skills have not kept pace with advances in carpet technology and the need for effective maintenance. The results of poorly maintained and neglected carpets may be:

- Integrated soil within and between the carpet fibres and backing
- Spots and stains
- Shrinkage
- Rotting
- Colour migration
- Discolouration
- Installation faults
- Cross infection and cross contamination
- Static

A well balanced carpet cleaning program is essential to your business in order to reduce your labour costs and maintain your carpets for longer.

Carpet care can be broken down into 4 main areas:

- Preventative measures
- Vacuuming / Soil removal
- Stain removal
- Stain protection

## **Preventative measures: Create a barrier to staining and soiling with entrance matting**

70% of the dirt entering your building is brought in on the soles of peoples' shoes. Entrance mats offer your building its first line of defence to help prevent dirt and moisture being walked in and damaging your interior carpets.

The type of soiling a carpet may sustain includes:

- Dry dirt (particulate)
- Water soluble
- Oil soluble
- Spots, stains and discolorations
- Odours

# Q&A

## **What's the optimum size for an entrance mat and where's the best place to put them?**

Ensure your barrier matting is of an adequate size, with at least the first six indoor footsteps taken on matting, with the full width of the doors covered. It may sound obvious, but ensure your barrier mats are correctly sited where the outdoors meets the indoors, and not placed some distance into the building. Use a proper commercial matting solution for your workplace, small coir or cotton mats may work at home, but they won't cope with the volume of traffic in a busy workplace!

## **Are serviced mats better for my floor?**

All barrier mats will fill up with dirt, and if the dirt isn't removed it will get tracked into your building. All mats should be regularly and thoroughly cleaned to ensure they're always working to protect your entrance flooring. Serviced matting means that your mats will be regularly deep cleaned, offering greater floor protection than non-serviced matting solutions.



# Q&A

## **If I already have fitted barrier matting, do I really need additional loose lay matting?**

If mud or grit is problematic, a two part mat system works best with a heavy-duty outdoor scraper mat followed by fitted barrier matting. To offer ultimate protection for your floor, place a third, loose lay indoor barrier mat beyond your fitted matting area to capture any previously missed dirt, grit and wetness etc.

Additional loose lay matting can be advantageous in many areas around the workplace including:

- Reception entrances to protect from foot borne dirt
- In front of hot drink vending machines to protect from drink spills and stains
- In front of reception desks to present a corporate image with a logo mat
- In front of photocopiers to protect from toner spills and stains
- In corridors between dusty warehouses and offices
- In front of water vending machines to protect from spills and water stains



## did you know?

As part of the PHS Group, PHS InterClean are able to offer a comprehensive range of entrance barrier matting, including:

- Loose Lay Mats
- Fitted Barrier Mats
- Barrier Mat Systems
- Logo Mats
- Shaped Designer Mats
- Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Mat Systems

We can also offer a regular entrance mat maintenance programme. We analyse the amount of footfall in your building and the type of soiling that affects your matting. We then tailor regular cleaning visits to suit your site, these could be quarterly, fortnightly or anywhere in between that best suits your budget and requirements!

# vacuuming & soil removal

80% of soil in a carpet can be effectively removed by vacuuming. Whilst almost everybody has used a vacuum at some point, very few cleaners are aware of the different types of vacuuming method appropriate for use on carpets in commercial premises, these are;

- Surface Vacuuming
- Agitation Vacuuming
- Restorative Vacuuming

## **Surface Vacuuming: The Cylinder Vacuum**

Surface vacuuming is the most popular method as it's fast and simple using inexpensive equipment. A surface vacuum will remove the superficial debris and dust from the face of your carpet, but beware; any large particles of dirt that are missed by a surface vacuum will, overtime, cause premature wear of carpet fibres.

## **Agitation Vacuuming: The Upright Vacuum**

An Agitation vacuum is an upright vacuum which incorporates a rotating brush and beater bar. The vacuum usually has two motors which will not only remove surface debris, but will also open the carpet pile and remove some of the heavier soils within the carpet too.

## **Restoration Vacuuming: The Specialist Vacuum**

When a carpet is heavily matted and soiled, a restoration vacuum is a key player in the process of bringing the carpet back to its former glory. Using a large powerful pile lifting machine with strong, effective brushes, these vacuums are usually used by specialist cleaning companies. The large brushes open the pile, completely removing the heaviest and most damaging soils. The results these machines deliver are noticeable immediately.



# vacuuming & soil removal

## How often should my carpet be cleaned?

area	monthly	quarterly	annually
main entranceways	✓		
reception	✓		
walkways		✓	
main office			✓
spot staining	✓		
vending areas		✓	
kitchens/canteens		✓	
office to workshop transition areas	✓		
outdoor covered areas		✓	

# vacuuming & soil removal

## Does it really make a difference if we use a cylinder or upright vacuum?

As well as the size and shape, the main difference between cylinders and uprights is in the type of cleaning head. Cylinders usually have a suction-only head with an adjustment for hard floors or carpets. Upright vacuum cleaners have much larger cleaning heads fitted with an agitator (brush or bar beater) which, as mentioned, is effective at removing surface debris and heavier soils.

## Benefits of a Cylinder Vacuum Cleaner:

- Good if you have a small to medium carpet area to clean. But, the cleaning head is generally much smaller on a cylinder so it will take longer to vacuum compared with an upright
- Cylinders are lighter and more manoeuvrable for getting under tables and cleaning stairs
- If you have a mix of carpets, mats and hard floors, cylinders are ideal for cleaning a wider variety of surfaces
- You need a lightweight cleaner which you can carry up and down stairs
- You have limited storage space

## Benefits of an Upright Vacuum Cleaner:

- Good if you have larger areas of carpet to vacuum. Uprights have a greater cleaning area on the head
- You have deeper pile carpets. This is because uprights have revolving brushes that help to dislodge dirt and grit which is embedded deep down in the carpet pile. The brushes are also better for picking up lint and fluff
- You have carpet in heavy traffic areas. The agitator will help dislodge trodden in dirt



did you know?

PHS InterClean carry out a full annual site audit prior to the start of a carpet cleaning programme to assess the condition and estimated life expectancy of your carpets. As part of our service, we will also advise your on-site cleaning staff about the right methods and products to use on a daily basis to keep your carpets looking good for longer.

[www.phsinterclean.co.uk](http://www.phsinterclean.co.uk)

# stain protection: prevention is better than cure

There are many guides to removing stains available, however these can provide variable results dependent on the type of stain, flooring material and age of the stain. Should stain removal be attempted, it is advisable to try a small area in an out of the way area if possible first. However for best results, professional advice should be sought from a professional flooring restoration and cleaning company.

Spillages are inevitable in commercial premises, so it's advised that you treat your carpeted areas with a good stain protection sealant.

## **Carpet fibre protection systems**

Carpets undergoing a Fibre Protection treatment (new carpets or pre-cleaned) are sprayed with a Fluro-Carbon product, which is absorbed by the carpet fibres.

The benefits of this process are:

- It creates a barrier seal, reducing the porous nature of the carpet
- Gives protection from dirt penetration
- Provides good protection from spots, stains and spillage

## **How does Fluro-Carbon technology work?**

The surface tension of a carpet treated with Fluro-Carbon technology is lowered, and so any contaminant spilt onto the carpet will have a higher surface tension, preventing it from penetrating the carpet fibre. Fluro-Carbon treatment will, without question, improve the anti-staining properties of almost all carpets.



PHS Interclean have developed a unique stain removal product which we use both in our process and supply (as an inclusive part of our service) to your cleaning staff, ensuring the stains can be effectively dealt with as they occur.

[www.phsinterclean.co.uk](http://www.phsinterclean.co.uk)

# stain protection: prevention is better than cure

## **Can carpet protection be applied to existing carpet installations?**

Yes, a good topical application can be applied to existing carpet installations. Offices certainly benefit from stain protection in areas where there is a high risk of staining, such as vending areas, canteen areas and main walkways.

## **Does wet cleaning effect the protection on my carpet?**

Wet cleaning of protector treated carpets will progressively reduce the efficiency of the system, therefore protector re-application will be necessary from time to time.

## **Professional restoration: Don't replace, restore!**

It is extremely rare for a modern carpet under an effective maintenance programme to wear out. What it becomes is heavily soiled and unsightly which leads to its often premature replacement. When the need arises, there are a number of different expert restoration methods to bring the carpet back to its former glory.



Restoration Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p><b>Restorative Vacuuming</b> using a large powerful pile lifting machine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completely removes the heaviest and most damaging soils</li> <li>• Breaks open the most heavily matted carpet allowing soil to be extracted and the pile left restored</li> <li>• Immediately you notice the difference</li> <li>• Labour saving in the long-term</li> <li>• Can remove large amounts of heavy dirt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These machines are heavy and can be expensive</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hot Water Extraction</b> The very hot water and cleaning solution is forced deep into the carpet using a high pressure system. As the machine runs over the carpet it loosens the soil and residue within the carpet, cleaning the deeply soiled fibres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used to sanitise a carpet</li> <li>• Can remove large amounts of heavy dirt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires a high degree of skill throughout the operation, professional floor cleaning restoration is recommended</li> <li>• Over-wetting can cause shrinkage and long drying times</li> <li>• Improper brush use or insufficient lubrication will cause tip flaring or pile distortion</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dry Compound Cleaning</b> A compound of granules which can either be synthetic or natural is scattered onto the carpet, it is then agitated into the carpet using a machine with counter rotating brushes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quick safe way to maintain a carpet.</li> <li>• It is a fast and simple cleaning system. If used frequently and correctly from installation it will maintain the appearance of the carpet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This method can only perform a light clean and if the carpet is heavily soiled, the clean will achieve only marginal results</li> <li>• A build up of compound can accumulate in the carpet if the vacuuming is not carried out correctly. This can discolour the carpet and cause re-soiling</li> </ul>

Restoration Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p><b>Crystallising Shampoo</b></p> <p>A shampoo solution is scrubbed into the carpet using a low speed rotary machine. The crystals within the shampoo encapsulate the soil particles, and as the solution dries, remove the particles from the carpet fibre. These crystals are then removed by vacuuming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick drying times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can only clean lightly soiled carpets</li> <li>• Can leave residue behind causing re-soiling</li> <li>• Often relies on a cleaning company to remove the dried shampoo</li> </ul>
<p><b>Heated Bonnet Cleaning</b></p> <p>The bonnets are made from a highly absorbent synthetic yarn which traps the dirt within its fibres, they are also heated which greatly accelerates the speed at which the soils break down</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less moisture compared to Hot Water Extraction and because of this, much shorter drying times</li> <li>• Exceptional performance on low profile commercial carpets</li> <li>• High productivity and low noise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can leave swirl marks in the carpet. These can be removed by vacuuming</li> </ul>

“ PHS Interclean have provided their services across an estate of over 200 sites, and have not only achieved a high standard of appearance on our carpets, but have also saved us considerable sums of money in carpet replacement ”

Richard Rose, Head of Cleaning and Soft Services, Mapeley Estates



A photograph of a polished marble floor with large, square tiles. The tiles have a light beige and cream color with intricate, swirling patterns of grey and brown. The floor is highly reflective, showing bright highlights and soft shadows. On the far left edge, there is a solid, vertical green bar. The text 'stone floor care' is overlaid in white at the bottom.

stone floor care

# maintenance & damage prevention

**The use of natural stone in commercial premises is becoming popular. However, a lack of knowledge of the correct maintenance methods can easily damage natural stone flooring.**

## **Keeping stone floors looking as good as new!**

Most natural stone floors are porous and require sealing to protect them from staining, and to make the daily cleaning of them easier and more effective. If the stone has not been sealed (the stone should have been sealed at installation, but this is often overlooked!), this should be carried out prior to any maintenance program taking place.



## **How do I know how well sealed my stone floor is?**

A simple test to see how well a stone floor has been sealed is to carry out the following test:

- Put three drops of water on the surface of the stone
- After one minute wipe away the first drop
- After two minutes wipe away the second drop
- After three minutes wipe away the third
- If the stone has darkened after one minute it has not been sealed
- If the stone has darkened after two minutes it may have been sealed ineffectively
- If after three minutes the water is still a proud bead on the surface, then it is properly sealed
- It is essential that you know if there is a good seal on the stones, as this will greatly affect the daily cleaning of flooring

# maintenance & damage prevention

## How often should I maintain stone floors?

Daily maintenance should be carried out on natural stone products that contain natural fats. This will enhance the colour of the stone and help maintain its seal.

## Can I use general detergents to clean a stone floor?

Avoid general detergents as they can leave stone looking dull and washed out. They often leave a residue which detracts from the natural look of the stone too.

## What equipment should be used to clean stone floors?

Whether you're using a mop or machine, your equipment should have non abrasive materials to ensure the surface isn't scratched or damaged.

## What treatments are best for a stone floor?

All stone floors will inevitably be affected by acid. The question is when will you need to do something about it?

The acid sensitivity test\* will give you an indication of how sensitive the floor is to acid and subsequent damage:

**Step 1:** Find an area of the stone which is inconspicuous to perform this test

**Step 2:** Apply a very small amount of vinegar to the floor

**Step 3:** If there is a reaction and the liquid begins to fizz or bubble, then it is acid sensitive. The acid is reacting with the calcium in the stone. This means that products containing any amount of acid will etch the surface of the stone, all stones will eventually be affected by acid but sensitive stones will be damaged in seconds. Damaged stones will result in a rough area on your flooring, which will gather dirt and become unsightly; it can only be removed by diamond grinding the surface

\* NOTE: PHS InterClean will not be held responsible for any problems that may occur, the above is only as an indicative guide

# maintenance & damage prevention

## **What is Diamond Grinding?**

No matter how well a stone floor is maintained, it will require to be re-ground at some point to eradicate the signs of wear, tear and scuffs. Diamond grinding is similar to sanding a wood floor; it's simply removing the damaged layer of the floor and then re-finishing it. Diamond grinding should only be carried out by specialists. Once the grinding process is completed, the flooring will need to be released.

## **Cleaning treatments to use and avoid**



There are so many cleaning treatment products on the market today it can make choosing the right one harder than it needs to be. Here's a brief guide to help you understand what product you should be using for your stone floor and equally what products you should be avoiding.



## did you know?

PHS InterClean use the latest equipment and techniques for polishing and diamond grinding floors, restoring all kinds of stone floors; Terrazzo, Marble, Limestone, Travertine, Granite and Sandstone.

[www.phsinterclean.co.uk](http://www.phsinterclean.co.uk)

floor type	treatment	use 	avoid 
Natural Stone: Granite Limestone Sandstone	Detergents	Neutral detergents Alkaline detergents Abrasive powders	Oily Materials
Quartzite Slate	Detergents	Detergent Crystals Solvent-based detergents	
	Floor Seals	Generally none, but some water based seals can be used on some floors if necessary	Solvent-based seals
	Floor Waxes	Generally none, but water emulsion floor waxes can be used if necessary	Solvent-based waxes
Terrazo Marble	Detergents	Neutral detergents Mild alkaline detergents Mild abrasive powders	Strong alkaline detergents Detergent crystals Solvent-based detergents Oily materials
	Floor Seals	Water-based seals	Solvent-based seals Silicate dressing
	Floor Waxes	None	Solvent-based waxes and water emulsion floor waxes

# professional restoration

Below references all the cleaning and restorative procedures available for stone flooring:

## Crystallization & Vitrification

- These methods use a chemical which reacts with the stone, hardening it and allowing a gloss finish to be produced. This is done with a low speed rotary machine and is usually carried out periodically where a high gloss finish is required
- It will remove light scratches and improve the shine on the floor, but to remove deep scratches and restore a high gloss finish, diamond grinding must be carried out
- These procedures are not complex but care should be taken and they are usually performed by specialist contractors

## Sealant options

- **Surface Seal** – A surface seal creates an impervious barrier to the surface of the stone. The main advantage of a surface seal is that it protects the stone from virtually any type of staining and wear, with the exception of strong acids. The main disadvantage with a surface seal is that it can change the appearance of the stone

- **Impregnating Seal** – This type of seal impregnates the stone, soaking it and leaving behind particles which change the absorption properties of the stone. The main advantage of an impregnator is that it causes very little change to the appearance of the stone, whilst providing a high degree of stain resistance. Impregnating sealant needs to be applied by professionals. If it's applied incorrectly it will offer little or no protection

## Stain removal

- If a stain cannot be removed using your usual daily maintenance product, then specialist advice should be sought as a more complex process (diamond grinding for instance), may need to be carried out on the stone

## get the right advice

If you're looking for a dedicated professional survey on your stone flooring, PHS InterClean offer a comprehensive cleaning plan which includes professional restoration and daily maintenance schedules for your cleaners.

[www.phsinterclean.co.uk](http://www.phsinterclean.co.uk)



wood floor care

# maintenance and restoration

Wood offers a beautiful and hard wearing floor covering. When properly maintained, wood floors are simple to clean and look fantastic for many years.

Adopt an effective maintenance regime for your wood flooring:

## **Barrier matting – your floor’s first line of defence!**

Barrier matting positioned at entrances can be very effective in protecting your floor where there is a concentrated level of footfall. The mat should be large enough to allow for six steps, preventing dirt from being trampled onto the floor. Barrier matting should be regularly cleaned and any dirt particles removed.

## **Daily dry cleaning**

Floors should be cleaned daily using a vacuum, scissor mop or soft broom. Take care to remove abrasive particles of grit and dirt which may scratch the floor seal.

## **Damp cleaning**

Soluble dirt should be removed as soon as possible using mop and bucket (being careful not to over-wet the floor), or for larger areas a spray buff system or scrubber drier should be used. Coarse pads should be avoided to prevent damage to the floor.



# maintenance and restoration

## Professional restoration

Over time, the seal on a timber floor can wear through, and the bare wood becomes exposed leaving the floor vulnerable to damage. As such, it will be necessary to re-finish sealed floors periodically, to prevent against wear.

## Top up seals – The process

The wood floor should be scrubbed to remove dirt and the top layers of seal and any scratches. The new seal is applied to avoid the much longer and more expensive sanding process.

## Why should I apply a top up seal?

A wood floor that is periodically screened and re-sealed will provide a long lifespan. This offers a fast and non-intrusive method of maintenance and ensures the wood floor is protected at all times.

## Full restoration – for heavily worn wood floors

When a wood floor is badly scratched or the seal has worn through, it requires a complete restoration process. This involves repairing sections as required and sanding the wood floor through progressively finer

grades until a final seal is applied. The results from sanding a floor can be quite amazing. This is a specialist job and ensure the contractor you use has the latest 99% filtration sanders, or the clear up job can be as long as the sanding one!



Did you know PHS Interclean offers a variety of commercial wood floor services including:

- Wood floor cleaning
- Wood floor sanding
- Wood floor restoration services
- Wood floor finishing
- Wood floor sealing
- Wood floor staining
- Parquet floor restoration

and use only the best products available to ensure the end result of a beautiful, long lasting wood floor!

[www.phsinterclean.co.uk](http://www.phsinterclean.co.uk)



hard floor care

# the essential facts

**Hard flooring includes coverings such as ceramic tiles, linoleum, vinyl and safety flooring. Advances in both cleaning products and equipment, has made the maintenance of hard floors more and more straight forward.**

However, there are a few things to consider when adopting a cleaning regime for your hard floor, as a straight forward strip and seal can have a few hidden problems:

- Is there a large build up of polish? If there is, this can take a lot of time and effort to remove
- Is the floor uneven? Uneven floors can make the removal of polish very difficult in certain areas. If the adhesive was slightly dry when the floor was laid, trowel marks can begin to show through after time
- If left unsealed, Vinyls and Linoleum will wear quickly and be prone to scratching and scuffing

Adopt an effective maintenance regime for your hard flooring:

## **Dry cleaning**

Floors should be cleaned daily to remove all abrasive particles from the floor using a vacuum, scissor mop or soft broom.

## **Damp cleaning**

Soluble dirt should be removed as soon as possible using a mop and bucket or for larger areas a spray buff system or scrubber drier. Coarse pads should be avoided to prevent damage to the floor.

# professional restoration

## Deep cleaning

Over time, through neglect or poor maintenance, soiling builds up and hard floors can start to look unsightly. A thorough deep clean by professional cleaners will remove the ingrained dirt and return the floor to a high standard of appearance.

## Strip and seal

This type of service is mainly used on linoleum and vinyl floors, as these flooring types usually require the application of a surface seal to protect the floor and add to its appearance. Over time, the seal becomes worn and should be replaced to prevent damage occurring to the material. The old seal is removed using a stripping product, before the floor is cleaned and a surface seal reapplied. Strip and seal should be carried out by professional cleaners on a periodic basis, to ensure the floor is fully protected at all times.



PHS Interclean's hard floor cleaning services are tailored to each flooring type and include:

- Ceramic tile cleaning
- Linoleum floor cleaning
- Vinyl floor cleaning
- Safety floor cleaning

As part of our floor cleaning services we also provide training for your onsite cleaning staff to ensure the daily maintenance and cleaning procedures are suited to achieving the best results for the flooring type.

[www.phsinterclean.co.uk](http://www.phsinterclean.co.uk)

# PHS Interclean: the floorcare experts

The skill of floor cleaning and restoration is not as simple as just using a mop, bucket or vacuum cleaner, and we hope that this guide has gone someway to providing you with helpful advice on how to maintain and restore your floors effectively and eliminate any unnecessary expenditure! With over 10 years experience, PHS Interclean are the specialists in floor care for all types of environments including hotels, stations and airports, offices, schools, retail sites and more.

## Services

PHS Interclean has grown from a small, family owned company to a division of the PHS Group, one of the UK's leading workplace service providers. We still offer the same exacting standards and service that the business was built upon, but now have the capacity and geographic coverage of a large organisation. We offer a nationwide service, carried out by our own dedicated, professional technicians and never sub-contract work, meaning we never compromise on either service or quality.

So whether you have a single site or multiple sites across the UK, you can be assured that you and your floors will receive the highest quality service, with all cleaning carried out at a time which is convenient to your site providing minimum disruption. We also offer that little bit extra by not only providing you with a complete floor care service through our professional floor cleaning services, but also by advising your on-site staff about the right methods and products to use on a daily basis.

For more information about PHS Interclean floor cleaning and restoration services, please get in touch

Call: **029 2080 9090**

Email: **[productinfo@phs.co.uk](mailto:productinfo@phs.co.uk)**

Web: **[www.phsinterclean.co.uk](http://www.phsinterclean.co.uk)**



“

PHS Interclean have supplied Pennyhill Park with a number of floor cleaning services, for both our wood and stone floors. With each job I've been delighted with the work, as the floors have looked brand new and we've received a professional service throughout the process. I'm confident that InterClean can undertake any job we require for the floors at Pennyhill Park and will continue to use them, I give them my full recommendation!

”

Ian Odenhall, Pennyhill Park Hotel & Spa





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