



Thank you for choosing Maine Traditions Hardwood Flooring. We hope you are enjoying your new hardwood floor. With some easy maintenance you will protect the beauty of your floor for many years.

Regular Maintenance

The first step in caring for your new floor is regularly vacuuming. Mop as needed with a damp mop and a mild detergent made for cleaning hardwood floors. There are many brands on the market. Make sure to wring the mop thoroughly to remove excess water.

Never use wax, regular household detergents, or oil based soaps on the floor. These products may damage the finish, cause discoloration and leave a greasy film that will make the floor slippery and hard to maintain in the future. Mixtures of vinegar and water are also not recommended. Vinegar has an oxidizing effect on the finish.



The Effects of Moisture on Your Wood Flooring

Water causes wood fibers to swell, which will damage your floors and their finish. Water can cause discoloration, alter floorboard dimensions, and lead to mold buildup between boards. Special care must

be taken in kitchens and entryways. Wipe up any liquids before they are absorbed. Place floor mats at entryways and in front of sinks and work areas in the kitchen.



Wood constantly reacts to variations in temperature and humidity. Ideally the internal moisture level should be between 6% and 9%. Wood swells and contracts with the variations. Floorboards with higher moisture levels will swell and bulge slightly, and you

may see spaces between the floorboards when levels are too low. Most generally the flooring will resume its original dimensions when levels return to normal. Use appropriate appliances like humidifiers and dehumidifiers to control the environment.

The Effects of Abrasives on Your Wood Flooring

Abrasives can cause a lot of damage to your wood floor. Sand and small pebbles can act like sandpaper on the finish. Even the tiniest grain of dirt can leave marks on your floor. Vacuum often and place mats inside and/ or outside exterior doors to trap dirt and keep your floor free of debris.



Be cautious of the heels of shoes as they can leave unsightly dents in your floor. Heel surfaces are small and the pressure exerted can easily reach 3,500 pounds per square inch. Broken or worn heels can mar floors even more. Avoid walking on flooring in cleats or any metal-tipped soles.

We recommend attaching felt pads to the legs of your furniture and chairs to avoid scratching the floor when objects are moved during use. Avoid placing rolling chairs with casters directly on the hardwood flooring. Place them on rugs or chair mats.

Do not drag furniture or heavy objects across the finished surface. Lift furniture to be moved and place it on a piece of plywood that has been laid on a blanket if you must slide items along the floor.

Keep your pet's claws trimmed to prevent scratching and indentations.



Tips in Review

- Sweep or vacuum regularly so abrasive dirt won't scratch the finish.
- Wipe up any spilled liquid quickly from your floor.
- Watch out for high heels—they are hardwood flooring's worst enemy after sand and water—and some kinds of sports footwear, particularly if they're worn or damaged.
- Place floor mats outside and inside entrances. This will prevent the build-up of sand and dirt.
- Place mats in front of the kitchen sink, the dishwasher, and all kitchen work stations to protect your floor from dropped utensils and spills of water, detergent, and food. Avoid mats with rubber or other dense backing that prevents airflow and traps abrasive dirt and moisture.
- Attach felt pads to the feet of all furniture to make it easier to move and prevent scratches. Keep the pads clean, and replace if they become soiled, worn or damaged.
- Replace plastic casters with wide rubber or soft polyurethane casters.
- Protect the floor when moving furniture. Use a mat turned upside down with a slightly smaller piece of plywood on top of it. Place furniture on top and slide it.
- Use a hygrometer [relative humidity indicator] to check moisture content in the air to ensure that relative

humidity is within the recommended range. Maintain humidity levels between 40 and 50%, for your own health as well as for the protection of your floor and wooden furniture.

- Avoid exposing your floor to sunlight and intense artificial light, which can cause wood to change color. This is a completely normal and natural phenomenon. The lighter the wood, the more pronounced the change will be.
- Move your carpets and furniture occasionally and use a minimum number of light sources to keep color changes uniform.

Repair & Replacement of Damaged Flooring

To repair small scratches, a repair kit may be purchased at your flooring supply store. Follow the directions on the kit that you choose to use. If you are unable to perform the repairs yourself, contact a professional.

Factory-finished floors can be restored after a number of years of use. Depending on the condition of the floor, you have two options. If wear is limited, you can apply a new top coat. Major scratches or damaged floors may be sanded and refinished. This option often allows you to stain the floor a different color if you wish.

Replacing a damaged board is a relatively simple fix. The basic replacement steps follow, using common household tools.

Select a replacement board slightly longer than the one to be changed. Check for color and pattern matching to the surrounding boards.

Next, set a circular saw to the depth of the board thickness. Make one cut inset 3/8" on each side of the board to be removed.

Make a third cut at a 45° angle across the board from the first long cut to the second long cut.

With a chisel, carefully remove the board pieces to avoid damage to adjoining boards.

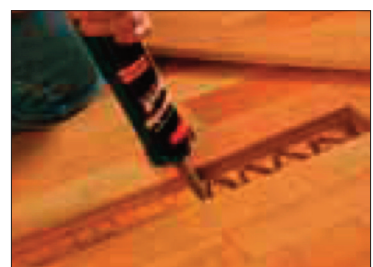
Remove any underlying construction paper or adhesive and clean residue from the subfloor.

Trim replacement board to the desired length, cutting excess 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. Remove it.

Apply quality adhesive to the subfloor.

Install the replacement board, using a wood block and rubber mallet.



Common Maintenance Mistakes to Avoid:

- Do not pour floor cleaner directly on the floor.
- Do not use a wet mop that can leave excess water behind.
- Never use floor wax, oil-based detergent, or any other household cleaner on your floor. These products can damage the finish and leave a greasy film that makes your floor slippery and difficult to maintain.
- Mixtures of water and vinegar are not recommended for cleaning prefinished flooring. Vinegar has an oxidizing effect on the finish.
- Do not raise or lower the temperature of a radiant heating system by more than 5°F (2.8°C) per day when turning the system on or off.

Troubleshooting Tips

Here are some simple tips for dealing with everyday problems.

Spilled Liquid—Quickly wipe up spills with a dry cloth or paper towel, and then spray some wood floor cleaner on a cloth to clean the surface.

Sticky or Oily Stains—Dampen a cloth with wood floor cleaner and rub the soiled area. Rinse the cloth and wipe the surface thoroughly.

Rubber or Heel Marks—Rub with a cloth lightly dampened with wood floor cleaner.

Stubborn Stains—Ink, tar, wax crayon, etc. First, try cleaning the stain using a cloth and wood floor cleaner.

If these steps don't work, you may need to contact your flooring dealer or contractor for a recommendation. It may be necessary to lightly abrade the area and apply a new top coat. Severe cases may require replacement of the affected boards.