



## How to Remove Pet Stains and Odors

You don't need to get rid of your pets to get rid of stains and odors. Accidents happen; here's how to clean up and eliminate the smell.

### Machine-washable items

Add a one-pound box of baking soda to your regular detergent and wash as usual, air-drying if possible. If you can still see or smell the soiling, wash again with an enzymatic cleaner — these break down pet-waste odors.

If your pet soils the sheets or blankets on a bed, cover the bed with a vinyl, flannel-backed tablecloth while you retrain them. It's machine washable, inexpensive and unattractive to your pet.

### Carpeted areas and upholstery

#### For "new" stains (those that are still wet):

- Soak up as much of the urine as possible: Place a thick layer of paper towels on the wet spot, and cover that with a thick layer of newspaper. If possible, put newspaper under the soiled area as well. Stand on this padding for about a minute, and repeat until the area is barely damp.
- If possible, put the fresh, urine-soaked paper towel in your pet's designated "bathroom area."
- Rinse the "accident zone" thoroughly with clean, cool water, blotting dry.

#### For stains that have already set:

- Consider renting a carpet cleaner from your local hardware or grocery store.
- Use a high-quality pet odor neutralizer once the area is clean.
- Use carpet stain remover if the area still looks stained after it's completely dry after extracting and neutralizing.
- Avoid using steam cleaners to clean urine odors from carpet or upholstery. The heat will permanently set the stain and the odor by bonding the protein into any man-made fibers.
- Avoid cleaning chemicals such as ammonia or vinegar. Strong chemical odors may encourage your pet to reinforce the urine scent mark in that area.
- Your job will be more difficult if urine has soaked down into the padding underneath your carpet. In some cases, you may need to replace portions of carpet and padding.

## Paint and wood damage

If the wood on your furniture, walls, baseboard or floor is discolored, the varnish or paint has reacted to the acid in the urine. You may need to remove and replace the layer of varnish or paint. If you do so, make sure the new product is safe for pets.

Washable enamel paints and some washable wallpapers may respond favorably to enzymatic cleaners such as Nature's Miracle or Rocco & Roxie.

## Find older messes

In some cases, old messes will have dried invisibly and be hard to locate. To find them:

- Use your nose to sniff out soiled areas.
- Examine the suspect area closely to catch hard-to-find soiling.
- If you have a black light, use it to identify soiled areas, and lightly outline the areas with chalk.

## Prevent future incidents

Once the area is clean, make it unattractive and/or unavailable to your pet and the appropriate bathroom area attractive. As long as your pet can smell their personal scent, they will continue to return to the "accident zone."

Have your pet checked by a veterinarian to rule out medical causes for the accident. When you are certain your pet is healthy, use positive reinforcement to train your cat or dog to eliminate in the proper place.

Finally, remember that there may have been a reason why your pet chose the wrong place to eliminate; Understanding your pet's motivations will make it easier to them on the right track again.

The re-training period may take a week or more. Remember, it took time to build the bad habit, and it will take time to replace that habit with a new, more acceptable behavior.

*Adapted from material originally developed by applied animal behaviorists at the Dumb Friends League, Denver, Colo. All rights reserved.*

## About Napa Humane

The Humane Society of Napa County and SPCA, known as Napa Humane, is a non-profit organization incorporated in 1973. Recognizing that companion animals are an important part of healthy communities, we've grown to consider Napa Humane a community service organization. Our programs and services are designed to address the needs of animals – and also to provide support, education, and assistance for all the people who care for and about them.

Napa Humane is a private and independent organization that is supported by private donations by individuals and businesses, bequests, and fees for service. We receive no government funding, tax dollars or funding from national animal welfare organizations.

### **Our Mission**

To promote the welfare of companion animals through protection, advocacy, education, and by example.