

Blot up spilled flower food promptly, then clean the area gently with a little water, taking care not to soak the furniture. The best method depends on the surface, so check its care instructions and test any cleaning solution in a hidden spot first.

Start with the spill

Flower food may contain sugar, an acid and other ingredients. Left on furniture, it can leave a sticky residue or affect a sensitive finish. If the packet is nearby, keep it so you can check its ingredients and safety instructions.

Act calmly and use a clean, absorbent cloth or paper towel. You do not need to scrub hard. That is more likely to spread the spill than persuade it to leave.

1. **Blot the liquid.** Press a dry cloth onto the spill and lift it away. Work from the outside toward the centre.
2. **Remove any powder.** If dry flower food has spilled, gently scoop or brush it up before adding water.
3. **Check the surface.** Look for a care label or manufacturer instructions, especially on upholstery.
4. **Clean carefully.** If the surface can be cleaned with water, use a cloth lightly dampened with plain water. Blot rather than rub.
5. **Dry the area.** Blot with a fresh dry cloth and allow the spot to air dry. Check for residue once it is dry.

Take care with wood

Wood furniture and its finish can be sensitive to moisture. Wring the cloth well before wiping, and dry the surface immediately with a soft cloth. Avoid leaving a wet towel on the spot.

If the finish looks cloudy, discoloured or damaged after cleaning, stop there. Extra scrubbing or household cleaners may make the mark worse. A furniture restoration professional can advise on the finish.

Blot fabric and upholstery

For fabric, absorb as much liquid as possible without pressing it deeper into the cushion. Check the furniture care label before using water or any upholstery cleaner, and test in an inconspicuous place first.

If water is suitable, dab the mark with a lightly damp cloth, then blot with a dry one. Use only a little moisture so the filling does not become soaked. Let the fabric air dry, and keep people and pets away from the damp spot.

Handle delicate surfaces gently

Leather, suede, unfinished wood and antique finishes need particular care. Follow the maker's instructions if you have them. If you are unsure what the surface can tolerate, blot gently and ask a specialist before applying a cleaner.

A small spill can be surprisingly determined, but a strong cleaner is not always the answer. Avoid mixing cleaning products, and do not use bleach or abrasive pads on the furniture.

Know when to get help

Contact a professional cleaner or furniture specialist if the spill is large, has soaked into padding, or has left a mark that does not lift with gentle care. The packet can help them identify what was spilled.

For safety concerns about exposure to the flower food, follow the packet instructions and contact your local poison control service for advice.

A quick blot and a patient cleanup give the furniture a good chance of looking like itself again.

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