

## **A Customer's Guide to selecting a PROFESSIONAL CARPET CLEANING COMPANY . . .**

### **Choosing a good carpet cleaner isn't easy!**

Carpets are still considered to be a major purchase, so it makes sense to carry out regular carpet care and to employ the services of professional carpet cleaners to extend the life of your carpet. Carpets get dirty from the bottom up, so if your carpet looks dirty on the surface then it is filthy at the base of the pile. Regular carpet care will keep your carpets in good condition. However, having your carpet professionally cleaned regularly will flush out all the impurities that lay deep in the pile, out of reach of the average domestic vacuum cleaner.

Choosing a good company is not easy because we are being bombarded with misleading advertising, confusing claims and simply bad information from silly low prices to unqualified, un-insured technicians with inadequate machinery and cheap chemicals.

There are also plenty of do-it-yourself cleaning methods on the market. You can buy or rent a cleaning machine, or get down on your hands and knees and do it manually with a carpet cleaning powder, foam shampoo or liquid spray from the supermarket. While this is the least expensive option, it will require a bit of elbow grease and the moving of furniture.

If you're not the furniture-shifting and machine-renting type why not make it easy on yourself by hiring a professional to do the dirty work. This may turn out to be the safest, fastest and easiest option after all.

After being in this business for several years, we've pretty much seen it all. . From Mansions to Bedsits, we've been there and got the T shirt. A few years ago I realised something was going very wrong in the industry. Everyone seemed really confused about the best way to clean a carpet and who you could trust to clean it for you.

So I decided to take action and clear things up for the residents of Leicestershire by exposing the misinformation touted by cowboys and outright conmen in the carpet cleaning industry. Has this made me popular? Certainly not with some carpet cleaners, but this information is too important to hide away.

### **Caution Advised**

Tread carefully into the professional carpet-cleaning arena. All is not always as it seems, and choosing the wrong company may leave you with more than just winter-weary floor coverings. People don't always realise the value of a sound, honest and knowledgeable carpet cleaning professional. It's very important to ask the right questions and do the research to save yourself from future headaches."



# MISTER CLEANER

## **How do you ever find a competent, certified, professional carpet cleaner?**

In this fact-filled report, you will discover how to avoid the “rip offs” and mistakes so many people make when trying to choose a carpet cleaner. It will also give you a better understanding and enable you to make a more informed decision. Here’s a checklist of questions to ask before you let them into your home:

### **DO THEY GUARANTEE THEIR WORK?**

We offer a 100% Money Back Satisfaction Guarantee!! We do not want any of our clients to feel they have paid us without being completely satisfied by our service.

### **ARE THEY FULLY TRAINED?**

They may not have had correct training in carpet & upholstery care and cleaning methods. Would you let an unqualified technician work on your car? Demand to see their qualification certificate.

### **ARE THEY FULLY INSURED?**

We are insured up to £1million and we can show you our documentation.

### **HOW MANY STAGES DO THEY USE IN THEIR CLEANING PROCESS?**

We use seven. . . Dry Vac, Pre Spotting, Pre-Spray, Agitation, High Pressure Hot Water Extraction, Grooming and Rapid Air Flow.

### **WHAT SYSTEMS DO THEY USE?**

We use Hot Water Extraction, the most highly recommended method of cleaning by the world’s largest carpet manufacturers such as Shaw Industries and DuPont.

We have invested in the most powerful portable machine on the market. Not only does it leave your carpets “standing tall” again, it leaves them practically dry.

### **DO THEY USE TOP QUALITY & SAFE PRODUCTS?**

You can rest assured we use only the safest highest quality products available. Whether your concern is Wool, Babies or Pets, our solutions are completely safe. Most importantly, whatever solution or spotting chemical we use on your furnishings we always rinse with an acidic solution after.

### **DO THEY GUARANTEE TO REMOVE ALL STAINS?**

No certified carpet cleaning professional will guarantee to remove a stain, regardless of how “innocent” it may appear. Like on clothes, some stains are permanent. We can however remove or improve most stains with our extensive range of stain removal solutions.

### **CAN THEY SHOW YOU HANDWRITTEN TESTIMONIALS?**

You wouldn’t believe it - some companies actually make their own references up! We have been privileged to clean for some of the most well-known local businesses as well as “us ordinary folk” and some of these people have been kind enough to put their names and comments down on paper to show you their thoughts of our excellent service.



***If you don't get straight answers from the questions on the previous page, then the company you are talking to may be someone using the tactics in our next article:***

## **HOW TO AVOID BEING "RIPPED OFF!"**

Sadly, like many industries nowadays, carpet cleaning has had its fair share of "cowboys" and their scams. Be cautious of any company that appears on your doorstep uninvited or contacts you out of the blue over the phone. Also, be wary of companies that advertise a cleaning price by the room. Rooms are different sizes and the charge should be based on the amount of carpet cleaned,

The two most popular doing the "rounds" at the moment are Bait & Switch and the Splash & Dash. A company based in the South was shown using these methods on BBC's Watchdog program.

### **Bait & Switch**

You get a leaflet through your door advertising carpet cleaning at ridiculously low prices, i.e. a lounge cleaned for £20 or a whole house for £100. (we've even seen one for only £9 a room) **This is the Bait!**

You ring and book them to do the job. They arrive and start cleaning straight away. No inspection and survey. No pre-vacuuming (which is a must) and no written confirmation of the price.

### **Now the Switch.**

Once they've made your carpet wet they point out that furniture must be moved (extra charge) traffic lanes are very dirty and need a double clean (extra charge) spot clean (extra charge) and so on.

When the work has been done (badly) you are presented with your invoice, including the extras. Your £20 carpet has now become £200 and I'm afraid people pay them. The biggest surprise? (Not) it's nearly always the elderly they target.

### **Splash & Dash**

As the name suggests, they're in and out before you know it. It is similar to bait & switch, but this time they just want to clean as much as they can in as little time as possible and move on to the next job.

Splash & Dash is a carpet cleaning industry term for unprofessional, untrained and usually uninsured "carpet cleaners" with non-professional equipment and cleaning solutions, limiting the cleaning results and potentially damaging/shrinking your carpets in the process.

A cheap clean could result in major damage to your furnishings that would cost you more in the long run. Best to play safe and get a professional in to do the job for you.



## FIVE COSTLY MISCONCEPTIONS

### **You should wait as long as possible to have your carpets cleaned!**

**No**, dirt is an abrasive, like sandpaper. Every time you step on it you grind and rub the dirt into the fibres. The longer you wait to have your carpets cleaned, the more damage you do and it will wear much faster.

### **The only reason to clean carpets is to remove dirt!**

**No**, dirt is only one of the reasons for cleaning. Outdoor air contains pollens, fungus, bacteria, pollution and hundreds of other chemicals. When you come indoors, you carry these things in your hair, on your shoes and on your clothing. Not surprisingly, these things end up on your furnishings and in your carpets.

Did you know that many allergies and breathing problems stem from home? Did you also know that there is now an anti-allergen protector on the market that practically eliminates Dust Mites from your carpets?

### **One carpet cleaning method is as good as another!**

No! There are two main cleaning methods, Hot Water Extraction and Dry cleaning but one is far more effective than the other. **The least effective way of cleaning is using the Dry Cleaning method.** This is where dry chemicals, foam or compound are used to clean your carpet, but it is not rinsed in any way. (would you clean your hair without rinsing it out after?)

Dry compound is spread on your carpet and then machine brushed into it before being removed. This method is effective, but can cause damage to the fibres. Would you run a stiff brush through your lovely carpets? The only reason Dry Cleaning should be used is if you have natural carpeting such as Coir, Sisal etc. this method is paramount as wet cleaning will cause damage.

Have a look through your local Yellow Pages directory and see how many carpet cleaners use this Dry Cleaning technique. In Leicestershire, it's about 2% or so. If the Dry Cleaning system is that good, why aren't we all using it?

### **This leaves us with the most effective cleaning method - HOT WATER EXTRACTION!**

The basic principle of this system is that a pre-treatment is applied to the vacuumed carpet by hand held sprayer and agitated with a hand pile brush. After a short period of dwell time, a rinsing solution is then sprayed into the carpet fibres through a series of spray jets at very high pressure.

This loosens the soiling which is then sucked back into the machine by a powerful vacuum shoe immediately behind the jets into a waste recovery tank. The power of the machine being used determines the cleanliness and dryness of your carpets, and this method is the most effective carpet cleaning procedure, but **ONLY** when used by certified, professional carpet cleaners!



## **Always hire the cheapest company!**

You and I are probably quite similar. . . We both like finding a bargain, and what appears to be a “great deal” can sometimes be hard to resist. But be warned . . . for some things in life, buying cheap isn’t always best because if things go wrong, the consequences are not pleasant. Would you let a bloke from the pub cut your hair if it was 50% cheaper than a professional? So why do the same with your carpets/furnishings!

## **An honest carpet cleaner should be able to give me a price over the phone!**

I wish this were true, but it isn’t. Honest, reputable carpet cleaning companies almost never price by the room. Instead, carpet cleaning is usually priced by the square foot or metre. (If they’re guessing your room sizes, what else are they guessing?) To get an exact price each area needs to be measured exactly before considering other additional factors such as:

- (a) The type of carpet. Certain types of carpet are harder to clean than others.
- (b) The amount of soiling. Carpet that hasn’t been cleaned for 10 years will take longer than a carpet that was cleaned within the last year.
- (c) Stain removal. If there are stains that will need treating separately certain chemicals will be needed and you need to establish how long it may take for the stain to be removed.
- (d) The amount of furniture needed to be moved.  
Then, and only then, a written quotation should be given with the exact full price you would have to pay.

## **Conclusion**

We do hope you have found this comprehensive guide to choosing a carpet cleaner informative. Our aim is to point out certain pitfalls that people have suffered and hopefully stopping you from making those same mistakes. There are many fine carpet cleaners out there and if we, in some small way can put more trust in our profession, then we are glad to be of service.

If all you want is a cheap carpet freshen up and you’re not particularly bothered about the results, just check the “small ad’s” in your local paper. There are plenty of companies who can help.

We all value our homes. Wouldn’t it be great if we could save money by making our carpets and furnishings last longer? If you would like to know the benefits of a “deep clean” and a healthy home please contact us... 0800 6101891

This free advice has been given as a service to the public. The intent is to offer accurate, verified and science-based information on carpet cleaning. While we have made an effort to ensure the quality of the content and credibility of sources listed, we provide no guarantee whether expressed or implied and assume no legal liability for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information or process disclosed on or in conjunction with our website.

