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EC86-418 Upholstered Furniture Care : Cleaning and Stain Removal

Shirley Niemeyer

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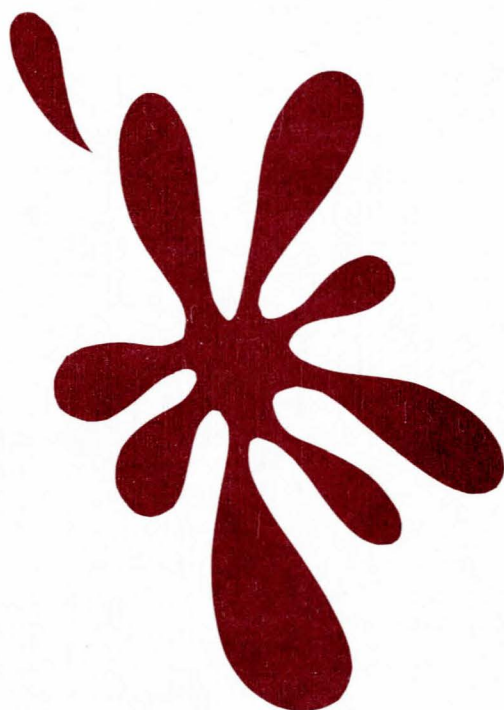
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Upholstered Furniture Care *Cleaning and Stain Removal*



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Upholstered Furniture Care - Cleaning And Stain Removal

Shirley Niemeyer
Extension Specialist
Interior Design/Home Furnishings

Does your favorite upholstered chair or sofa look like a mustard, catsup, soft drink and ink collage?

Upholstered furniture is a major investment in your home. Your investment should give you years of service and enjoyment. To make the most of your upholstered furniture, care for it properly.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Upholstery fabrics require maintenance to keep their attractive appearance. The following procedures will help postpone overall cleaning and assure better results when the time comes:

Regular vacuuming of fabrics helps slow the soiling process. Vacuum to remove soil before it works its way into the fibers and padding below. Use an upholstery and crevice attachment. Avoid using a stiff fiber or metal brush; it may damage the fabric. Reverse the seat and back cushions each time they are vacuumed.

Remove spots immediately. The longer they remain, the harder they are to get out.

Use matching protector pieces for arms and headrests to prevent excessive soiling. If protector pieces are not supplied by the manufacturer, you may want to order extra fabric pieces when purchasing furniture.

Avoid removing zippered cushion covers. Zippers are installed by the manufacturer for a better fit, and the covers are not made to be removed for cleaning. If cleaned separately, covers can shrink, become distorted, and the mechanical action can cause seams to fray.

FURNITURE CLEANABILITY LABELS

Some manufacturers have adopted the uniform standards for furniture cleanability developed by a joint industry committee. Use of these standards is voluntary. If used, each fabric will be marked with a code that indicates the appropriate cleaning method. The code may be printed on fabric samples, on a label under seat cushions and/or on hang tags.

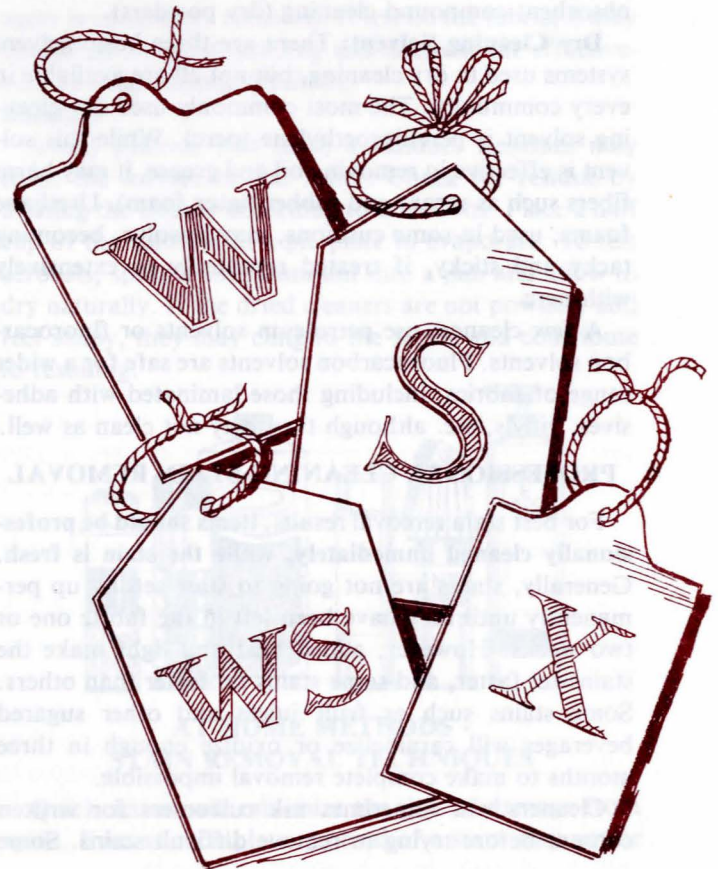
W - Use Water-based Cleaner. Spot clean, using the foam only of a water-based cleaning agent, such as a mild detergent or commercial non-solvent upholstery shampoo. Use sparingly and avoid over-wetting. Apply foam with a soft brush in a circular motion. Vacuum when dry.

S - Use Solvent Cleaner. Spot clean with a mild, water-free, solvent or dry cleaning product available in local stores. Use sparingly in a well-ventilated room. **CAUTION:** Use of water-based solvent cleaners may cause spotting and/or excessive shrinking.

W - S - Use Water-Based or Solvent Cleaner. Either of the above methods may be used.

X - Vacuum Only. Clean this fabric only by vacuuming or light brushing to prevent accumulation of dust and grime. Water-based foam or solvent-based cleaning agents of any kind may cause excessive shrinking, fading, or spotting, or affect the pile.

Cleanability codes can help in selecting a furniture fabric for your needs and provide assistance in its continued care. If the voluntary codes are not present on a label, ask the sales person to help you locate care information from the manufacturer or distributor.



PROFESSIONAL OR AT HOME CLEANING?

Consumers have a choice of sending furniture needing overall cleaning to a business that specializes in upholstery cleaning, having a professional come into the home to clean the furniture, or attempting to clean the furniture themselves.

Sources such as the International Fabricare Institute and the National Association of Furniture Manufacturers recommend that overall upholstery cleaning should be left to the professional.

Compare the costs, advantages and disadvantages of cleaning the item yourself with those of professional cleaning services. Include your time and energy, cost of products, and the cost of re-upholstering or replacing the fabric should damage occur. The services of a qualified professional may be more economical.

PROFESSIONAL OVERALL CLEANING

Because of the various fabrics and materials used for outer coverings, stuffings and paddings, the professional upholstery cleaner must adapt methods to the item to be cleaned. In addition to wet and dry solvents, detergents and brushes, the professional may have equipment to remove surface soil, apply the cleaning solution to the fabric, remove it quickly, and dry it thoroughly.

Basic cleaning procedures include wet cleaning and dry cleaning procedures. Wet cleaning procedures include, among others, hot water extraction (steam cleaning), foam, and shampoo. Dry cleaning procedures use solvents and includes as examples, dry extraction and absorbent compound cleaning (dry powders).

Dry Cleaning Solvent: There are three basic solvent systems used in dry cleaning, but not all are available in every community. The most commonly used dry cleaning solvent is perchloroethylene (perc). While this solvent is effective in removing oil and grease, it may harm fibers such as saran, and rubber (latex foam). Urethane foams, used in some cushions, may dissolve, becoming tacky and sticky, if treated repeatedly or extensively with perc.

A few cleaners use petroleum solvents or fluorocarbon solvents. Fluorocarbon solvents are safe for a wider range of fabrics, including those laminated with adhesives, vinyls, etc. although they may not clean as well.

PROFESSIONAL CLEANING-STAIN REMOVAL

For best stain removal results, **items should be professionally cleaned immediately, while the stain is fresh.** Generally, stains are not going to start setting up permanently until they have been left in the fabric one or two weeks. However, added heat and light make the stains set faster, and some stains set faster than others. Some stains such as fruit juices and other sugared beverages will caramelize or oxidize enough in three months to make complete removal impossible.

Cleaners will sometimes ask customers for written consent before trying to remove difficult stains. Some

textile products are so sensitive to spotting agents that dye bleeding, color change, or damage to the finish is unavoidable. Complete stain removal in these types of items may be impossible.

You can make some stain removal more difficult for professionals by leaving the stain in the item too long before taking it to the professional, applying heat to the stain, or applying the wrong agent in home spot removal. If unsure about how to remove a stain, ask your local dry cleaner, or upholstery furniture cleaner. They may suggest home removal, pre-treatment steps, or that the stain be left alone and brought in for professional care.

Tell your professional cleaner where any stains are, and which spotting procedures you may have used.

PROBLEMS IN CLEANING AND STAIN REMOVAL

Dye Problems

Stain removal is sometimes difficult or impossible because the fabric contains dyes that are not colorfast. Color changes may occur when water, solvents, mild acid, alkaline, or alcohol products are applied.

If dye transfer or bleeding does occur, it is sometimes impossible to correct because of the nature of the dye.

Invisible Stains

Now you see it, now you don't, now you do! Some stains such as fruit juices, soft drinks, candy, etc. may dry invisibly on items. If the staining product is colorless, it may not be noticed. Months later the stain may reappear because of oxidation. Oil and grease stains may also disappear and reappear later because of oxidation. Heat will cause these stains to reappear even faster. Once they become visible, they can be difficult or impossible to remove.

To avoid problems, tell professional cleaners of all stains on the item, even if you think the stain has been removed or no visible stain resulted.

Backings and Finishes

Fabrics, especially olefin, are sometimes reinforced with a coating on the reverse side. The coating may not be resistant to dry cleaning solvents. Some coatings may be damaged by perchloroethylene but resist petroleum or fluorocarbon solvents used in cleaning.

Fabric finishes, added to items to give body, shine, and other qualities, may also be damaged or removed by cleaning.

Sizings, such as those often found in cotton, rayon and linen, may be disturbed by moisture and dry cleaning solvents. Water and dry cleaning solvents can remove the sizing causing limpness of the fabric and spot cleaning may cause a ring to form. Sizing rings can be very difficult to remove.

Difficult Stains

Some stains are difficult or impossible to remove, even by a professional. Permanent glues, adhesives, and paints, for example, dry quickly and many cannot be removed. Some ball point and felt tip pen inks leave permanent stains.

Chemical Stains

A serious stain appearing more frequently is discoloration caused by chemical ingredients in household products. Medications, fertilizers, some cosmetics, certain plant foods, disinfectants, household cleaners, insecticides, polishes, and bleaches can damage dyes in upholstery fabrics. Generally, nothing can be done to restore the dye to its original color.

Spots can appear suddenly. The chemical stain lies unseen until a change in humidity, temperature, moisture or sunlight activates the chemical reaction. This means that discoloration could result shortly after a textile item is cleaned. Sometimes professional cleaners are falsely suspected of causing these stains.

Benzoyl peroxide is a strong oxidizing and bleaching agent capable of destroying most dyes in upholstery fabrics. Products containing benzoyl peroxide include acne medications, fade or age creams, some foot care preparations and pet shampoos. Benzoyl peroxide stains begin as orange or dark yellow depending on the dyestuff used, and then turn lighter.

As little as one percent hydrochloric acid in solution can cause pink or orange spots. This means vomit, which contains some hydrochloric acid, can cause permanent spots if not promptly removed and/or neutralized.

Urine can cause permanent stains if not promptly removed. Spots caused by urine may be a dull yellow or even red.

AT HOME METHODS - OVERALL CLEANING

If you choose to clean furniture yourself, *read labels and test the product and the process first on an inconspicuous area.* Cleaning products used improperly can alter a fabric's color or texture, cause shrinkage, stains, fabric deterioration, and loss of sizing, or, cause some pile fabrics to mat. Check results again after the fabric has dried.

Suds of a mild detergent and water, commercial foam and liquid shampoo products, and dry powders are available. Overall cleaning with a dry cleaning solvent is not recommended for do-it-yourself cleaning.

Read the cleanability code label, if present first. Cleanability codes S, W, and W-S recommend that professional furniture cleaners be used when an overall soiled condition is reached.

Detergent and Water Shampoo

Make suds of a mild detergent (one containing little or no alkalis or bleaches) and water. Use 1/2 teaspoon of liquid hand dishwashing detergent per quart of warm water. Make suds by squeezing a sponge in the solution or whipping with an egg beater.

Apply suds with a sponge or soft brush, rubbing gently with the grain of the material. Do not saturate the surface. Keep mechanical action to a minimum. Work on a small area at a time, "rinsing" each area with a clean damp sponge. Move on to the next area, overlapping areas to avoid spotting. Change rinse water fre-

quently to keep it clean.

Commercial Shampoos - Water-Based Foams

Water-based commercial aerosol can or foam shampoos are easy to use. They produce a foam, reducing the danger of soaking the fabric which could cause shrinkage or color bleeding. Residue and soil are usually vacuumed off after the upholstery has dried. Thorough vacuuming is important to remove residue. Some cleaners are wiped off. Follow directions on the label.

Commercial Shampoos - Water Based Liquids

Some water-based shampoos come ready to use while others must be diluted according to directions on the label. With some liquid shampoos, the cleaner and soil are wiped off; other cleaners are vacuumed or brushed off when dry. Water extraction carpet cleaning machines with upholstery attachments can be rented. Specific cleaning products are recommended for use with the machine along with instructions. Be sure to test first.

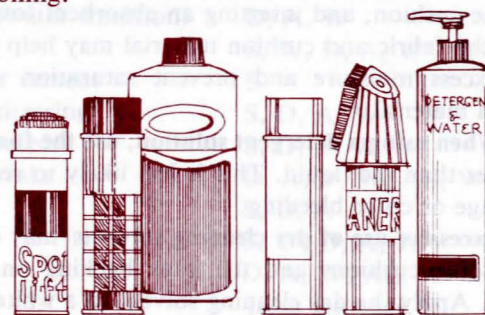
Dry Powder Solvent Cleaners

Dry powder solvent cleaners can be effective on pile fabrics such as velvet. When brushed into the fabric, a solvent begins to loosen soil, which the powder will then absorb. A powerful vacuuming is essential to remove both the powder and the soil. Check the label for safety directions. You may wish to wear a dust mask and gloves when working with the powder. Work in a well ventilated area. Dry powder cleaners usually are appropriate for delicate and non-colorfast upholstered items. They have limited ability in removing heavily embedded soil.

Whichever method you choose, be sure the cleaning agent is completely removed. If left on the fabric, it may contribute to rapid resoiling and decrease the effectiveness of stain-resistant finishes.

Residues

Avoid cleaners that leave a residue. Residues may cause the surface to soil faster. Check for residue by diluting the cleaner according to directions. Place a half cup of the solution in a pie plate to evaporate. To test aerosols, spray a small amount into a pan and allow to dry naturally. If the dried cleaners are not powdery and feel soapy, they may cling to the fabric and contribute to resoiling.



AT HOME METHODS - STAIN REMOVAL TECHNIQUES

Quick action will minimize the risk of damage from spills. Even so, complete removal of a stain may not be

possible. Some staining materials tend to dye the fibers, while others may remove color. In addition, a fabric may be made of two or more different fibers, each one reacting differently to both staining materials and cleaning solutions. Techniques used are as important as the type of cleaner used in removing stains.

To avoid risk of permanent stains, follow these procedures:

1. **Blot liquid spills immediately** with a clean absorbent material. Barely touch the spill with a clean cloth. Do not apply pressure. Scoop or scrape up solid materials with a spoon or dull knife.

2. Refer to the cleanability code on the label (if present) and to the stain removal chart for the appropriate cleaning agents to use. You will find numerous recommendations in various charts and sources. **Pre-test each cleaning agent on an inconspicuous area.** Leave it for a minute and then press white tissue on the spot and hold for 10 seconds. **If the tissue shows any color removal, or color change, or if the fabric shows texture or surface changes, do not use the cleaner.** Wait until the test area has completely dried before proceeding. Even if no damage is immediately evident - ringing or spotting may show up after the cleaning agent has dried. If no change occurs, proceed with caution. Prolonged wetting, chemical actions, and large amounts of solution may produce damage. Contact a professional if the pre-test indicates the procedure will not work for that item. Be especially careful of alcohol, which is more likely as a cleaning agent to produce color change, and it can damage acetate.

3. When using cleaning agents, **do not over-wet.** This can cause discoloration. Apply small amounts to the spot and blot between each application. Be patient, blotting or tamping with a spoon is preferred to rubbing, which may distort the fabric and push the stain further into the fabric and cushion. However, even blotting with a damp cloth could damage a fabric containing water-soluble dye or sizing. Work from outside of the stain toward the center to prevent spreading the stain. Rotate the absorbent material as it picks up stain so the stain is not transferred back to the upholstery. Unzipping the cushion, and inserting an absorbent towel between the fabric and cushion material may help to absorb excess moisture and prevent saturation of the cushion material.

4. **When using a detergent solution, use the foam only** rather than the liquid. This is less likely to result in shrinkage or color bleeding.

5. **Excessive use of dry cleaning solvents** may deteriorate some cushions and the latex backing on some fabrics. Apply the dry cleaning solvent to a white cloth first; use the cloth to blot the stain.

When using a dry cleaning solvent, wear rubber gloves and work in a well ventilated area. Substances in the solvent may be toxic when inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Avoid working in an area where there may be an open flame or chance of sparks.

6. When the recommendation is to use both a dry cleaning solvent and a water-based cleaning agent, **use the solvent first, then the water-based cleaning agent.** Let the solvent evaporate completely before using the water solution.

7. **If stain remains,** try bleaching with hydrogen peroxide. Test first on an inconspicuous area of the fabric. Buy a three percent solution of hydrogen peroxide. Use a diluted solution of one part peroxide to ten parts of water. If not successful, try one part to five parts of water or use the three percent solution at full strength. Stronger solutions may damage the fabric. Apply a drop or two. Wait a few minutes and rinse with water, blotting between applications. Do not use on rust spots because a chemical reaction may destroy the fabric.

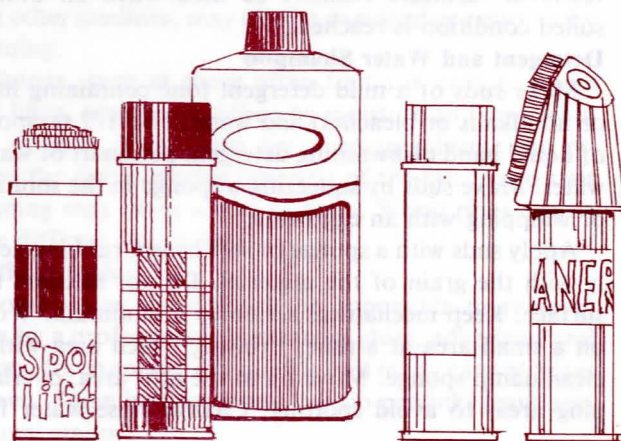
8. After removing the stain, blot well to **soak up excess moisture.** If a water solution was used, place absorbent tissue on the area and weight it down for a few hours. If any soil is present, it will wick up into the tissue rather than remain on the surface of the fabric.

9. You can speed drying by using a fan or hair dryer set at cool. Fast drying helps prevent ring formation. **Avoid applying heat** to a stained area. Brush pile fabrics lightly several times during drying.

10. When all the stain is gone, **be sure chemicals are thoroughly removed.**

11. **If water rings do occur,** moisten the entire stained area with a white vinegar and water solution. Let it stand a few minutes, then sponge the area with water. Dry the spots thoroughly.

12. Successful spot and stain removal requires **patience and persistence.** Repeated applications of solvents in sparing amounts are recommended over hasty applications of too much solvent that can lead to complications from over wetting. Haphazard attempts at spot removal may result in permanent stains or pile distortion. **If in doubt, seek the advice of a professional upholstery cleaner.**



STAIN REMOVAL CHART

CLEANING AGENTS

The following cleaning agents are used in the procedures given in the stain removal chart. Symbols are used to represent the following cleaning agents.

D - Detergent and water solution: Use 1/2 teaspoon liquid hand dishwashing detergent per quart of warm water. Water-based commercial shampoos (liquid or foam) can be also be used.

S - Non-flammable liquid dry cleaning solvent: Dry cleaning solvents may contain the following ingredients: petroleum solvents; petroleum hydrocarbon; petroleum distillate; 1,1,1 trichloroethane; perchloroethylene. Examples of dry cleaning solvents include Carbona®, Energine®, Renuzit®, and SolveOil®, among others.

Caution: Dry cleaning solvents are poisonous and may be flammable. Do not use near open flame, pilot light, or heat source. Store dry cleaning solvent in tightly capped unbreakable containers, out of the reach of children. When using dry cleaning solvents, work outside or in a well ventilated room. Avoid breathing the fumes and use only a small amount at a time.

If you spill dry cleaning solvent on your skin, wash it off immediately. Observe all precautions on the label.

Dry cleaning solvent-based sprays are also available. Test before use to check for ease of removal.

Carbon-Tetrachloride is not recommended for use. It is toxic and has proved fatal under certain conditions. It is no longer readily available.

V - One part white vinegar to one part water.

A - One tablespoon non-sudsy household ammonia to one cup water: Avoid inhaling ammonia fumes. Ammonia will cause burns or irritations if it comes in contact with skin or eyes.

AL - Rubbing alcohol (Isopropyl) Alcohol can affect some dyes.

W - Water

STAIN REMOVAL KIT

Having a stain removal kit on hand can mean quicker attention to spills and fewer permanent stains.

Essential Items

Stain Removal Chart

Dry cleaning Solvent (such as Energine® or Carbona®)

Detergent Solution (1/2 tsp. liquid hand dishwashing detergent per quart of water)

Weak Acid Solution (1 part white vinegar to 1 part water)

Ammonia Solution (1 tablespoon non-sudsing household ammonia to 1 cup water)

Rubbing Alcohol (Isopropyl)

Other Items

Amyl acetate (banana oil - available at drugstores)

Glycerin (available at drugstores)

Bleach (hydrogen peroxide 3%)

How to Use the Chart

To the right of each staining material listed below are the symbols for each cleaning agent in order of use. Always start with the first one and continue working with it as long as the stain is being removed. If this one is effective, stop there. If not, go to the second one.

PRE-TEST.

Stain	Removal Procedure
Acids	W, A, W
Alcoholic beverages	D, W, AL, W
Ammonia	W, V, W
Blood	D, A, V, W
Candle wax	See page 8. _____
Catsup	S, D, A, W
Chewing gum	See page 8. _____
Chocolate	S, D, A, V, W
Coffee and tea	D, V, W, AL, W
Cologne/Perfume	W, D, W, AL, W
Cosmetics	S, D, A, V, W, AL, W
Crayon	S, D
Dyes/Food coloring	S, D, A, V, W, AL, W
Fingernail polish	See page 8. _____
Fruit/Fruit juices	D, V, W, AL, W
Furniture polish or stain	S, D, A, V, W
Glue: Casein/white	D, V, W, AL
Glue: Other	See page 8. _____
Ice cream	S, W, D, A, W
Ink: Ball point	See page 8. _____
Ink: India/felt tip	S, D, A, V, W
Ink: Writing	D, V, W, AL, W, A, W
Lipstick	S, D, A, V, W, AL, W
Meat juice/Gravy	S, D, A, W
Milk with cream	S, D, A, W
Mustard	S, W, D, V, W
Ointment	S, W, D, A, W
Oils (butter, fats)	S, D, A, W
Paint (oil base)	S, D, A, W
Paint (water emulsion)	D, A, W
Pencil	S, W, D, A, W
Rubber cement	S
Salad dressing	S, D, A, W
Shoe polish	S, D, V, W
Soft drinks	D, A, V, W, AL, W
Soot	S, D, A
Tar	S, W, D, A, W
Urine	D, A, W, AL, W (also see page 8.)
Varnish	See page 8. _____
Vomit	D, A, W
Wine/Liquor	D, V, W, AL, W

The type of stain is an indication of the removal procedure to use.

Non-greasy or water-based stains such as soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, fruit juices, etc. are generally removed with a detergent water solution or water. Note also that sugar dissolves in water, but not dry cleaning solvent.

Oil-based stains such as oils, butter, greasy foods are generally removed with a dry cleaning solvent-based cleaner.

Combination stains such as, ice cream, gravy, milk with cream, chocolate, and lipstick are removed with the dry cleaning solvent method first, then a water or detergent water solution.

SPECIAL CLEANING PROBLEMS

Candle Wax Chill with a plastic bag of ice and scrape off as much as possible. Sponge with a dry cleaning solvent until all wax is removed. An alternate method is to cover with paper towels and iron at low temperature. Replace paper towels and continue until no wax melts. Then sponge with dry cleaning solvent.

Chewing Gum Chill with ice for easiest removal. Blot with dry cleaning solvent.

Glue Epoxy glues cannot usually be removed. Glues such as airplane glue or household cement should respond to either a dry cleaning solvent or amyl acetate. First sponge with dry cleaning solvent. Cover with a tissue dampened with the solvent. Keep it moist and blot occasionally. Continue as long as material is being removed. Let it dry. Then apply amyl acetate and cover with tissue, dampened with this solvent. Keep moist for 15 minutes, blotting occasionally. When not working on the stain, keep it covered with an earthenware saucer to minimize evaporation. Finish by sponging with dry cleaning solvent. Solvents are sold for some glues such as instant bond glues. Check with the manufacturer of the glue.

Fingernail Polish To remove fingernail polish use amyl acetate (banana oil), available from drugstores. Ask for the chemically pure type. A non-oil fingernail polish remover is safe for most fabrics unless the

remover contains acetone. Acetone will dissolve acetate fabrics and swell modacrylics. Check the label for ingredients. To be on the safe side, test polish remover first. Dry cleaning solvents will also remove some types of fingernail polish.

Ink (Ball point) Apply lukewarm glycerin, then blot or tamp with a spoon. Keep the stain moist and continue as long as any stain is being removed. Rinse with water. Apply detergent solution with a few drops of ammonia and continue to blot. Remove all cleaning solution with water and blot between applications. Old stains may not be removable. Ball point ink is difficult to remove and can be set by water. Other sources also suggest using alcohol. Methyl and ethyl alcohol are more effective than isopropyl (rubbing alcohol). When using these flammable, hazardous liquids, all precautions should be taken. Test first.

Mildew Gently brush off excess or vacuum the item outdoors. Sponge with a dry cleaning solvent and then water. Sponge with an alcohol solution and allow to dry. Once fibers are damaged by mildew, it may not be possible to restore because weakened fibers will break.

Urine Urine is removable from fabric if worked on within the first few hours, but if it has seeped into the padding, an odor will usually remain. If so, replace the padding. Incomplete removal can cause color change, odor problems and permanent stains. Discoloration is due to a slow reaction of the fabric dye and the urine. Pets tend to revisit the same spot unless the odor is completely removed. Try using a pet repellent in the area after removing the stain. Spots caused by urine may be a dull yellow or even red.

Unknown Stains Sponge with cool water, then detergent and water. Rinse and let dry. If stain remains, sponge with a dry cleaning solvent, then dry. Any remaining stain may respond to hydrogen peroxide treatment.

Varnish Apply dry cleaning solvent and keep the spot damp until it softens. Apply more solvent and blot and continue until no more stain is removed. If stain remains, apply amyl acetate and cover with a pad dampened with this solvent. Keep moist for 15 minutes, blotting occasionally. Continue until no more stain is removed. Sponge with dry cleaning solvent and blot.

CARE OF LEATHER AND VINYL

Leather

In general, there are two types of leather: leather that has a surface coating and leather that has very little surface protection. Most leather produced in the past few years has been specially treated to prevent drying and cracking and requires little care. Treated or surface coated leather simply needs to be dusted with a dry cloth regularly and occasionally cleaned with a solution of mild soap and warm water. Wipe the suds away thoroughly with a clean, damp cloth; then lightly buff the leather with a dry cloth. Avoid use of leather creams, saddle soaps or oil treatments on treated leather unless the manufacturer states that they may be used. They may harm the finish. Most stains can be wiped away with a damp sponge.

Untreated or leathers with limited surface protection can be cleaned by dusting. An art-gum eraser may remove ordinary dirt. The uncoated surface absorbs liquids, and oil substances. Stains may be impossible to remove. Avoid use of strong detergents, furniture polishes or dry cleaning solvents.

Vinyl

Clean vinyl by wiping with a clean damp cloth. For heavier soil, sponge with a warm water and mild detergent solution. Allow the sudsy mixture to maintain contact for a few minutes, then wipe with a damp cloth and polish with a dry one. Do not let the washing solution seep into the upholstery padding. Rinse well and pay special attention to areas in contact with hair oils, such as head rests. Clean these areas frequently, because hair oils and tonic may make vinyls brittle.

Household cleansers may be effective on very soiled vinyl, but you run the risk of damage if these cleansers contain ingredients such as ammonia or chlorine which can cause damage. Abrasive cleansers may also scratch the surface. Dry cleaning solvents can cause the fabric to stiffen and layers to separate. Check labels for products that are "safe for all vinyl". Some special cleaners for automobile upholstery are also safe.

Nail polish and polish remover will damage vinyls permanently if left on the surface. Sponge with synthetic turpentine or mineral spirits. Test first.

Ball point pen marks may be permanent. Try rubbing with alcohol. If this does not work, cover the area with a clean white cloth soaked in a six percent solution of hydrogen peroxide for about 30 minutes. Be sure to test first.

Felt-tip markers will usually leave permanent stains even if wiped up immediately. They may respond to treatment with mineral spirits. Test first.

Vinyls sometimes pick up dyes from colored objects with which they come in contact. Use white cloths for cleaning. After using a cleaning agent, wash and rinse the surface with water.

CARE OF VELVETS

Velvets, a fabric construction technique, can present problems for consumers using at-home methods. Velvets with stain-resistant finishes can usually be spot cleaned with a cloth dampened with water. Rayon velvets can sometimes be spot cleaned with dry cleaning solvents - avoid water. Stain removal products often warn against their use on velvets. Be sure to test for discoloration or pile distortion in a hidden area.

Some adhesives used to make flocked velvet are affected by dry cleaning solvents. And many velvets cannot be cleaned with water-based cleaning agents.

Dry powder cleaners may be used on velvets, but test them first. **Because of possible damage by any spot cleaner, caution is urged in cleaning velvets.** Read labels and pretest all cleaners. If in doubt, consult a professional cleaner.

CONSIDER CARE BEFORE YOU BUY

Some fibers and fabrics are easier to care for than others. If you are buying upholstered furniture, or re-covering what you presently have, **before** you make a decision consider these points.

Color and Design

Light and bright colors tend to show soil readily; whereas soil is less noticeable on colors that contain some grayed values. Patterns camouflage dirt and soil until it can be removed.

Fiber Content and Fabric Structure:

Highly absorbent fibers have a low resistance to staining. Cotton, rayon and acetate have high moisture absorption and require stain resistant finishes for easier care.

Synthetic fibers such as olefin and polyester have low moisture absorption and resist water-borne stains. However, unless treated with a protective finish, most are subject to staining from oily stains.

Generally, the closer the weave and the tighter the yarn twist, the more resistant the fabric will be to soiling. Fabrics with nubby textures, raised designs, and long yarns floating on the surface are more difficult to care for than smooth-surfaced, evenly balanced, woven fabrics. Low-twist yarns have a lower resistance to staining because they expose more surface to attract moisture and dirt.

Finishes

Finishes that increase a fabric's resistance to soiling can help to ease its care. Spills on protected fabrics will bead up on the surface, making immediate removal easier. If the spill is allowed to stand, it can be difficult to remove. Spills need to be blotted up quickly, not rubbed in.

Stain-resistant finishes are available to guard against both water- and oil-borne stains. Silicone fabric protectors such as Hydropruf® and Syl-mer® resist water-

borne stains primarily. Fluorocarbon finishes such as Scotchgard®, Teflon®, and Zepel® resist both water- and oil-borne stains.

While factory-applied stain resistant finishes can be more durable, renewable finishes may also be purchased at hardware stores, or supermarkets for home application and some retail stores provide in-store applications. Check labels on home application products to be sure the product is intended for use on upholstery fabrics. Labels stress application on new fabrics or those that are newly cleaned.

Renewable soil and stain resistant finishes applied to fabrics are not considered permanent. Some change in their performance and resistance to soiling may be noted after several cleanings and the finish will need to be renewed.

If the fabric you select doesn't already have a stain resistant finish you can pay to have it treated or do it yourself. Read the label or check with the salesperson to determine whether a soil resistant finish has already been applied at the factory or fabric mill. Check whether the soil resistant finish resists water and oil-base stains or water-borne stains only.

You can also perform a test by dropping a bead of oil and a bead of water onto the sample of the fabric. If the oil and water beads up, does not soak in, and can be

easily removed with an absorbent tissue, the fabric has repellency to oilborne stains and liquids. If the water only beads up, a water-repellent finish resistant to waterborne stains may be present.

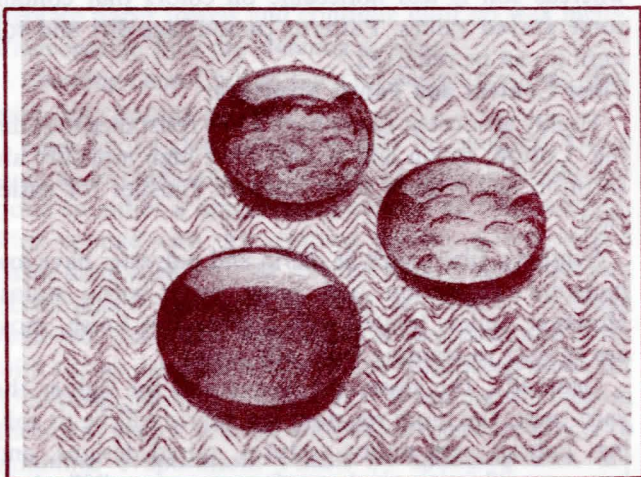
Currently the upholstery industry is debating potential problems of applying stain resistant finishes over an already existing stain resistant finish (e.g., silicone over fluorocarbon). Many factory applied finishes are fluorocarbon and most in-store applications are silicone.

Some industry sources claim that application of a silicone finish over an already fluorocarbon finished fabric reduces or eliminates the effectiveness of the original fluorocarbon finish in repelling oil- and water-borne stains. And some claims have been made that application of in-store finishes have resulted in seam slippage, discoloration and separation of the latex backings. Other sources disagree.

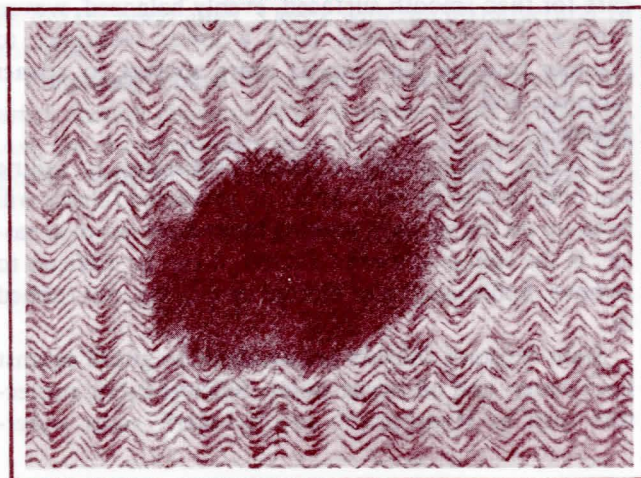
At least one state has begun investigating the issue of "double-treated" fabrics (fabrics with in-store soil resistant finishes over mill applied soil resistant finishes).

To complicate the issue even further, some retail outlets remove, for appearance sake, the tags that indicate a soil resistant finish is already present.

Consumers should continue to seek out additional information as new research results and information becomes available.



treated fabric



untreated fabric

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Carol Easley, Instructor, Textiles, Clothing and Design Department, University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Neeraj Gupta, Assoc. of Specialist, Cleaning and Restoration, Falls Church, VA.

Kay McKinzie, Extension Agent-Home Economics, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

Sharon Meyer, Extension Agent-Home Economics, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

Eileen Muller, Extension Agent-Home Economics, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

Andrea Nisley, Extension Agent-Home Economics, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

Kathleen Parrott, Extension Specialist-Housing and Interior Design, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

Mary Temme, Extension Agent-Home Economics, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

Rose Marie Tondl, Extension Specialist - Clothing and Textiles, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

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