



Leave it at the Door

What's in the dust in your home?

There may be insect fragments, lead dust, pesticides, pollen, dust mites, animal dander, hair, human skin flakes, fungal spores or cigarette ash. A recent study indicates that cockroach exoskeletons and droppings found in household dust can trigger asthma.¹

Around 30 to 40 percent of the contaminants inside your home are brought in from outdoors.² They can enter your home on your shoes, clothing, or your pets can track them in on their paws and fur. Not surprisingly, the greatest concentration of household dust is found in carpeting near the entryway.³

Children are at greatest risk of exposure to the contaminants found in household dust. They are more likely to be sitting and crawling on floors, and placing their hands in their mouths. Numerous studies confirm that the greatest number of environmental exposures and risks, especially for young children, occur inside the home.^{4,5,6,7,8} Children are not the only ones at risk. Anyone with asthma or other respiratory problems, or a weakened immune system should make every effort to reduce household dust.



What can you do to reduce contaminants indoors?

The first four steps you take inside your front door bring in close to 85 percent of the outdoor contaminants found inside your home.⁹ By taking a few simple steps you can improve the health of your home and reduce the time spent cleaning.



The first step is to place doormats by every exterior door, including the door between your garage and house. Once you have doormats in place, there are additional steps to making your entryway more effective at reducing contaminants.

The EPA recommends establishing an entry system that captures soil, pollutants, and moisture at the door. One of the best ways to reduce tracking in contaminants is to have a hard surfaced walkway, such as a paved sidewalk, leading to the front door of your home.



Place a grate-like scraper mat outside your entry door and scrape your feet on it before going inside. Just inside the door, place a highly absorbent doormat that will trap soil and water below shoe level.

If you have space, add a second doormat as a finishing mat. The purpose of this mat is to capture and hold any remaining particles or moisture from the bottom of your shoes.



Take an additional step: remove your shoes and just leave them at the door. The carpet inside your home acts like a doormat, scraping off debris and dirt with every step you take. Removing your shoes at the door not only leaves contaminants behind, it reduces wear and tear on your floors, and time spent cleaning.

To prevent slips and falls indoors, choose an indoor shoe, slipper or sock with a non-slip sole. If you have balance issues or a tendency to bump into things, choose a hard soled shoe with good traction to wear indoors

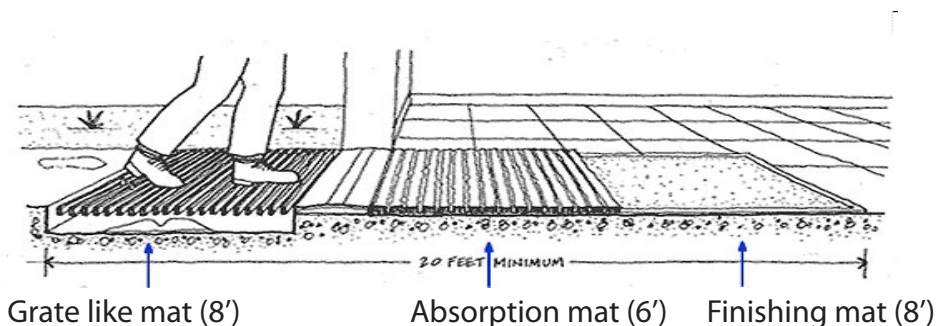


Photo Source: <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schooldesign/controlling.html#Entry%20Mat%20Barriers>

Doormats help reduce tracking in contaminants. Findings from an EPA study indicated that when a doormat was used and shoes were not worn, lead dust and other chemicals in the home were reduced by about 60 percent.¹⁰

Leaving contaminants and shoes at the door has time, economic, and health benefits. Adding a doormat reduces the time and effort needed to clean your home. You will save money by reducing wear and tear on your carpets and floors. The health benefits come from reducing your exposure to pesticides, lead dust, and asthma and allergy triggers.



Key features of a good doormat:

- Stores soil and water below shoe level
- Has a non-slip backing
- Made with a reinforced surface to avoid wearing out quickly

A clean doormat is a good doormat.

PROJECT:

Create a Shoe Storage Unit

- * Keep outside shoes out of the way
- * Store inside shoes near the door
- * Provide guests with slippers to wear inside

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