



MAINTENANCE GUIDE FOR PRE-VARNISHED FLOORS ONLY

Satisfaction for Years to Come

Thank you for choosing the best pre-varnished floor on the market! American Wide Plank Flooring includes this maintenance guide which contains useful advice pertaining to the upkeep of your floor and the preservation of its beauty for years to come. Please respect these instructions as they are a determining factor in the application of your warranty.

The Right Maintenance Product

At American Wide Plank Flooring, we recommend the use of our line of methods which are specially designed to clean and protect your pre-varnished floor.

First Step

Start by using the vacuum cleaner regularly. It is the most efficient way to remove dust and abrasives from the surface. In the absence of a vacuum cleaner, sweep the floor carefully with a broom duster.

Second Step

Spray a small amount of our cleaner on the microfibre surface of your mop and clean one section of the floor at a time, using a back and forth motion in the direction of the length of the floorboards. Repeat the operation on the other sections of the floor. Wash the microfiber mop cover when necessary. For best results, clean the surface of your hardwood floor at least once a month.

Warning!

Household detergents, wax, mixtures of water and vinegar (which has an oxidising effect) and oil based soaps must be avoided at all times. Contrary to popular belief, these products can discolour and damage the finish and leave a residue on the surface that can render the floor slippery and difficult to maintain. The build up of wax or oily substances could greatly inhibit the application of a restorer coat.

- We recommend the use of a vacuum cleaner instead of a standard broom which causes dust particles and abrasives to be lodged in the micro-v joints as well as between the planks.
- Microfibre mop covers should be machine washed separately from other laundry items using a mild de-tergent. Do not use softeners.

The Effects of Humidity

Because of its organic nature, wood constantly reacts to the variations in its environment. The ideal range of internal moisture of your wood floor should be between 6% and 9%. Wood expands by absorbing excessive moisture in the air and contracts if the humidity level becomes insufficient.

If their internal moisture level is too high, the floorboards can become slightly curved. On the other hand, spaces can appear between the floorboards if the internal moisture content is insufficient. But when the ambient humidity level stabilizes, wood regains its original dimension.

Warning !

In all circumstances, do not saturate the floor with water when cleaning.

Please note that it takes a mere 5% change in the ambient air relative humidity to affect the wood's internal moisture level. This can cause variations in floorboard dimensions.

To maintain the dimensional stability of your wood floor, the ambient humidity levels should be maintained at levels between 40% and 60%. To correct the environmental conditions in your home, use the appropriate ventilation appliances such as: air exchanger, heating system, dehumidifier, humidifier, etc.

The Effects of Abrasives

Pebbles lodged in the heels of shoes, or sand trudged in from the outdoors act like sandpaper under friction when walked on and they can easily mark the surface of the floor and damage its finish.

Place mats at the threshold of all access doors in your home. Choose mats which collect and retain the abrasives while allowing ventilation. Vacuum often to avoid build up of abrasives on your floor.

The Effects of Water

It is a well known fact that wood fibres inflate when they absorb water. This can deteriorate your wood floor and its finish. Water infiltration can cause the floorboards to expand which can lead the discoloration of the wood surface and the development of mould in the joints of the floorboards.

In the home, it is important to pay special attention to the most likely places where water damage can occur, such as the kitchen and the main hall entry. Do whatever is necessary to make sure that water and snow do not come into contact with your wood floor. It is also important to maintain the prescribed temperature and humidity levels in the home.



Warning!

Never saturate the floor with water when cleaning but simply use a damp mop.

Useful Tips

If an accidental spill occurs on your hardwood floor, immediately wipe the water or other liquid before it is absorbed by the wood fibres. Protect your floor with mats in front of the sink, dishwasher, center island or other work sites. Don't forget to place protective carpets in entryways to protect the floor from water and snow. Elsewhere in the home, place leak-proof saucers under your houseplant containers to avoid water spills.

Because of high humidity levels, the installation of wood flooring in the bathroom is not recommended. The ambient relative humidity should be maintained at levels between 40% and 60% to maintain.

The Effects of Pressure

If pressure exerted on your wood floor is greater than its compression resistance, marking will result. Pressure is determined by an object's weight and its surface contact with the floor. For an equivalent weight, the smaller the contact surface, the greater the pressure exerted on the floor.

Warning!

Footwear that is fitted with cleats or metal-tipped soles is to be proscribed as well as high heeled shoes, as they can mark the floor. The heel is so small that the exerted pressure can easily reach 3,500 pounds per square inch. If the heel is worn or broken, the damage may be even greater.



Useful Tips

Glue felt pads to the legs of furniture and chairs, to avoid scratching the floor when objects are moved. Periodically examine the pads for wear and replace when needed.

Avoid rolling chairs with narrow casters on the finished surface. Replace them with wide rubber or flexible polyurethane casters. Plexi-glass chair mats are also recommended. When moving heavy furniture, distribute the load on a piece of plywood laid on a blanket, to avoid scratching the floor.

Verify your pets' claws and trim them regularly to prevent scratches and indentations on the floor.

The Effects of Discolouration

American Wide Plank Flooring products have a protective screen incorporated in the polyurethane factory finish that filters out UV rays responsible for yellowing of the finish of your floor. This will longer preserve the original appearance of your floor. Nonetheless, from time to time, take the precaution to move furniture and carpets around so that as your floor ages, its color will remain even.

Useful Tips

Here are some simple tips for dealing with day to day problems.

- Scratched wood finish and/or deep scratches
To repair surface scratches in the urethane finish use the Finitec touch-up kit. To replace a floor board damaged by a blow from a heavy object, follow our replacement instructions included in this guide.
- Accidental spills
First, use a paper towel or a dry cloth to wipe up the spill, and then spray some Finitec cleaner on a cloth to clean the surface.

- Greasy or oily stains
Pour some Finitec cleaner on a clean cloth and rub the soiled area in a circular motion. Then proceed to wipe the surface thoroughly.
- Rubber or heel marks
Rub with a cloth lightly dampened with Finitec cleaner.
- Stubborn stains: tar, ink, wax crayon, lipstick etc.
First try removing the stain using a cloth dampened with Finitec cleaner. If you do not obtain the desired results, pour a small amount of paint thinner or lighter fluid on a dry cloth and rub the stain. Once the stain is removed, wipe the surface using Finitec cleaner to remove any solvent residue.

Characteristics of Matte and Ultra-Matte Varnished Floors

Matte varnished floors, popular in Europe for the last 20 years, have only been available in North America since 2010. They are now very trendy. They have great advantages: the natural beauty of the wood is brought to the fore, and scratches and deep marks are less noticeable. Yet, most people do not know about matte varnish. It is important to note that matte varnish makes the floors more porous than a semi-gloss varnish, for example. Therefore, they require a little more maintenance and a better deep cleaning. When you have finished installing the floors, do a deep wash to remove any marks and inlaid dirt. Be

sure to put pressure on the mop, to go in the direction of the grain, and to use Finitec cleaning products. An industrial polisher with a cleaning pad would be of great use. For regular cleaning, read and follow the instructions in this maintenance guide. Be aware that this kind of floor shows more rubbing or cleaning marks, footprints, etc.



Floorboards: Minor Repairs

Finitec wood patch is specially designed to fill cracks, nail holes and other imperfections found in hardwood flooring.

- Fill the hole with the wood patch
- Use Finitec cleaner and a clean cloth to remove any excess putty
- If necessary, sand slightly and apply a thin coat of varnish
- Let dry for approximately one hour.

Instructions for replacing a damaged floorboard

To replace a damaged floorboard, follow these easy instructions or contact your American Wide Plank Flooring retailer if you are not able to perform the repairs.

Vacuum the floor and make sure the surface is clean.

- Select a replacement board which matches with the surrounding boards. Choose one that is slightly longer than the one to be changed.
- To remove the existing floorboard, cut the board lengthwise to within 1/2" of the edges using a circular saw or router.
- For a glued board, make several cuts close together to separate the board into smaller sections.
- Make a diagonal cut down the center of the board from one end to the other. It may be necessary to make more than one cut if the board is glued in place.
- Remove the central part of the board first (between the side cuts) using a chisel.
- Remove nails or staples, and then remove edges, taking care not to damage the adjacent boards.
- Remove the underlying construction paper or adhesive and clean any residue from the subfloor.
- Trim the replacement board to the desired length, cutting excess length 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, and then remove it. Apply glue to the subfloor.



- Install the board, using a rubber mallet and a wood block to place it in position.

Restoration of a pre-varnished floor

After a number of years of use, pre-varnished wood floors can still be restored to their original beauty. If the wear of the floor is limited, a new coat of varnish is all that is necessary. If the floor is quite used, it is best to sand the surface and apply a new finish. You may also change the color of your floor with the stain of your choice.

Finitec Cleaning System

Finitec floor cleaning products are specially designed for the maintenance of wood flooring. You will appreciate this quick and easy cleaning system which does not require buckets and water for cleaning! For maximum results, choose products recommended by American Wide Plank Flooring.

To locate a retailer closest to you,

go to our website at : www.americanwideplankflooring.ca or call us Toll free at : 1 855 801-3030.

American Wide Plank Flooring highly recommends the following products :

- Finitec wood floor cleaner
- Microfibre mop cover with a sturdy 3 piece aluminum handle
- Finitec 9000, water based polyurethane finish.

Thank you for choosing American Wide Plank Flooring for your floor!