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Wood Floor Care Tips

Hardwood floors offer elegance and sophistication and can stand the test of time. When maintained properly, hardwood floors will serve proudly for years, often 50-100+ years or more.

Proper Cleaning - Proper floor cleaning is confusing because cleaning product promises and infomercials can be misleading, inviting damage or causing residue buildups. Another mistake is steaming floors, a big no-no that will damage the floor or ruin the finish. And don't overuse shine rejuvenating products that affect appearance.

Most wood floors can be beautifully maintained with minimal effort! In many cases, a little preventive maintenance will help maintain and enhance the natural patina an aged floor acquires year after year.

- **Wipe up all spills immediately.** Spills left untreated can result in permanent staining or surface damage.
- **Upright vacuums are discouraged.** Set the vacuum for hard surfaces. Turn off the beater-bars / brushes, if possible. Wands, disk "vac" or attachments should be felted or have soft-bristle wand glides.
- **DO NOT over-wet-mop a wood floor.** Standing water causes all kinds of problems and damage. Just don't do it! It will distort by getting in cracks, splits, or cause cupping, warping and degrade the finish or discolors the floor.
- **DO NOT use steam cleaners on wood floors.** Water in a vapor form will penetrate the wood fibers and cause irreversible damage to the wood flooring and the finish.
- **Avoid using heavy additives and scented cleaners.** Fabulously loved cleaners cause residue build-up.
- **Avoid using ammonia.** It will chemically react with the wood, causing discoloration, deterioration of the finish, and taking years of life off your hardwood floors.
- **Avoid wax and oil-based soaps' overspray from furniture polish.** They can damage the wood and will leave sticky residues that will spread and transfer to carpets, causing discoloration, leaving ugly brown traffic lanes.
- **Avoid dust-treated cloths/mop strips.** They are a huge cause of trips & falls, and should be avoided.
- **Use breathable throw rugs.** Place inside and outside doorways to prevent grit, salt, chemicals, sand, moisture, and other debris from being tracked in on the wood. In kitchens, place a breathable area rug in front of the kitchen sink.
- **Remove wet rugs.** Don't ever put wet rugs on the floor, only dry ones or they can damage the wood floors.
- **Be careful when placing area rugs on new or newly refinished floors.** Check the finish manufacturer's recommendations for when it is safe to place rugs on the floor. The finish needs to cure completely first.
- **Beware of using synthetic non-skid pads.** They can leave imprints damaging the floors that won't clean off.
- **Be aware when using area rugs.** UV/sun exposure directly on wood floors will result in fading. Areas protected by the rugs will be unaffected by the exposure, resulting in different colors.
- **Use floor protectors under the legs of furniture.** This will help prevent scuffing and scratching. Inspect and replace the protectors when soiled or damaged.
- **Avoid walking with cleats, sports shoes, and high heels.** A 125-pound woman in high heels forces 2,000 lbs per sq. inch impact on the floor, greater than a grown elephant standing on the floor!
- **Keep pet claws trimmed and buffed.** No matter the size of the pet, its claws are sharp and can leave scratches.
- **Be careful when moving heavy items.** Use felted movers, dollies, or handtrucks with clean, soft wheels. Do not slide heavy items on wood flooring. Instead, pick up and set in place the furniture to avoid scratching the floors.
- **Heed extreme caution when moving appliances.** When moving refrigerators, stoves, etc., use safety glides, or reinforced floor protection like Ramboard™, and/or plywood placed on a blanket, and move in short spurts.
- **Use humidifiers and dehumidifiers.** Throughout the winter/dry months, use a humidifier and a dehumidifier in the summer/humid months to keep wood movement and shrinkage to a minimum. It's crucial to maintain a consistent environment throughout the year to minimize floor movement.
- **Refinish when needed.** When the floor loses its luster, becomes scratched or damaged, it's time for refinishing!

Adopting these care practices will help assure your hardwood's lasting beauty!
For more information and comprehensive tips, refer to our Wood Care Guide