

Maintenance and Care of Your New Hardwood Floors

Wood is a product of Mother Nature. Just as there are no two identical trees, no two pieces of wood are alike. This is the beauty of a natural product. The natural colour and the graining will differ from piece to piece. This is most prominent in the traditional grade where you can expect a rustic appearance with pronounced color variation (in lower grades), streaks, lengths, tight knots, scattered pinworm, and hollow small surface checks. There are few natural flooring covering products that can give you the richness, the warmth and the beautiful mystique that hardwood floors can.

Here are some tips for maintaining your floor.

- Use only proper floor cleaners which are recommended by the “wood flooring” manufacturer. Read directions on the product info label. Overuse of cleaners can cause buildup and streaking.
- Do not use a wet mop or steam cleaner, this may leave puddles of water that can leak down between the boards and cause the finish to lift.
- Remove spills promptly and wipe the area with hardwood cleaner
- Use hardwood friendly area rugs at entrance ways inside your home, and rub off mats outside your home to help keep dirt and grit from being tracked onto your hardwood floors. Such contamination underfoot can abrade the finish of your hardwood flooring.
- Place a rug in front of the kitchen sink, fridge and dishwasher to prevent premature wear and possible damage caused by falling utensils, pots, water, etc..
- Sweep and vacuum floors regularly. To avoid scratches. Never clean floors with beater bar vacuums.
- Place protectors on the feet of all furniture and appliances to prevent scratching and gouging.

- Dogs will scratch the finish of the hardwood floor. Keeping your dog's nails clipped back may limit such damage
- The relative humidity of your home should be kept between 35% and 55% .This will help prevent shrinking (low humidity) and expansion (high humidity) of your hardwood floors. Shrinking will create gaps between the side edge of the boards and expansion could cause your hardwood floors to cup
- UV (ultraviolet) rays from sunlight and lighting will cause a chemical reaction with the wood floor (not the finish) creating a high "patina" (a mellow or darken of the floor). This is a gradual process which is generally noticed only when area rugs and the low lying furniture are moved. This is no cause for concern because the area previously covered up will gradually develop a patina if left uncovered. This is much more noticeable on light colored floors. Note: if you use rugs you want ones that will allow the floors to breathe. Avoid rugs with a rubber backing or other non-venting material.
- High heels, sand and water are some of the worst enemies of hardwood floors and flooring.
- Heating ducts which rub directly under your hardwood floor (underneath the subfloor in your basement) should be well insulated. If not the heat reflected from the ductwork, during the heating season, can dry your hardwood floor causing the floors to shrink, thus leaving gaps between boards. The same thing can happen to your wood floor if directly over top of the furnace.

Recommended cleaners sold at Bigelow Flooring are:

- ~ Bona Hardwood Cleaner available in:
 - kits with microfiber mop and dry dusting mop head
 - spray bottles
 - refill bottles
- ~ Hagesan Hardwood Cleaner
- ~ Bona Hardwood Refinisher

Warranty: Every flooring manufacturer has a specific warranty program for each product line. Please keep your invoice in a safe place for proof of purchase. Labor warranty is one year from the date of installation.

Maintenance and Care of Your New Laminate Floors

- Remove spills promptly and wipe area with a laminate cleaner.
- Use doormats at all exterior entrances to trap sand, grit and moisture before it enters the house. If you use rugs, they should allow the floor to breathe. Avoid rugs with rubber backing or other non-ventilating material.
- Sweep and vacuum floors regularly. Do not let sand or grit buildup.
- Never clean floor with beater bar vacuums, electric brooms, steel wool, scouring powder or abrasive cleaners such as Comet or Vim
- Place protectors on the feet of all furniture. Rolling furniture should be fitted with soft rubber chair casters.
- Do not use a wet mop or a steam cleaner, this may leave puddles of water that can leak down between the boards and cause the finish to lift.
- Always apply laminate cleaner directly to a cloth or mop and never directly to the floor. Do not use wax, oil soap, or other household cleaners.
- In order to avoid severe drying out during the heating season you should ensure that the room temperature does not exceed 22 degrees Celsius and that the relative humidity is between 30-55%. In the interests of maintaining this ideal climate we recommend the use of a humidifier during the heating season. The formation of gaps in the flooring can be expected in the event of failure to maintain the recommended relative humidity level.

Recommended cleaner sold at Bigelow Flooring is:

Bona laminate cleaner available in:

- kits with microfiber mop and dry dusting mop heads
- spray bottles
- refill bottles

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Maintenance and Care of Your New Tile Floors

Ceramic and Porcelain

- Keep your tile floors free of dust and sandy soil to minimize scratches, wear patterns and grout soiling that can develop from everyday use and traffic.
- Use walk off mats to trap abrasive soil. Sweep, dust, or vacuum surfaces regularly to remove loose soil and dust.
- Use a neutral pH cleaner for natural stone or a cleaner specifically formulated for ceramic and porcelain tile and grout. Do not use ordinary household cleaners as you can degrade the sealer that was applied to the grout to protect it from stains.

Natural Stone

- Proper maintenance is critical when it comes to taking care of natural stone. Stone is naturally porous and therefore requires stone specific cleaners that have a neutral pH.
- Acids and even a light solution of vinegar and water will etch and eventually damage natural stone.
- All natural stone must be sealed prior to installation/grouting to provide maximum stain protection. Sealer should be re applied every 12 to 24 months depending on usage
- Penetrating sealers are used to create a natural look and do not alter the look of the tile. Stone enhancing sealers are formulated to darken, enrich and highlight the natural beauty of the stone.

Glass tile

- For routine cleaning use any non-abrasive compound recommend for either glass or tile. Remember not to use products with ammonia, bleach or abrasives because it can discolor the grout or alter the finish of the tile.
- For regular cleaning warm water and a soft cloth will be one of the best things you can use.

Metal Tile

- To clean, use a liquid nonabrasive household cleaner. Do not use scouring pads or steel wool. You can use a mix of warm water and a mild soap detergent or a mix of warm water and vinegar and wipe clean with a soft cloth

Grout

- A grout haze can form on the tile between 12-24hrs after the tiles have been installed and grouted. You can simply remove this by using a white cotton cloth to dry buff the surface of the tile. A small amount of water on the cloth can be used, but make sure that you do not buff directly on the grout joint before it has a chance to fully cure (24-48hrs)
- Grout needs to be cleaned on a periodic basis to remove any surface buildup.
- Even though the grout is sealed, this does not guarantee against surface buildup or discoloration.
- If your grout has not been sealed, it is recommended to apply a sealer on an annual basis depending on the quality of the sealer, traffic patterns and maintenance routine.
- Grout and tile cleaners are capable of removing grease, soap scum, body oil, mildew stains, algae and synthetic waxes.
- Grout colorant is available when grout has been stained to the point when it cannot be returned back to its natural color.

Recommended cleaners sold at Bigelow Flooring are:

Ceramic Tile - Hagesan superfloor shine cleaner

Porcelain Tile - Hagesan streak free cleaner

Natural Stone - Hagesan Neutral; pH cleaner safe for all stone surfaces

- Multi use cleaners and strippers for specific natural stone are available

Natural stone sealers - available through most of our suppliers

Grout sealer - Hagesan grout protector and grout sealer application bottles

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Maintenance and Care of Your New Carpet Floors

- Vacuum frequently and thoroughly to remove dirt particles which dull the carpet appearance. Use vacuum cleaner with beater bar (except on looped pile berber and wool carpets).
- Remove spills immediately by using a carpet spot remover and cleaners.
- In order to maintain and protect your warranty coverage, Periodic professional cleaning is necessary every 12-18 months to remove the oily or sticky soil that builds up in the pile. Professional, hot water extraction (steam cleaning) method is recommended. The more time that elapse before treatment, the more difficult a stain will be to remove.
- Carpets with stain resistant treatment improves your ability to clean, not prevent stains. Bleaches, plant foods, hot coffee or tea, wine, shoe polish, hair dye may stain the carpet permanently.
- Matting or crushing are not manufacturing defects. It occurs over time by use.
- Shedding is normal with some new cut pile carpets. It will stop over time
- Pooling, which is a naturally occurring phenomena it is not a defect. Occasionally you may find small tufts of fiber sprouting above the carpet surface do not pull, simply clip with sharp scissors.
- In wall to wall carpeting high heat and humidity may cause rippling. If the carpet remains rippled especially through multiple seasons please let us know
- Some carpet will seam better than others depending on the style and thickness of the carpet. If the seam is tight together and cut straight without cutting the pile on cut pile products and the seams still a bit visible this is normal and is not a sign of a poor job.
- To remove a dent caused by heavy furniture, stroke carpet with the edges of a coin. You can also use a hair dryer to gently raise the dented area.

Recommended spot cleaner sold at Bigelow Flooring is:

~ Richmond spot carpet cleaner

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Maintenance and Care of Your New Vinyl Floors

- Immediately after installation do not disturb the sealed seams and keep traffic light during the first 24 hours to allow the adhesive to dry properly.
- Clean any adhesive residue or factory printing on the surface of the product by using a clean white cloth dampened with mineral spirits
- When moving furniture or appliances place “Glide Guard” or plywood on the floor and walk objects across the panels to avoid scratching your floor.
- Close your curtains or blinds where extreme sunlight hits the floor. A combination of both heat and sunlight cause most home furnishings including vinyl floors to fade or discolor
- Place felt pads or non-staining glides or casters on the bottom of chairs and furniture
- If you see seams opening let us know immediately so it can be repaired. Failure to do this could result in our not being able to repair.
- If the vinyl is cut straight and butts together tight but the seam is visible this is normal and not a defect in workmanship.

Maintenance:

- Sweep or vacuum regularly to remove dirt and grit that can abrade or scratch your new floors. Do not use a beater bar when vacuuming because it can visibly damage the floor surface.
- Clean floors using only manufacturer recommended floor cleaners.

Recommended cleaners sold at Bigelow Flooring are:

- ~ Armstrong Once n' Done
- ~ Congoleum Bright n' Easy
- ~ Hagesan Vinyl Cleaner

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Maintenance and Care of Your New Groutable Luxury Vinyl Tile Floors

It is normal to have grout haze after the initial install cleaning by the installer. Traffic should be kept off the installation until the grout has completely dried - Min 24hrs

- Homeowners are responsible for a final cleaning
- Dilute vinyl cleaner and use with cloth to remove any remaining leftover haze from the grout, Buff dry with a soft cloth.
- You may clean the surface of the tile to eliminate any haze residue, keep any cleaners and water away from the grout joints for min 5 days.
- Do not use grout haze cleaners.
- Tile may be walked on immediately after install, no heavy rolling traffic for 72 hrs after Install.
- Use wood panels when moving heavy furniture and appliances back into the room.
- Do not use vacuums with beater bars.
- Use floor protectors under all furniture

Recommended cleaners sold at Bigelow Flooring:

- ~ Armstrong Once n' Done
- ~ Congoleum Bright n' Easy
- ~ Hagesan Vinyl Cleaner

Warranty: Every flooring manufacturer has a specific warranty program for each product line. Please keep your invoice in a safe place for proof of purchase. Labor warranty is one year from the date of install