

Basic Care of Your Oriental Rug

Here are some simple rules of thumb for proper care of your fine Oriental rug. In general, Oriental rugs are very durable and when properly cared will last for generations. If you take these few simple steps, you can make your investment last and look beautiful throughout its life.

Keep your rug clean

Dirt is the worst enemy of fine Oriental rugs. Dirt is abrasive, and when it gets packed into the base of the knots it will actually cut off the fibers from the pile. We recommend vacuuming your rug at least weekly. Your vacuum should have an agitator or beater bar, set so that it beats the surface lightly. Excessive pressure of the beater bar can cause extra wear. Every few years you should have your rug professionally cleaned. Proper cleaning removes all dirt that has collected in the rug, restores the original colors of the rug, and rehydrates the wool in dry climates.

Walk on your rug

Oriental rugs are made to be walked on. In the East, most people remove their shoes when they enter a home, leaving the dirt on their shoes outside. In the West, we generally don't do this, so timely cleaning becomes essential. Rubber soled shoes are hard on rugs and tear at the wool fibers, wearing them prematurely. Bare feet or stocking feet are best for the rugs whenever possible. Walking on the rug massages the lanolin through the wool, giving the rug a beautiful luster. It also discourages moths from laying eggs on the rug.

Mothproof areas

Moths look for dark, moist places to lay their eggs. It is actually the larvae which do the damage to any wool garment or rug, not the moths themselves. Your professional Oriental rug cleaners would spray a colorless, odorless solution that discourages the moths from laying eggs on any susceptible areas. Whenever a wool rug is hung on the wall it needs to be mothproofed.

Protect your rug from sunlight

Harsh, direct and constant sunlight can fade a rug. In and of itself this may not be a bad thing, but many rugs get exposed to sunlight unevenly, causing fading only on part of the rug.

Turn your rug 180 degrees in the room periodically to avoid uneven fading. This also helps your rugs wear more evenly.

Blot up spills with clear cold water

Spills and stains are an inevitable part of a rug's life. You should clean spills immediately, as many drinks can permanently dye the rug. Blot up the spill with a fresh towel, and use a little clear cold water to dilute the stain. Keep rinsing (not too much water) and blotting until the stain is gone. If someone spills milk on the rug, it is probably a good idea to have the rug professionally cleaned, as the milk can sour and leave an unpleasant odor. Coffee, red wine, blood, and dark sodas can all leave permanent stains, so get to them as quickly as possible. If you have a "wet/dry" vacuum you can use it to suck out excess water from the rug.

Pet stains

Our beloved pets sometimes have "accidents". Urine is particularly bad about staining, because it is acidic. Also, left untreated, urine will leave an odor that is very hard to remove. For urine stains, use the same procedure as above, but be sure to rinse thoroughly.

Repair any damage quickly

Most repairs are very simple when they first appear. Attend to any tears or damage quickly. We find that oftentimes people will procrastinate a simple repair on a rug. Left unattended, many simple repairs become major repairs.

These cleaning tips are merely suggestions and no guarantee implied.



Woven Treasures Calendar 2018

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