

## Awning Cleaning - Short Course

What's new in the world of awning cleaning? Over the last few years, hundreds of new and improved awning fabrics have been introduced by the manufactures of canvas, vinyl, backlit and shade structures. (Awning fabrics is also known as Industrial Fabrics.) Many with more glossy surfaces, brighter colors and longer durability, but cleaning them remains pretty much the same - water, soap, scrubbing, rinsing and still the good news for those of us in the contract cleaning business - "clean them often" - every 60 to 180 days to remove environmental dirt, bird droppings, mold and mildew. The techniques for cleaning awnings also translates well for cleaning tents, tarps, many signs, lawn furniture, kiosks and outdoor umbrellas.

It's unbelievable how many billions of dollars are spent every year in making and replacing these products and that opens up millions of new opportunities for keeping them clean and bright. Keeping awnings (or any other industrial fabric) cleaned and maintained can add years to their useful life and clean awnings look much more appealing and desirable. Our motto is, "It's not just an Awning, it's your Image."

Here's the short course in cleaning an awning:

### Materials Required:

- Awning Cleaner or a mild natural soap i.e. Ivory Snow, Dreft or Woolite.
- Soft bristled cleaning brush (with extension pole if needed) or sponge or towel
- Water source and hose
- Ladder (if needed)
- 2 gallon or larger pail or 1.5 gallon hand sprayer

For best results do not work in direct sunlight, in the heat of the day or on windy days. Before cleaning, always check the stitched seams, both sides to ensure the thread is sound and will withstand cleaning. For compatibility, always spot test in an inconspicuous area before using any product on awnings. Rinse immediately if cleaning solution comes in contact with polished, painted, glass, exotic surfaces or noncolor fast materials.

Eye protection and rubber gloves should be worn during cleaning.

1. Fill pail with one gallon of clean lukewarm water (less than 100 degrees F.) or fill hand sprayer with one gallon of clean water.
2. Add 8 to 16 ounces of awning cleaner. (follow label on awning cleaner)
3. Thoroughly rinse awning with clean water to remove all loose dirt and debris.
4. Dip brush, sponge or towel in awning cleaning solution (or spray with hand sprayer) then, gently scrub awning fabric in a circular motion, starting at the bottom and gradually moving to the top of the awning, this helps eliminate streaking. (Wash no more than about 8 square feet at a time.  
Do not allow awning cleaning solution to dry on awning fabric.)

5. Rinse awning thoroughly with clean fresh water.

6. Repeat if necessary. (Realistically, there may be some awnings that through neglect or improper maintenance or other reasons may be impossible to clean satisfactorily, consider fabric replacement.)

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