In the days before stain-resistant carpets and upholstery, keeping muddy dogs and kids' shoes off the furniture and out of the living room was a full-time job. However, manufacturers have now figured out how to keep the mess out and spirits high — and the answer lies in a petrochemical called xylene.

Xylene is one of the raw materials used to make new polyester carpets and upholstery that are stain-resistant, providing protection and affording peace-of-mind that allows people to enjoy time with their pets and kids, rather than dealing with a dirty living room. Petrochemicals don't just make progress, they also help us spend our time on what really matters.

Xylene is integral in making other things you likely encounter every day, like high-denier polyester, a breathable, sweat-wicking fabric widely used by athletes and active families. Manufacturers now have the technology to embed nanoscale silver particles into polyester, so uniforms and practice gear don't smell (our members think everyone can agree that that's progress).

Xylene is even one of the chemical compounds used to make something a whole lot sturdier: the Kevlar used in bullet-proof vests is five times as strong as steel on an equal weight basis.

Xylene not only makes our lives a little more convenient, but also more fun, active and safe

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