

Care & Maintenance

Care & Maintenance Guide

Thank you for choosing Maine Traditions Hardwood Flooring. We hope you are enjoying your new hardwood floor. With some easy maintenance you will protect the beauty of your floor for many years.

Maintaining the beauty of your floor is easy with some simple cleaning and care.

Vacuum or sweep your floor regularly to keep damaging grit from building up. Use Maine Traditions Hardwood Floor Cleaner to clean your floors. Do not use wax or oil based house hold cleaning agents to clean your hardwood floors. These types of cleaners can damage and or dull the finish on your floor. Do not pour cleaner directly onto the floor, only dampen the cloth mop, rinse as needed and dampen again until floor is clean.

Please do not hesitate to contact your local flooring dealer with any questions you may have pertaining to your floors. We look forward to serving any future flooring needs that you may have.

In order to maintain your hardwood floor and keep its beauty and value, follow the simple steps in our free download.

Regular Maintenance

The first step in caring for your new floor is regularly vacuuming. Mop as needed with a damp mop and a mild detergent made for cleaning hardwood floors. There are many brands on the market. Make sure to wring the mop thoroughly to remove excess water.

Never use wax, regular household detergents, or oil based soaps on the floor. These products may damage the finish, cause discoloration and leave a greasy film that will make the floor slippery and hard to maintain in the future. Mixtures of vinegar and water are also not recommended. Vinegar has an oxidizing effect on the finish.

The effects of abrasives on your wood floor:

Abrasives can cause a lot of damage to your wood floor. Sand and small pebbles can act like sandpaper on the finish. Even the tiniest grain of dirt can

leave marks on your floor. Vacuum often and place mats inside and/ or outside exterior doors to trap dirt and keep your floor free of debris. Be cautious of the heels of shoes as they can leave unsightly dents in your floor. Heel surfaces are small and the pressure exerted can easily reach 3,500 pounds per square inch. Broken or worn heels can mar floors even more. Avoid walking on flooring in cleats or any metal-tipped soles.

We recommend attaching felt pads to the legs of the furniture and chairs to avoid scratching the floor when objects are moved during use. Avoid placing rolling chairs with casters directly on the hardwood flooring. Place them on rugs or chair mats.

Do not drag furniture or heavy objects across the finished surface. Lift furniture to be moved and place it on a piece of plywood that has been laid on a blanket if you must slide items along the floor.

Keep your pet's claws trimmed to prevent scratching and indentations.

Tips in Review:

- Sweep or vacuum regularly so abrasive dirt won't scratch the finish.
- Wipe up any spilled liquid quickly from your floor.
- Watch out for high heels-they are hardwood flooring's worst enemy after sand and water-and some kinds of sports footwear, particularly if they're worn or damaged.
- Put mats outside and inside entrances. This will prevent the build-up of sand and dirt.
- Put mats in front of the kitchen sink, the dishwasher, and all kitchen work stations to protect your floor from dropped utensils and spills of water, detergent, and food. Avoid mats with rubber or other dense backing that prevents airflow and traps abrasive dirt and moisture.
- Attach felt pads to the feet of all furniture to make it easier to move and prevent scratches. Keep the pads clean and replace if damaged.
- Replace plastic casters with wide rubber or soft polyurethane casters.
- Protect the floor when moving furniture. Use a mat turned upside down with a slightly smaller piece of plywood on top of it. Place furniture on top and slide it.

- Maintain humidity levels between 30 and 50%, for your own health as well as for the protection of your floor and wooden furniture.
- Use a hygrometer [relative humidity indicator] to check moisture content in the air to ensure that relative humidity is within the recommended range.
- Avoid exposing your floor to sunlight and intense artificial light, which can cause wood to change color. This is a completely normal and natural phenomenon. The lighter the wood, the more pronounced the change will be.
- Move your carpets and furniture occasionally and use a minimum number of light sources to keep color changes uniform.

Things to Avoid:

- Do not pour cleaner directly on the floor.
- Do not use a wet mop that can leave excess water behind.
- Never use floor wax, oil-based detergent, or any other household cleaner on your floor. These products can damage the finish and leave a greasy film that makes your floor slippery and difficult to maintain.
- Mixtures of water and vinegar are not recommended for cleaning prefinished flooring. Vinegar has an oxidizing effect on the finish.
- Do not raise or lower the temperature of a radiant heating system by more than 2.8°C [5°F] per day when turning the system on or off.

Repair and Replacement:

Factory-finished floors can be restored after a number of years of use. Depending on the condition of the floor, you have two options. If wear is limited, you can apply a new top coat. Major scratches or damaged floors may be sanded and refinished. This option allows you to stain the floor a different color if you wish. Replacing a damaged board is a relatively simple fix. First select a board slightly longer than the one to be changed. Check for color and pattern matching to the surrounding boards. Next, set a circular saw to the depth of the board thickness. Make one cut inset 3/8" on each side of the board to be removed.

Make a third cut at a 45° angle across the board from the first long cut to the second long cut.

With a chisel, carefully remove the board pieces to avoid damage to adjoining boards.

Remove any underlying construction paper or adhesive and clean residue from the subfloor. Trim replacement board to the desired length, cutting excess from the tongue end. Remove the lower edge of the groove on the end and side of the board. Position the board to check the fit. Remove it. Apply glue to subfloor. Install the board, using a wood block and rubber mallet to place it in position.

Troubleshooting Tips:

Here are some simple tips for dealing with everyday problems.

Spilled liquid

Quickly wipe up spills with a dry cloth or paper towel, and then spray some wood floor cleaner on a cloth to clean the surface.

Sticky or oily stains

Dampen a cloth with wood floor cleaner and rub the soiled area. Rinse the cloth and wipe the surface thoroughly.

Rubber or heel marks

Rub with a cloth lightly dampened with wood floor cleaner.

Stubborn stains

Ink, tar, wax crayon, etc. First, try cleaning the stain using a cloth and wood floor cleaner.

If this doesn't work, you may need to contact your flooring dealer or contractor for their recommendation. It may be necessary to lightly abrade the area and apply a new top coat. Severe cases may require replacement of the affected boards.

Long Term Care:

Moisture is one of the worst enemies for a hardwood floor. During periods of high humidity you should use a dehumidifier to control the moisture in your

home. High moisture causes cupping in wood floors. During dry periods such as during the winter when your heat is on, you should use a humidifier to control the moisture in your home. Low moisture causes your floor to shrink and create gaps between the boards. The ideal relative humidity level for your hardwood floors is between 30 and 50% year round. Gradual changes are best for maintaining the care of your floor.

Sand, grit, hard heeled shoes, and water are the highest causes of damage to your floor. Control these and you will maintain beautiful floors for years to come.

Over time the sun can also change the look of your floor by changing the color of the wood. Your finish contains UV protection to help ease the changes the sun will cause over time, but will not fully protect your floor. To help your floors age gracefully, you should move furniture and area rugs around the room, allowing covered floor surfaces to age with the exposed surfaces. This will also allow you to enjoy different looks of your floor as you change the layout of the room.