



**DOERR DALLAS
VALUATIONS**



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CARING FOR YOUR ITEMS

Without doubt, one of the most common questions that we at Doerr Dallas Valuations get asked is “What is the best way to take care of... (insert as appropriate)” and the simple answer is that everyone has their own way and own interpretation for different items – some people swear by old wives tales, whilst some find new solutions and potions on Amazon and insist that their carpet has never looked cleaner. So as a rough guide I have compiled the following advice for certain groups of items.

FURNITURE

When people ask about furniture, it is generally whilst talking about wood items, such as mahogany, oak, walnut, rosewood, and many other weird and wonderful materials that we are privileged to work with.

The first thing to say is – look at where the item is kept; Is it in sunlight? Next to a radiator? In a damp shower room?

If any of these answers are ‘yes’ then seriously consider relocating the items, as ultimately, it’s not going to end well. Warping, fading and serious cracks may appear after time and that will result in a costly visit to the restorers.

Whilst we all remember the smell of the spray cans of furniture polish commonly seen in the 80s and the 90s, these really are not a good way of polishing or cleaning antique furniture,

the artificial chemicals will gradually damage the finish and leave you with an item needing to be professionally restored – the general rule of thumb, is less is more.



A lint free cloth with natural beeswax is always the best route, applied until the wood is nourished (this might take a little while, but have patience) will gradually bring back a nice genuine shine and bring out the grain of the wood, as opposed to a silicone type shine that a spray can will bring – it also smells a lot better in my opinion.

Any metal work, such as handles or escutcheons, should be dealt with very carefully – personally I would leave them well alone and enjoy the patina that develops over time, especially with brass work. However if you have to clean them, a very fine wire wool, used sparingly is really your best option – never, ever use Brasso, or similar products as you will end up with a rather ugly rash around wherever you have used it.

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Ultimately, furniture is there to be used and a good tablecloth or coasters are one of the most simple ways of keeping the piece in tip top condition – you are more likely to damage it with a stray glass of red wine, rather than normal use over decades.

RUGS

Rugs and carpets are some of the most susceptible items in the household to damage, but how do we avoid the wear and tear?



Again, much like furniture, one should always think about where a carpet is going to be positioned, direct sunlight and damp areas are of course a big no due to the impact that both factors can have on the material. Additionally, turning a rug is a really good idea – for example if in a drawing room, there will always be that one corner that is worn more frequently than the others, and turning the rug will spread the wear more evenly – why not try them in different parts of the household?

When it comes to spillages, again the glass of red wine seems to be the biggest culprit of terrible stains. The experts are unanimous in their recommendations – DO NOT SCRUB – always blot the stain with a kitchen towel and then flush with water, and repeat... this may take some time.



If you are lucky enough to have a furry friend, then they present a slightly different problem and a slightly different method of attack; white vinegar diluted with water is generally considered to be the best option, as the chemicals in urine can attack the fibres and cause significant damage – the logic behind the vinegar is that it works against those chemicals.

The one area that I would strongly recommend not doing anything to, is silk rugs. Whilst there are options out there, the risk for things going horribly wrong are so great, and ultimately a good carpet cleaner or restorer will be able to advise you as to what action to take.

So whilst furniture and rugs are both somewhat daunting in terms of maintenance, it really is a case of keeping on top of little things regularly and they will continue to give you years, if not decades of reliable service.

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