

# Decorative pebble coatings and stone carpets

Stone carpets and decorative pebble coverings differ from other floorings in their special appearance and jointless, open-pored structure. They are available in various colours, equally suitable for indoor or outdoor use and can also be scattered with natural stone granulates. On walls and floors, they allow to lend the surface a personal creative touch with patterns, lines or lettering. Stone carpets or decorative pebble coverings create a pleasant walking comfort, are warm to the feet and gentle on the joints. They are highly decorative, give rooms a special look and should therefore only be used in areas where such design floors fit in.

If the coating is to retain its attractive appearance in the long term and be kept clean economically, coordinated cleaning measures are required. This means using the right cleaning materials and machines as well as suitable detergents.

For cleaning, we would like to give you the following recommendations:

## Preventive measures

If possible, floor coverings should only be installed after all other trades. Otherwise, the coating must be protected from damage and dirt while construction work is still in progress.

Soiling from cement, plaster, etc. is difficult to remove due to the open pores of the surface. If the floor is to be covered for a longer period of time, make sure that no liquids get between it and the cover.

Clean run zones and dirt trap mats in front of entrances or in the door area can keep out much of the usual dirt. The mats must also be cleaned on a regular basis and be planned for as part of the cleaning process.

Because the less the coating is soiled, the less cleaning effort is required. Please note that only mats without plasticiser content may be used.

## Ongoing maintenance cleaning

Stone carpets and decorative pebble coverings can, of course, only look as good as they are cleaned up regularly. According to use and soiling, dry cleaning needs to be done daily to weekly, if necessary also with water.

Which measure should take place when and how is usually written in the property's cleaning plan.

## Manual cleaning

### Carrying out cleaning:

Maintenance cleaning is carried out in two steps, the frequency of which depends on the amount of soiling that gets onto the surface.

Manual cleaning is only suitable for smaller rooms. For areas larger than approx. 30 - 50 m<sup>2</sup>, we recommend mechanical cleaning.

*Manual cleaning is done as follows:*

1. *Loose dirt is removed by vacuuming with a powerful Hoover. Depending on the degree of dirt, vacuuming alone may not be enough, so the floor might need to be damp cleaned.*
2. *Adhering, dried soiling can be eliminated by wet wiping, e.g. by the 1-step or 2-step wiping method.*

*During manual wet cleaning, please work with high-performance damp mop covers such as microfibre wipe covers to effectively loosen the dirt and remove it from the pores. Squeeze the mop covers well to prevent excessive moisture from penetrating.*

**Important note:** If too much water enters, it must be sucked out immediately and thoroughly with a water vacuum cleaner.

We recommend neutral to mildly alkaline floor or universal cleaners without any care components up to a maximum pH value of 10 in concentrate. If the soiling is mainly greasy or oily, a mild alkaline cleaning agent is preferable. This is particularly effective in removing such residues. Mineral dirt such as lime deposits should be removed with acidic detergents with a maximum pH value of 2 in concentrate (in the application solution pH value 4 - 5).

### **Important note:**

**Please test the compatibility of acidic cleansers on stone carpets made of marble pebbles in a hidden area before cleaning (limestone is not acid-resistant).**

## Mechanical cleaning

During mechanical maintenance cleaning, the surfaces are regularly cleaned with a scrubbing machine or automatic scrubber dryer. (Automatic) cleaning machines make it possible to combine wet cleaning with subsequent extraction of the dirt liquor in one work step. Such equipment is increasingly being used for large areas. They replace time-consuming manual wet mopping with bucket, mop cover and press. In addition to the improvement in cleaning quality, the time saved also plays a major role in terms of floor efficiency.

Cleaning machines with counter-rotating double brushes, so-called double roller machines, are particularly suitable for mechanical cleansing. They work with a special application method in which only a small amount of water is distributed and immediately picked up again. In this way, very little water gets into the substrate. In the past, this type of machine has proven best for maintenance and cleaning.

Large automatic scrubber dryers should be equipped with soft roller brushes. Machine pads such as super pads may not be used for cleaning stone carpets or decorative pebble coverings.

For mechanical maintenance cleaning, we recommend neutral to mildly alkaline automatic cleaners without care components with a maximum pH value of 10 in concentrate.

If the soiling is mainly greasy or oily, a mild alkaline cleaning agent is preferable. This is particularly effective in removing such residues. Mineral dirt such as lime deposits should be removed with acidic detergents with a maximum pH value of 2 (in the application solution pH value 4 - 5).

### **Important note:**

**Please test the compatibility of acidic cleansers on stone carpets made of marble pebbles in a hidden area before cleaning (limestone is not acid-resistant).**

We generally recommend using cleaning agents that are free of soaps, chlorine or aggressive acids such as formic acid.

Otherwise, the surfaces are severely attacked and become dull, or the substrate can also be affected, which is usually even more sensitive. Cleaners containing chlorine can bleach and discolour the coatings.

The dosages recommended by the detergent manufacturers must be observed. Both over- and under-dosing lead to undesirable cleaning results.

### **Intensive / basic cleaning:**

This is a special measure in the mechanical cleaning process, e.g. to remove build-up residues of dirt, lime and surfactants.

These soils are loosened with intensive or base cleaners in a higher concentrated cleaning solution.

During basic cleaning, it is important to focus on the type of soiling and question what has led to its excessive occurrence. It often helps to clean the floor in two or more steps by using cleaning products that can dissolve different types of dirt (alternating method). Acidic cleaners remove mineral soiling such as lime residues; alkaline cleansers mainly greasy and oily impurities. If the detergents are used in combination one after the other, the dirt can be loosened and is thus easier to be eliminated from the surface. Finally, a satisfactory cleaning result can be achieved.

### Carrying out cleaning:

1. After picking up the loose dirt by vacuuming, larger particles such as dust or sand should have been cleared away.
2. Distribute the cleaning solution from the water tank of the single-disc machine over the surface with a soft brush and scrub the floor intensively at the same time. The removed dirt is sucked up immediately with the wet vacuum cleaner. The surface is wiped again with the single-disc machine and clear water, then vacuumed thoroughly soon after. Here it is advantageous to work in sections, as this coating does not allow water to run off, but is water-permeable; therefore, the use of large amounts of water for cleaning should be avoided.

### Or:

Use a cleaning machine, e.g. a brush-roller or a scrubber-dryer, to pass over the floor several times. Please select a soft brush. We recommend rinsing the surface with clear water to remove all residues and reduce resoiling.

*It is important that the water is carefully vacuumed during each cleaning cycle!*

Please refrain from using aggressive cleaning agents for intensive/basic cleaning. For this purpose, we advise using powerful mildly alkaline cleaners with up to a maximum pH value of 10 in concentrate as well as acid detergents with up to a maximum pH value of 2 in concentrate (application solution up to pH 4 - 5).

We generally recommend cleaning agents that are free of soaps, chlorine or aggressive acids such as formic acid. Otherwise, the surfaces are severely attacked and become dull, or the substrate can also be affected, which is usually even more sensitive. Cleaners with chlorine can bleach or discolour the coverings.

### **Important note:**

**Please test the compatibility of acidic cleansers on stone carpets made of marble pebbles in a hidden area before cleaning (limestone is not acid-resistant).**

The dosages recommended by the detergent manufacturers must be observed. Both over- and under-dosing lead to undesirable cleaning results.

**Never use any spray extraction equipment during intensive / basic cleaning.**

### Stain removal

Unusual stains, such as paint, plaster, rust, tar, chewing gum, oil paints, varnishes, etc., are just as difficult and often impossible to remove without residue from stone carpets or decorative pebble floors, as from other conventional floor coverings. We recommend that all work that could lead to such contamination is carried out before the flooring is installed.

If you would like to know how to remove certain stains from decorative pebble coatings, we are of course happy to help.

### Coverings with pore-sealed surface

Pores on the surface can be sealed by a finishing treatment with a so-called pore-closure. A distinction is made between reactive resin and dispersion pore sealers. Reactive resins are mainly used in areas with increased moisture exposure; dispersion pore-closure is intended for predominantly dry floors.

Stone carpets and decorative pebble coverings that have received such a treatment are easier to clean. Here, too, we recommend a cleaning method that allows the detergent to dry in without leaving any residue.

In this case, either manual 1- and 2-step wet wiping or mechanical cleaning is possible, as the pore-closure largely prevents penetration of the cleaning liquid.

Please work with high-performance damp mop covers such as microfibre wipe covers to effectively loosen the dirt. Squeeze the mop covers well to avoid the entry of too much moisture. Do not use brushes with abrasive bristles for machine cleaning.

A dispersion pore-closure should be wiped off with a maximum damp mist and only small amounts of water. Then ensure sufficient drying or prevent standing moisture. We recommend using neutral cleaners.

The cleaning frequency depends on the degree of soiling and is written in the property's cleaning plan.

## A few more notes:

- In some cases, it can be necessary to clean outdoor surfaces such as terraces with high-pressure cleaners. However, such pressure washers can destroy stone carpets and decorative pebble coverings. To ensure that the coating is not damaged, **cleaning must be done at a sufficient distance from the floor, with low pressure and using cold water.** If necessary, carry out a test in a hidden area.
- Make sure you know what is happening on your floor and which cleaning method is suitable.
- With the wrong cleaning measures, problems with hygiene or slippage as well as deterioration in the appearance and quality of the flooring can occur due to increased dirt accumulation. Cleaning shall be carried out in accordance with the recognised rules of facility cleaning and taking into account the possibilities currently available.
- As an additional protective measure, it is recommended to use furniture castors type W according to DIN EN 425 (based on DIN EN 12529) or to provide chair castor pads at office workplaces. The floor covering itself, the castors and glides need to be cleaned regularly and checked for proper functioning.
- To avoid damage to the floor when moving the furniture in and out, we recommend placing felt glides underneath.
- Do not use your new stone carpet or decorative pebble coating too soon. Often, the surface is permanently damaged already in the first few days of use, making cleaning difficult throughout the entire life of the floor covering.
- Talk to your cleaning company or the manufacturer of your cleaning products / machines about this cleaning recommendation.
- We accept no liability for the execution of the cleaning, the detergents and care products used or their mode of action, nor for the fulfilment of what is expected from them.
- A list of suitable cleaning agents can be requested from KLB Kötztal Lacke + Beschichtungen GmbH.

We hope that this has provided you with sufficient information on how to clean our decorative pebble coverings or stone carpets, and wish you much pleasure with your flooring.



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By handing over these cleaning and maintenance instructions, the floor installer fulfils his obligation according to DIN-VOB 18365 Flooring works. The recognised rules of craftsmanship as well as the current state of the art shall apply.



Certified according to ISO 9001.