

ANIMAL STAINS

Dogs, cats, and other household pets can wreak havoc on oriental and other specialty area rugs. The often clandestine interactions between pet and rug can result in permanent staining, dye bleed, foundation dry rot, strong objectionable odors, and an overall unhealthy environment. Pet stains typically come in three varieties; urine, feces, and vomit.

Pet urine can present several issues. Staining can occur from pigments in the urine. The most common is urochrome which gives urine its yellow color. Staining can occur on contact and can be influenced by age, diet, and any medications the animal may be taking. Urine, especially if not cleaned, can also affect the dye structure sometimes causing a slight bleaching effect in addition to destabilizing the dyes resulting in color bleed. If enough urine is present and is left unattended dry rot, a fungal disease which causes cellulose to become brittle and crumble into powder, can occur. Cotton, which provides the foundation yarns of most oriental rugs, is primarily cellulose.

When a fresh accident is discovered quickly blot up all liquid with cotton or paper towels. White toweling is preferred but any towel that doesn't impart color to the rug is acceptable. Follow with a small amount of cold water and blot thoroughly. If necessary a solution of 1/2 teaspoon of dishwashing detergent with one cup cold water may be applied to the area and then blotted. Follow with a solution of 1/3 cup white distilled vinegar with 2/3 cup cold water and blot. Cover the area with a thick towel or several thin towels, weight down with phone book or magazines and allow 8 hours to dry. The weighted towel will continue to absorb moisture from the rug. If the top layer of towel appears wet more towels will need to be added to the top. Make sure not to disturb the bottom layer.

Pet feces are typically easier to deal with than urine. Solid deposits can be removed with paper towel or plastic bag. Clean the area with a solution of 1/2 teaspoon of dishwashing detergent with one cup cold water and blot. Rinse with water and blot.

For loose feces or diarrhea scrape up all that is possible and then blot. It is important to remove as much as possible before adding any cleaner. Clean area with above detergent solution, blot, then rinse with water and blot. Do small areas (3" circles) at a time to prevent spreading. If the areas are large professional cleaning is recommended. Contact your ARCS cleaner.

Pet vomit should be treated the same as feces. Due to food dyes and stomach acids staining can easily occur. Contact your ARCS cleaner.

Please note that the use of any cleaner including water may cause color bleed and/or texture distortion. It is recommended to test all cleaners in an inconspicuous area to determine suitability.

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