

care and cleaning

awnings with Sunbrella Graphics System applied vinyl graphics

One of the best ways to keep Sunbrella® fabrics looking good and to delay the need for deep cleanings is to hose fabrics off on a monthly basis with clear water. This practice will help prevent dirt from becoming deeply embedded in the fabric and eliminate the need for more frequent cleanings. In most environments, a thorough cleaning will be needed every two to three years.

When it's time for a thorough cleaning, Sunbrella fabrics can be cleaned while still on an awning frame. When cleaning Sunbrella fabrics, it is important to observe the following:

- Always use a mild soap such as Ivory Snow, Dreft or Woolite.
- Water should be cold to lukewarm. Never more than 100°F.
- Air dry only. Never apply heat to Sunbrella fabrics.
- DO NOT use a power washer/sprayer.
- DO NOT use vigorous abrasive scouring action to clean areas with graphics.
- DO NOT use harsh cleaners/solvents, such as acetone, to clean areas with graphics.
- DO NOT machine wash.

General or Light Cleaning

To clean Sunbrella while still on an awning frame, follow these simple steps:

- Brush off loose dirt.
- Hose down.
- Prepare a cleaning solution of water and mild soap such as Ivory Snow, Dreft or Woolite (no detergents).
- Use a soft bristle brush to clean.
- Allow cleaning solution to soak into the fabric.
- Rinse thoroughly.
- Air dry.
- May not require re-treatment depending on the age of the fabric.

If stubborn stains persist, you can use a diluted chlorine bleach/soap mixture for spot cleaning of mildew, roof run-off or other similar stains (see our Stain Chart for specific recommendations).

Heavy Cleaning for Stubborn Stains and Mildew

Sunbrella fabric does not promote mildew growth, however, mildew may grow on dirt and other foreign substances that are not removed from the fabric. To clean mildew, or other stubborn stains:

- Eight ounces (1 cup) of chlorine bleach.
- Two ounces (1/4 cup) of mild soap and/or detergent.
- One gallon of water.
- Clean with soft bristle brush.
- Avoid brushing the "edge" of the vinyl graphics. Brush from the vinyl graphics out; away from the edge of the vinyl.
- Allow mixture to soak into fabric for up to 20 minutes.
- Rinse thoroughly.
- Air dry.
- Repeat if necessary.
- Re-treatment of fabric for water and stain resistance will be necessary.

Remember to protect the area around your Sunbrella if using a bleach solution. Carpet or other fabrics that are not Sunbrella may have an adverse reaction to the bleach.

Re-treating the Fabric

As part of the finishing process, Sunbrella fabrics are treated with a fluorocarbon finish, which enhances water repellency. This finish is designed to last for several years, but must be replenished after a thorough cleaning. Based on test results, Glen Raven recommends 303 High Tech Fabric Guard™ as the preferred re-treatment product for Sunbrella fabrics. Fabrics should be re-treated after thorough cleaning or after five years of use. For more information on re-treatment products, please visit www.303products.com.

Applying 303 High Tech Fabric Guard

303 should be applied to Sunbrella fabrics after each thorough cleaning, which typically removes the original finish and reduces the fabric's water repellency.

- Clean Sunbrella fabric, using one of the cleaning methods.
- Allow Sunbrella to completely air dry.
- Apply 303 Fabric Guard in a well-ventilated area following instructions on the container.
- Apply 303 in a thin, even coat and allow fabric to dry completely.
- Apply a second thin, even coating of 303. (Two light coatings are more effective in restoring fabric water resistance than a single heavy coating. A 15-ounce bottle provides coverage of up to 50 square feet of fabric.)

For more information please see www.303products.com.

Professional Awning Cleaners

You may have access to professional awning cleaning firms. In evaluating the services of a professional firm, you should inquire about a firm's experience in working with Sunbrella fabrics and knowledge of cleaning and re-treatment requirements. DO NOT dry clean Sunbrella fabrics.

Helpful Hints

- Protect the area around the Sunbrella fabric when using a bleach solution – bleach may discolor non-Sunbrella fabrics. Always rinse Sunbrella thoroughly to completely remove bleach.
- Sunbrella air dries very quickly.
- Use of bleach and/or advanced age of the fabric application may impact the deterioration of the sewing thread and other non-Sunbrella components.

