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## Caring For It- Other Residential Interior Hard Surfaces Floors

**Comprehensive Types of Hard Surface Flooring-** LVP & LVT / Vinyl Tile / VCT / Vinyl Sheet Goods / Wood Floors & Engineered Varieties /Gym Floors & Matting

**Overall Benefits of Our Hardsurface Steam Cleaning** All the above-described types of hard surface flooring (with the exception to wood floor cleaning) respond beautifully well to our deep steam extraction cleaning. Often, there is an immediate, right-before-your-eyes difference! There can be a night and day difference in the appearance when looking at the cleaned surfaces vs. the uncleaned ones.

**LVP / LVT-** Also referred to as “luxury vinyl,” this newer, highly sought-after flooring surface offers a plethora of styles and colors. These flooring types offer water resistance. Although not quite waterproof, they are ideally a good match in areas where water exists. It also has ease of installation, to some extent, also ease of repair. It is softer, quieter, and man-made, so it is more readily available. They are made in 2 ways:

- Made to mimic wood flooring, aka LVP, or known as “Luxury Vinyl Plank”
- Made to mimic tile flooring, aka LVT, or known as “Luxury Vinyl Tile”

**Vinyl “No Wax” floor material hits the market-** These vinyl square tiles replaced the older VCT as a no-wax variety. The sheen of the tile is ‘baked in’ the finish surface. Available as square tiles, these tiles were a square version of the newer “sheet goods,” described below.

**Sheet Goods-** An older version of residential flooring, also a “No Wax Floor,” the vinyl square tile and “vinyl sheet goods” liberated care beyond the drudge of stripping and waxing. Its continual shine was revolutionary. It mostly looked good day in and day out, but with age and use it would show battle scars owners wanted rid of.

**VCT- “Vinyl Composite Tile” unfinished Tile.** Although VCT is more common in commercial buildings, you do see it in residential homes as well. More complicated to maintain, homeowners usually hire professionals to strip and refinish VCT because it requires a bit of skill and special equipment to work with it.

**Gentle Cleaning for Wood Floors & Engineered Floors-** rarely offered but useful in many cases, we have what we call a “Zamboni for wood.” This machine lays a subtle amount of cleaning solution. It scrubs it, rinses and extracts it, followed by a squeegee action, all in one pass.

**Overuse of Shine Restoring Agents Can Get You In Trouble-** In some cases, where there is a wax or acrylic we are dealing with (removing it becomes a nuisance, and it can get unsightly, and attract dirt and debris). We may also use stripping solutions. When doing this, we must work in small areas and carefully so we don’t oversoak the surface (inviting damage to the wood itself).

And with an overabundance of these wax coatings, one or more strippings may be required. When done, it will become clean. But it will likely lose its shine. Generally, we do not recommend acrylic or wax coatings.

Instead, if a shine factor is what you want, be aware that these topical products may improve the shine somewhat. Many floors are not good candidates for shine products. Truly addressing the shine requires sanding and

refinishing where appropriate. Overall, it is not our recommendation that you use or overuse these products (they will come back to bite you)!

**Area Rug pad removal-** special products and gentle cleaning are needed to remove pad residues that may have transferred from the pad to the floor. The crusty film needs subtle agitation, cleaning, and even sanding to remove.

**Gym Matting.** It cannot be expressed enough how regularly disinfecting should be done on gym/yoga mats. They get exposed to body sweat and soiling from sneaker treads. Steaming is ideal to sanitize them periodically.

**DIY or Make An Appointment?** In these cases, DIY efforts often suffice, but having professionals do the work is a whole lot easier!

To sum it up, all these hard surfaces are commonplace in a residential application. And with modern living, homeowners often gladly hire professionals like ourselves to lend a hand with their cleaning needs. As family and work life began and do still whiz by, eliminating the need to clean these floors by hiring professionals is liberating, with results that surpass what they could ever hope to obtain!

## General Care for Hard Surface Floors

1. **Sweep or dust mop:** remove loose debris such as dirt, sand, etc.
2. **Track-off Mats:** Always place mats at frequently used entrances, like the garage or back door. Vacuum regularly to eliminate dirt buildup. Mats trap foreign soils but lose effectiveness if neglected.
3. **Vacuuming /Dust Mopping / Sweeping is Key:** Dusting's ok, *but vacuuming is preferred* (removes dry soil more effectively). Use a soft-brush beater-bar on high (upright or disc), or *felted wand* for canister, shop vac, or backpack vacuum.
4. **Neutral Floor Cleaner:** Use a **pH-neutral** mopping solution **7pH**. Avoid oils, strong disinfectants, or scented soaps that leave residues that travel. They also discolor grout. If you insist on a residue-laden cleaner, occasionally dry buff with a clean cloth, or rinse with plain, hot water to remove the excess.
5. **Avoid Floor Waxes:** Waxes are not suitable for vinyl, ceramic, no wax sheet goods or rubber matting.
6. **Professional Low-Moisture Auto Scrub or Steam Cleaning:** We'll advise you best for professional hard surface care. Periodically steam clean the hard surface, but beware that excess use of steam or hot water can cause delamination (lvp / lvt /pergo / other composite).
7. **Protective Sealants:** Consider getting protective sealant (not wax) after steam cleaning. We can recommend what floors are suitable for this, and if so the clear coating helps surfaces clean up better.

## Avoid Cleaners with Heavy Additives

Avoid cleaning products with heavy additives, such examples are heavy oil soaps, disinfectant soaps, and highly fragranced ones. If you must occasionally do a (limited) hot water rinse or buff with a clean terry towel!

**Convinced hiring us is the better way to go?** We're happy to help! Leave the 'wet work' to us. Having all the tools, tricks, and equipment gets it done better, faster, and without you lifting a finger! Have questions or want to schedule, give us a call! (609.953.0472)

As always, for more comprehensive information that is extremely helpful, you might want to refer to:

- Our stone and tile routine cleaning is (generally similar to LVP, Vinyl Tile & Sheet Goods).
- Our Commercial VCT care guide.
- Wood care guide (coming soon).