



## The real deal with carpet cleaning

According to the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, landlords **CANNOT** charge for routine carpet cleaning—no matter what.

Even if...

- your lease requires that you pay for it when you move out
- your lease states that you must provide a receipt showing that you had the carpets cleaned
- your lease says that you must pay for carpet cleaning when you move in
- your lease says that the cost of carpet cleaning will be deducted from your security deposit
- any of the above rules are listed in a “NONSTANDARD RENTAL PROVISION”

...your landlord still can't legally charge you.

### What can I do if the landlord is trying to make me pay for routine carpet cleaning?

1. **Write a letter** to the landlord explaining that the note to state ATCP code 134.06 (3)(c) states that “a landlord may not withhold from tenant’s security deposit for routine painting or carpet cleaning, where there is no unusual damage caused by tenant abuse.” Madison General Ordinance 32.07(14) forbids withholding for routine carpet cleaning in the City of Madison.
2. **File a written complaint** with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection at 1-800-422-7128 or <http://datcp.state.wi.us/core/consumerinfo/cp>.
3. **File a claim** in small claims court to recover an illegally withheld security deposit. You may be eligible for two to three times the amount wrongly withheld.

### When can the landlord legally charge for carpet cleaning?

When you damage or abuse the carpet *beyond* normal wear and tear. For example, the carpet requires treatments to remove severe stains or repair damage caused by you, your guests, or your pets.

Tenant Resource Center • (608) 257-0006; toll-free outside Dane County (877) 238-RENT



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