



Do All Carpet Cleaning Methods Produce the Same Results?

All methods of carpet cleaning require the use of water except the “powdered” dry compound method. References to “dry” carpet cleaning simply mean less wet and this may or may not be true based on how the carpet is cleaned. Do all carpet cleaning results produce the same results? You decide:

Dry Foam: Even though the name implies it, dry “foam” does not involve complete dryness although it does have low moisture that is 90% air and 10% liquid (shampoo). The dry foam machine consists of a pressure tank in which a solution of water and shampoo is added. There are very few “dry foam” carpet cleaners and as you can guess, the foam will attract re-soiling dirt to your carpet because it’s hard to extract even if rinsed. Not a good idea for your carpeting.

Bonnet Cleaning: After club soda mixed with cleaning product or an “encapsulation” product is sprayed onto the carpet surface as a mist, a round cotton material buffer or "bonnet" under a floor scrubbing machine scrubs the mixture with a rotating motion. To reduce pile distortion, the absorbent pad should be kept well-lubricated with cleaning solution. This method can amount to the soil being “moved around” rather than extracted. The idea is to get the dirt into the pad and the pad is rinsed in a bucket of clear (at least initially) water. Again, not a good idea for dirty carpets.

Shampoo Cleaning: Shampooing was used up unto the 1970’s. A shampoo brush under a floor scrubbing machine would create a foam when mixed with carpet shampoo. The suds supposedly attracted the dirt particles up out of the carpet and the dried residue would later be vacuumed up by the customer. This is why people today still ask, do I need to vacuum my carpet when the carpet is dry? Again, carpet and foam cleaners are not a good match and shampooing is one reason why people still say “I waited to get my carpet cleaned because I know it will re-soil faster after it is cleaned.” Yes, that shampoo residue attracted dirt. If the carpet is rinsed with a steam cleaner, this produces better results.

Encapsulation Cleaning: In the 1990s, new polymers were found to encapsulate (crystallize) soil particles into dry residues on contact, working like "tiny sponges". An encapsulation cleaning solution is applied by rotary machine, brush applicator, or compression sprayer. Dry encapsulated residue is then vacuumed immediately, either separately or from a built-in unit of the cleaning-

system machine. Again, having to vacuum after cleaning sounds like shampoo cleaning. Seems like an old idea with new chemical technology. Still not the best way to get your carpets cleaned.

Host or Capture Powder: These powered chemicals have been around for decades and an operator sprinkles them on your carpet and used a machine similar to a deep scrubbing vacuum to extract the powder and loosened soil out of the carpet. The advantage promoted by this method operator is that the carpet is dry and ready for use after the cleaning is done. The powder may not be all extracted and is not good for your carpet just like powered deodorizers. With modern fan and dryer technology, carpet can be dried is as little as an hour after they've been steam cleaned.

Steam Cleaning - Portable: Portable steam cleaning units often lack three essential ingredients for a great carpet cleaning experience. They are water heat, water pressure and high level vacuum. Although heat aids in cleaning effectiveness and quicker drying time, the amount of vacuum is the main reason dirt is extracted and the carpet dries quickly. Portable units vary greatly in size and efficiency and a top of the line unit can produce some fairly decent results.

These units are usually loud, use your electricity and take longer to clean carpets because of set up time, perhaps having to dump water, which is down time and because they're less efficient, the operator needs to scrub more. The cost to operate a portable is less than a Truck Mount so usually those who use them charge less to clean your carpet.

Steam Cleaning - Truck Mounted

This method of carpet cleaning can either be the wettest or driest method of carpet cleaning depending on the equipment and operator used. Its real name is Hot Water Extraction. Truck Mounted Steam Cleaning is a deeper cleaning similar to washing and rinsing your clothes in a washing machine as compared to spraying a chemical on your clothes and wiping them down with a wet towel (similar to the above methods).

Carpet manufacturers recommend that you clean your carpets once a year with Hot Water Extraction. Even if you use any of the above methods, even they will tell you to have your carpet rinsed with a good truck mounted steam cleaning.

Please note that not all truck mounts are the same and even good ones may not be working properly when it's used on your carpet. Some entry level truck mounts and operators can leave your carpet very wet and not as clean as it could be.

Now most of you won't do this, but to find out what a carpet cleaner uses, either ask or go to their website. Get the name of the unit and company that made it and then Google it. You'll get a whole better picture of what's being used if you do.

We have a video of the carpet cleaning unit we use on our website. We believe this statement

says it all about carpet cleaning methods: “Many carpet manufacturers recommend professional hot water extraction as the most preferred carpet cleaning method.

**Call A. Andrews and Sons Professional for Truck Mounted Steam Cleaning at (951) 805-8585
www.aaasons.com**