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Hardwood Flooring Care and Maintenance Guide

Hardwood flooring is an important investment in your home. Here are a few essential tips that will help your hardwood floor last longer.

- Vacuum your hardwood floors with the hard surface attachment regularly to rid your floor of dust and eliminate abrasives that can scratch the floor finish. **CAUTION:** Do **NOT** use Vacuums with a beater bar or power rotary brush head can damage a floor and should never be used – this would include robotic type vacuums with a beater bar.
- Regularly swept or vacuumed floors will almost eliminate any need to "clean" the floor with a cleaning product. But when a cleaning product is needed, we suggest only using a "hardwood specific, non-oil based cleaner." Cleaning products should be applied to the mop or hand towel, never pour cleaner directly on to the floor itself.
- Never apply floor cleaners that contain wax or an acrylic polish as they may permanently damage your floors.
- Quickly wipe spills from floor to protect wood from excess liquid.
- Use walk off mats outside and inside entrances to prevent sand and abrasive build-up on your hardwood floor. Avoid rubber or other dense mat backings that prevent airflow beneath rugs and retain abrasives and humidity.
- Use area rugs or mats near sink, dishwasher and workstations to protect floor from cooking utensils, water spills, detergents, oils and other kitchen mishaps.
- Apply felt pads under any furniture or chair legs to ease movement and prevent scratches on the wood floor. Keep pads clean at all times and regularly check for signs of wear. Felt pads will accumulate dirt and grit so change them out periodically to prevent damage.
- Rolling chairs - soft polyurethane or rubber casters rather than narrow, rigid plastic ones. Use protective mats beneath rolling chairs and keep furniture casters clean.
- Protect your hardwood floor when moving heavy objects. Place on a reversed mat and slide smoothly over floor. If moving heavy appliance or furniture lay down ¼" plywood to protect the floors.
- Be careful with pointed objects such as spiked-heeled and sport shoes that may damage the finish of your wood floor, especially if they are worn or damaged.
- Maintain proper relative humidity level between 30% R.H. (heating) and 50% (non-heating) for optimal performance of your wood floor. Proper relative humidity level is especially important during the winter/heating months when the air can become much drier- wood can dry out causing checking splits or seasonal gapping.
- The floor needs to be protected from sunlight and intense artificial lighting to reduce discoloration of exposed wood. This phenomenon with wood surfaces is normal and natural, and varies according to species.
- Occasionally move furniture and carpets around and reduce intense light sources to minimize color contrasts.
- Keep pets' nails trimmed as pet's nail can damage or scratch the floors finish.
- Things to avoid:
 - Never pour cleaner or any other liquid directly onto floor surface.
 - Do not use a wet mop that leaves excess water on your hardwood floor.
 - Do not use wax, oil-based detergents or other household cleaning agents on your floors, since these products may dull or damage the floor finish, leave a greasy film that makes floors slippery, and make maintenance of your hardwood floor more difficult.
 - Do **NOT** use a steam cleaner/sweeper on your hardwood flooring.

Floor Repair

- Very light and small surface scratches can be repaired with a staining "touch up" pen of the appropriate color.
- Slightly deeper scratches can be repaired by means of colored putty and or stains. Fill the scratches with the putty. Level with putty knife. Wipe off excess putty.
- Very deep scratches may require the replacement of the planks.

Additional Care for Handcrafted, Handscraped, Distressed or Wirebrushed Floors

Since the floor that you purchased has a unique design and character you want to make sure to keep the floors looking like new. There are several key factors to protect the look of these truly handcrafted floors.

- Walk off mats and area rugs at entryways and pivot points – i.e., Kitchen sink and work areas.
- Vacuum the floors as often as needed. It is important to vacuum up the dirt and debris as opposed to using a wet microfiber mop. Vacuuming will remove the dirt from the surface where a damp microfiber mop simply will push or embed the dirt into the wirebrushed, handscraped and/or distressed areas. Over time wet cleaning as such can discolor the floors making them look dirty. Additionally, the use of Microfiber mops can catch on the edges of the planks and may damage the planks requiring repair – avoid the use of these type of mops.
- In the event the floors do show some discolor due to dirt build up consult a wood flooring professional who has the proper tools and equipment to thoroughly clean the floors. We recommend the use of a buffer in combination with a Tampico brush. A Tampico brush is a stiff natural brush typical made from Hog's hair and will help to restore the floors appearance by removing embedded dirt and debris from the distressed areas.

Caring For White Stained Floors

- White stained/Whitewashed hardwood flooring provides a clean and contemporary look and special care and maintenance is critical to keep them looking new. A White floors overall appearance is going to be heavily influenced by family lifestyle – the number of members in the household, pets, etc. can play a role in how the floors perform. In addition, daily maintenance and frequent cleaning along with the use of area rugs and walk off mats are going to be critical to keeping the floors white and not soiled looking.