

# Maintenance for Hard Floors

## LACQUERED/OILED

As we know 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder'. There is little difference in the purchase cost between a lacquered and an oiled floor; therefore it will most likely be the look of the flooring that determines which the consumer will choose. This said there are a number of other considerations, which should be born in mind when taking this decision.

Lacquered hardwood floors are pretty much non-maintenance. Obviously they need to be swept over with a soft broom from time to time and occasionally wiped over with a lightly moistened mop or damp cloth. They will however show scratch marks with usage, as would a lacquered tabletop. With a bad scratch, it is possible that a French polisher may be able to improve the appearance; however local repairs generally achieve limited success.

It is of course possible to completely sand and re-seal a lacquered floor, although this would not normally be required until such times as the flooring has given several years of hard wear. Unless the flooring has been badly damaged during its lifetime, this process will pretty much restore the flooring to 'as new' condition.

Oiled floors are on the other hand much more forgiving where scratching is concerned. Scratches tend to be less obvious and are also much easier to repair locally. A light sand, followed by the re-application of oil, will generally restore the appearance of the flooring without the need to refinish the entire area.

There are however maintenance issues, which one needs to take on board, before purchasing an oiled product. It is the saturation of the timber surface with oil, which protects the flooring against spillage and soiling. It is important therefore to ensure that oil is applied to the surface of the flooring periodically.

How often the flooring needs oiling will depend upon the environment in which the product is laid. Logically; an oiled floor laid in the hallway of a country cottage, where one-steps immediately from the outdoors onto the flooring, will require more maintenance than an oiled floor laid to the lounge of a penthouse apartment in the West End of London. In the winter months; the proprietor of the cottage would also do well to consider providing some further protection of the flooring; by way of an entrance mat laid just inside the doorway of their home.

In conclusion, the use of common sense is your best aid in maintaining the long lasting good looks of an oiled floor.

## **MAINTENANCE FOR PRE-FINISHED LACQUERED & OILED HARDWOOD FLOORS**

Since wood is a natural material each board will be unique and will vary in colour and grain characteristics. It will scratch and indent and can change colour when exposed to UV light.

Your floor may expand or contract due to local changes in temperature or climate Osmo Hardwood Cleaner is recommended for normal cleaning along with vacuuming or sweeping.

A simple well rung mop or damp cloth can be used on occasional basis. Do not use soap, wax or polish as it will leave a layer of film behind making the floor look greasy. As an added precaution use felt pas under furniture legs and pads or plastic wheels under chair legs.

**Always use a doormat in an entrance.**

### **AFTER CARE**

One of the most common causes of damage to wooden floors are stiletto heels, these shoes can leave a small round indent on your floor, so beware!

Over wetting of your flooring during cleaning can cause the timber to swell so ensure that your mop is well rung or if liquids are spilt that they are wiped up immediately. Steam cleaning your Hardwood Floor is not recommended.

Rugs can add a touch of comfort to any room but remember that timber floors tend to darken or lighten with or lack of exposure to ultra violet light. Be aware of furniture or plant pots which can restrict light too.

Tables and chairs that sit on your wood floor should have pads adhered to the base of the legs or castor cups should be used.

# MAINTENANCE FOR HARDWOOD OILED FLOORS

## REMEMBER

Place doormats inside and outside the front door to stop dirt and grit being walked in, which can cause considerable wear. Put protective pads on furniture (not metal feet, which mark wood floors) to avoid unnecessary marks and scratches on the floor. In rooms where you know water is frequently spilled, and where it may also be left on the floor, we recommend that the floor be treated with Oil Refresher after laying. This seals the joints between the boards and gives better protection against water. Wood floors expand and contract depending on the ambient climate. To counteract excessive movement, and consequential damage to the floor, maintain a normal room temperature and a relative humidity of 45–65%. Certain wood species such as Beech and Hard Maple are more susceptible to climatic variations than others.

## *CLEANING OILED FLOORS*

For daily cleaning, use dry methods such as vacuuming. When necessary, damp-clean the floor with a well wrung-out floor mop. The floor must only become slightly damp. The film of water formed in this way must dry within one minute. For the best cleaning results, use pH neutral cleaner. (Maximum pH 8) Do not allow spilt water to be left on the floor, particularly on Beech and Hard Maple floors, which are particularly susceptible to moisture. The frequency of damp cleaning depends on how much the floor is used and how soiled it gets. Regularly cleaning the floor prevents dirt from adhering to the oiled surface. Unnecessary cleaning using damp methods does more harm than good. This applies particularly to the first few weeks after maintenance with an Oil Refresher.

## *REMOVING MARKS*

Remove marks as soon as possible using water and a neutral cleaner. If this does not work, remove the mark using a green nylon pad, e.g. Scotch- Brite. After removing the mark, you may need to apply a little Touch-up Oil to the area before applying a new Oil Refresher.

## *REPAIR OILED FLOORS*

UV oil is hardened using UV-light. As it is an industrial method, UV-oil cannot be applied on site. The surface, therefore, cannot be recreated in its original condition.

## *PARTIAL REPAIR OF OILED FLOORS*

Treat small surface scratches and scrape marks with Oil Refresher. First fill deep dents, scratches and cracks with Wood filler, then oil with Touch-up Oil. Boards with major damage can be replaced.