

SILICON VALLEY HARDWOOD FLOORS

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Floor Care Tips

With today's finishes wood floors are relatively easy to maintain. By following the simple steps listed below, you should be able to enjoy your wood floor for many years.

1. Place scatter rugs at entrances. This will help trap grit and other material, which can scratch your floor. The rugs should be swept, or vacuumed on a regular basis. These rugs should occasionally be moved to provide equal oxidation throughout the entire floor, allowing the floor to age at the same rate throughout. Also, don't use the rugs until 2 weeks after the finish has been applied.
2. Place mats near high spill areas but do not allow soiled rugs to stay on the floor as they can trap moisture next to the floor. Rugs should be cleaned and replaced on a regular basis.
3. Do not use water on your floor. This means you should not wet-mop your floor. A damp/dry mop is fine as long as the moisture is limited to an amount that will evaporate almost immediately. Water will seep through cracks in the floor causing the finish to break down and damage your floor. A wet rag may be used for cleaning up spills but be sure to dry afterward and do not leave any moisture on the floor.
4. It is recommended that you vacuum your floor regularly. This will replace mopping and will remove dirt and rocks that can scratch your floor.
5. Always use the manufacturers recommended cleaning products on your floor. If you don't know the manufacturer, use a generic hardwood floor cleaner designed for the type of finish that is on your floor. You will need to determine whether you have a surface coated floor, which is the most common in today's market, or if you have a penetrating oil or wax based floor finish as was common in the 40's, 50's and 60's.

A cleaner for surface finishes, such as urethane, is quite common and readily available. This is generally a water-based product similar to Windex. Do not use Windex as it will leave a film. Do not use a solvent based (petroleum based products) cleaner on urethane-finished floors (surface coated). Solvents/petroleum's will soften and break down a surface finish.

Solvent type maintenance products were originally created for waxed hardwood floors and are still important products for floors that are finished with penetrating oil or wax finish. Although not as common, there is still a demand for this traditional finish. Using a water-based cleaner as in the urethane finished floor cleaners will ruin a penetrating finish. It will turn it first a white color (like a ring from a glass on a coffee table) and eventually black as it rots the wood.

6. Put floor glides under your furniture. This will allow your furniture to move but not scratch the floor.
7. Heels can exert a tremendous amount of pressure per inch. They can dent even the hardest of floors. Baseball cleats or even a dog with unclipped toenails can also damage a floor.
8. Motors generating heat should be kept off the floor, or directed away from the floor. Refrigerators and dishwashers with bottom motors should have appliance trays installed under them to protect the floor from heat. Heat can cause the floor to have varying degrees of dryness. This may cause uneven shrinkage and cracking. These cracks, while not obvious, will collect dirt causing them to become more visible over time. Lastly, the lighter the floor's color the more visible the dirt will be.
9. If the floor is beginning to show significant wear it may be time to recoat the floor. Consult a flooring professional regarding your options. By recoating the floor at the first signs of wear, you will be able to bring your floor back to new condition with just a recoating. If the floor is allowed to wear into the wood, it will require the floor to be resanded and then coated resulting in a much higher cost.