

Hardwood Floor Cleaning Guide

NORMAL DAY-TO-DAY CARE

The following provides the basic guidelines for you to follow to help you maintain your hardwood floor.

There are three key aspects to maintaining your hardwood floor.

1. Frequent, gentle sweeping or dust mopping.
2. Prompt clean-up of spills.
3. Periodic professional care and refinishing.

All the information on this page is provided so that you can maintain and enjoy your hardwood floor for years to come.

SWEEPING & DUST MOPPING

The most important thing you can do to keep your hardwood floor looking great is to sweep or mop it frequently, particularly in high-traffic areas. Regular sweeping removes grit and dirt particles that can scratch the finish. For best results, use a soft-bristle broom, a microfiber dust mop, or a vacuum with a hard-floor attachment (never a beater bar, which can scratch wood). Avoid steam mops and excess water, since standing moisture can warp boards and damage the finish over time. Regular, gentle cleaning is vital for prolonging the life of your flooring.

BASIC CLEANING STEPS FOR CLEANING COMMON FOOD AND BEVERAGE STAINS

The following "Basic Cleaning Steps" (BCS) are recommended for sealed, finished hardwood floors.

What You Will Need

- Clean, soft, absorbent cloths or paper towels
- A soft-bristle brush (for stubborn residue)
- 1 qt of warm water
- A few drops of a pH-neutral, wood-safe floor cleaner or mild dish soap

Here's How To Clean Your Floor

1. Immediately blot up as much of the spill as possible with a dry, absorbent cloth. Do not let liquid sit or pool on the wood.
2. Most stains clean up with a cloth lightly dampened in warm (not hot) water. Wipe the stained area, then immediately dry it with a clean cloth. Never rub aggressively or soak the wood.
3. If residue remains, make a solution of warm water and a few drops of a pH-neutral, wood-safe cleaner. Lightly dampen a soft cloth with the solution — never pour liquid directly on the floor — and wipe the stain.

4. **IMPORTANT:** Immediately follow with a cloth dampened in plain water to remove any cleaner residue, then dry the area thoroughly. Any leftover moisture or cleaner residue can dull the finish or damage the wood.
5. Buff the dried area lightly with a soft, dry cloth to help restore shine and even out the finish.
6. Once completely dry, sweep or mop the area to remove any loosened debris.

Reappearing Stains: If a stain reappears after drying, it may have penetrated the finish and reached the bare wood. If so, do not repeat wet cleaning — contact a professional, as sanding and refinishing may be required.

CLEANING OTHER KINDS OF STAINS

The following guidelines refer to stains from substances other than food and beverages. Identifying the source of the stain is key to successful removal. Since different stains require different cleaning procedures, any spill on a hardwood floor should be cleaned up immediately — standing liquid is more damaging to wood than to carpet. While the substances below usually can be cleaned up successfully with prompt, proper steps, some stains, and any stain that has penetrated the finish, will require professional refinishing.

Stain Key

Substance	Key
Alcohol (spirits)	E
Asphalt/tar	A
Blood	B
Candle wax	D
Chewing gum	D
Chocolate/candy	B
Coffee/tea	B
Cosmetics/makeup	A
Crayon	A
Dirt/mud	H
Fruit juice	B
Grease/cooking oil	A
Ink	E
Lipstick	A
Nail polish	F
Oil (motor/machine)	A
Paint (latex)	B
Paint (oil-based)	A
Pet urine	C
Rust	C

Shoe polish	A
Soda/soft drink	B
Tomato sauce	B
Vomit	G
Water rings/heat marks	C
Wine	B

CLEANING PROCEDURES

Basic Cleaning Steps (BCS) Key

A. Follow BCS no. 1-2. If residue remains, dampen a cloth with mineral spirits (never pour directly on the floor) and wipe gently. Follow instructions and precautions on the container, working in a ventilated area. Then follow BCS no. 4-6.

B. Follow BCS no. 1-2, then apply the mild cleaner solution described in BCS no. 3. Wipe with a clean, barely damp cloth. Repeat BCS no. 3-6 as needed.

C. Follow BCS no. 1-2. For water rings or heat marks, once dry, try buffing with a small amount of wood floor polish on a soft cloth. For pet urine or rust that has penetrated the finish, avoid further wet cleaning and consult a professional, as bleaching or sanding may be required.

D. Harden wax or gum by holding an ice cube in a plastic bag against it briefly. Gently scrape away the hardened residue with a plastic scraper or old credit card — never a metal blade, which can scratch the finish. Then follow BCS no. 2-6.

E. Dampen a cloth with a small amount of denatured alcohol and blot the stain gently — never pour it on the floor. Test in an inconspicuous area first. Then follow BCS no. 4-6.

F. Test a small amount of non-acetone nail polish remover on an inconspicuous area to confirm it does not affect the finish. If safe, dampen a cloth (never pour directly) and blot the stain. Then follow BCS no. 4-6.

G. Blot up as much material as possible immediately, then follow BCS no. 2-6. Avoid letting acidic residue sit on the finish.

H. Sweep or dust mop thoroughly. If a residue remains, follow BCS no. 1-6.

NOTE: If these procedures do not work, or if a stain has penetrated the finish, consult a professional hardwood floor refinisher. Always test any cleaning solution in an inconspicuous area first, and never use steel wool, abrasive scrubbers, ammonia, vinegar in strong concentration, or steam cleaners on finished hardwood, as these can dull or damage the finish.