

Checklist to Remove Red Wine Spill from the Surface of a Wool Rug

- If there is still a puddle of wine on the surface of the rug - Don't Blot It.
- Use some paper towels to wick up the wine off the surface.
- When the puddle is gone, touch the surface without applying pressure to wick up as much as possible. When I can't remove any more, I apply pressure to the paper towel to absorb every last bit possible.
- When you can't remove any more with pressure on the towel, mist water on the remaining spots to dilute the wine, then blot with paper towels.

If the rug is on a wood floor, before you begin misting and blotting, put a towel or clean rags underneath the area so you don't get the floor wet. Leave them there until the rug is dry.

Use as little water as possible, but enough to flush out the soap and wine residue. Apply pressure when you blot to absorb the liquid out of the wool. Water always moves from wet to dry.

- When I can't remove any more, it's time for a solution of hand dishwashing liquid. This is not the product that is used in automatic dishwashers. That product is too chemically aggressive to use on wool. I put a squirt of hand dishwashing liquid in a cup of warm water.

I used hand dishwashing liquid for the demonstration videos at www.RealCleanRugs.com/wine-spill-videos. Most folks have this readily available at home. This solution is much more concentrated than you would normally use when washing dishes. But I only use a very little bit and only on the spots. I want to remove this with water so less is more.

- I apply it with an old toothbrush because a tooth brush is designed to hold liquid. You could also use cotton Q-Tips. I apply the soapy solution only to the wine spots. I let it work for a bit, then mist on water to rinse it out and blot with a paper towel.

Do not rub or scrub. That will fuzz the yarns. I let the soapy solution do the work. The dishwashing solution acts to break the bond between the wine sediment and the wool fiber. (You may have seen this product used to remove oil from the wings of birds caught in oil spills.) The water suspends the sediment and soap in solution.

- Because the spots are small and I've used very little "soap" and very little water, I can blot up the wine/water/soap with paper towels. I repeat the process until I don't see any more improvement.

There may still be some light red or maroon color left. It may disappear when the rug dries.

- Wool can hold up to three times its weight in water and still appear dry. And you can see the spots are very wet at this point. So set up a household fan to speed the drying process.

We clean and repair rugs valued by their owners. If you need the services of someone who cleans and repairs rugs and you live in NH or VT call us at either number and ask for Katharine or Keith.