



## Ceramic Tile Flooring Care and Maintenance

### Grout Care

1. Grout is the mortar type material used to fill the spaces between the individual tiles, or stone. It's purpose is simply to fill the joint between the tiles and become a permanent, integral part of the floor.
2. Neither sealing the grout nor using a 100% Epoxy Grout will guarantee against surface build up or discoloration of the grout.
3. Grout needs to be cleaned on a periodic basis to remove any surface residue build up.
4. This routine cleaning can be done with a neutral PH balanced daily-use household or commercial cleaner depending on the application.
5. When heavy-duty grout cleaning is required, you can use a professional strength tile and grout cleaner that is capable of removing grease, soap scum, body oil, mildew stains algae, and synthetic or acrylic waxes from the grout joints.

### Post Grouting Installation Clean-Up

1. Grout haze is a film left behind on the surface of the tile as part of the final grouting process; it is usually buffed off the surface after the grout has achieved its initial 12 to 24 hour cure, with the use of a cheese cloth material. If after 48 hrs a grout haze still exists, then use a "grout haze remover" which usually contains Sulfamic Acid. Sulfamic acid cleaners should ONLY be used on Ceramic and/or Porcelain tiles. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Never use Acids on natural stone tiles;** this could lead to permanent etching. Instead use a Natural Stone Cleaner and a cheese cloth for grout haze removal.
2. In cases where you have used Epoxy Grouts, you may need to use an "Epoxy Haze Remover". These cleaners are formulated to quickly and safely remove Epoxy grout haze, without damaging the grout or the tile face of your newly installed ceramic floor.

### Routine Maintenance

1. You should allow your new ceramic tile and grout to dry for at least 72 hours after installation, before any type of maintenance occurs.
2. Cleaning your new floor with a damp mop once a week is the best thing you can do to maintain your ceramic floor.
3. A simple sweeping or vacuuming of your tile floor prior to mopping will remove any dust or debris.
4. Make sure that any cleanser you have chosen is compatible with grout cleaning, (neutral pH), and will not stain the grout. We recommend Shaw's **R2X Hard Surface Cleaner**.
5. Heavy traffic areas should be mopped more often than once a week.
6. Never use a detergent or soap because it may dull the surface.
7. When cleaning, the entire area should be cleaned or scrubbed with the cleansing solution, through the use of a cotton mop, cloth, sponge, or non-metallic brush.
8. The entire flooring area should then be rinsed with clean water to remove any cleaning solution residue.
9. Cleaning unglazed tiles should be done on a regular basis using cleansers that have a neutral pH for safe regular use; these cleaners are better suited at removing grease, oils, and normal spills from unglazed products.
10. Remember: Routine cleaners should never contain acids, vinegar, chlorines or ammonia as these chemicals can damage and discolor the grout or the surface of the stone or tile.
11. Always thoroughly rinse the flooring surface after cleaning, using clean clear water, to avoid any periodic residue build up or mold and mildew growth.

### Protecting Your Ceramic Floor

1. Protect you ceramic tile by affixing felt or similar pads to the legs of any metal, iron, wood or plastic furniture that could scratch and dull the surface.
2. Exterior metal furniture which rests on tile floors or patios may rust and cause staining.
3. Good quality entry mats will help protect your ceramic tile from wear by collecting dirt, sand, grit and other substances such as oil, asphalt, or driveway sealer that might otherwise be tracked onto your floor.
4. You can also place these mats at heavy pivot locations such as in front of the kitchen sink or stove.



Where Great Floors Begin

## Hardwood Flooring Care & Maintenance

**Note:** All woods are affected by light. Some exotic species will darken while others species will tend to lighten over a period of time when exposed to natural and artificial light sources. Some wood species darken and/or lighten at a faster rate than others. This is a natural characteristic of wood and does not constitute any type of product defect.

### Routine Maintenance

1. Use a damp cloth to blot up spills as soon as they happen. Never allow liquids to stand on your floor.
2. For tough spots, such as oil, paint, markers, lipstick, ink, or tar, use 10% acetone/nail polish remover on a clean white cloth, then wipe the area with a damp cloth to remove any remaining residue.
3. Sweep, dust, or vacuum the floor regularly with the hard floor attachment (not the beater bar) to prevent accumulation of dirt and grit that can scratch or dull the floor finish.
4. Periodically clean the floor with cleaning products made specifically for pre-finished hardwood floor care, such as Shaw's **R2X Hard Surface Cleaner**.
5. Do not wash or wet mop the floor with soap, water, oil-soap detergent, or any other liquid cleaning material. This could cause swelling, warping, delamination, and joint-line separation, and void the warranty.
6. Do not use steel wool, abrasive cleaners, or strong ammoniated or chlorinated type cleaners.
7. Do not use any type of buffing or polishing machine.
8. For spots such as candle wax or chewing gum, harden the spot with ice and then gently scrape with a plastic scraper, such as a credit card. Be careful not to scratch the flooring surface. Wipe clean with a damp cloth.
9. For tough stains, you may need to use a heavy-duty stain remover made specifically for hardwood floors.
10. A more frequent dust-mopping or vacuuming schedule may be required in very sandy areas such as a beach home.

### Environmental Protection

1. Entry mats will help collect the dirt, sand, grit, and other substances such as oil, asphalt, or driveway sealer that might otherwise be tracked onto your floor.
2. Do not use rubber or foam backed plastic mats as they may discolor the flooring finish. To prevent slippage, use an approved vinyl rug underlayment.
3. Use floor protectors and wide-load bearing leg bases/ rollers to minimize indentations and scratches from heavy objects. As a rule, the heavier the object, the wider the floor protector.
4. Maintain a normal indoor relative humidity level between 35% and 65% throughout the year to minimize the natural expansion and contraction of the wood.
  - a. Heating season (Dry): A humidifier is recommended to prevent excess shrinkage due to low humidity levels. Wood stove and electric heat tend to create very dry conditions.
  - b. Non Heating Season (Wet): An air conditioner, dehumidifier, or periodically turning on your heating will help to maintain humidity levels during summer months.
5. Avoid excessive exposure to water during periods of inclement weather.
6. Do not walk on your floor with stiletto heels, spiked golf shoes, or other types of sports cleats.
7. Do not allow sharp, pointed, or rough textured objects to be exposed to the hardwood flooring.
8. Keep your pet's nails trimmed to prevent them from scratching your floor.
9. Periodically rearranging your area rugs and furniture will allow the floor to age evenly. UV sunlight will soften the tone of different species of hardwood to varying degrees.
10. Use a dolly when moving heavy furniture or appliances; but first, put down a piece of quarter inch plywood or Masonite to protect the floor. Never try to slide or roll heavy objects across the floor.
11. A protective mat should be used for furniture or chairs with castors.

### Repairing Your Hardwood Floor

1. Minor damage to your hardwood floor can be repaired by using a color fill. This special product should be matched to the color of your floor and, when properly used, will make the damaged area virtually invisible. In addition, the repaired area will hold up to traffic and wear.
2. A qualified hardwood flooring installer should repair extensive damage to traditional engineered or solid hardwood flooring.

### Glueless Hardwood Board Replacement Repairs

1. Shaw glueless hardwood may be assembled and dis-assembled several times. Carefully disassembled glueless joints will retain their original locking integrity during re-assembly.
2. New replacement plank(s) should be acclimated in the replacement area for at least 72 hours, to allow them to equalize to the conditions of the flooring in the room where the replacement(s) will take place.
3. Remove baseboard, wall base, or quarter-round as needed to replace the damaged board(s). Take the flooring apart, 1 row at a time, by lifting the rows to detach them; then separating the individual boards.
4. Be sure to stack the individual planks in the proper order for re-installation. This usually eliminates the need to cut planks for start or end of the row lengths.
5. Replace the damaged board with a piece from the edge of the original installation.
6. Insert the properly acclimated new plank(s) along the outer edge of the original flooring installation during re-assembly. This minimizes the chance that a newer plank might stand out from the wear condition of the original installation.
7. Re-install the baseboard, wall base, or quarter round, and the replacement-repair is complete.

## Laminate Flooring Care & Maintenance

### Routine Maintenance

- 1) Use a damp cloth to blot up spills as soon as they happen. Never allow liquids to stand on your floor.
- 2) For tough spots, such as oil, paint, markers, lipstick, ink, or tar, use acetone/nail polish remover on a clean white cloth, then wipe the area with a damp cloth to remove any remaining residue.
- 3) Sweep, dust, or vacuum the floor regularly with the hard floor attachment (not the beater bar) to prevent accumulation of dirt and grit that can scratch or dull the floor finish.
- 4) Periodically clean the floor with cleaning products made specifically for laminate floor care, such as Shaw's **R2X Hard Surface Cleaner**.
- 5) Do not wash or wet mop the floor with soap, water, oil-soap detergent, or any other liquid cleaning material. This could cause swelling, warping, delamination, and joint-line separation, and void the warranty.
- 6) Do not use steel wool, abrasive cleaners, or strong ammoniated or chlorinated type cleaners.
- 7) Do not use any type of buffing or polishing machine.
- 8) For spots such as candle wax or chewing gum, harden the spot with ice and then gently scrape with a plastic scraper, such as a credit card. Be careful not to scratch the flooring surface. Wipe clean with a damp cloth.
- 9) A more frequent dust-mopping or vacuuming schedule may be required in very sandy areas such as a beach home.

### Environmental Protection

- 1) Entry mats will help collect the dirt, sand, grit, and other substances such as oil, asphalt, or driveway sealer that might otherwise be tracked onto your floor.
- 2) To prevent slippage of area rugs, use an approved vinyl rug underlayment.
- 3) Use floor protectors and wide-load bearing leg bases/ rollers to minimize the chance of indentations and scratches from heavy objects. As a rule, the heavier the object, the wider the floor protector.
- 4) Maintain a normal indoor relative humidity level between 35 and 65% throughout the year to minimize the natural expansion and contraction of the wood.
  - a. Heating season (Dry): A humidifier is recommended to prevent excess shrinkage due to low humidity levels. Wood stove and electric heat tend to create very dry conditions.
  - b. Non-Heating Season (Wet): An air conditioner, dehumidifier, or periodically turning on your heating will help to maintain humidity levels during summer months.
- 5) Avoid excessive exposure to water during periods of inclement weather.
- 6) Keep your pet's nails trimmed to prevent them from scratching your floor.
- 7) Never try to slide heavy objects across the floor.
- 8) A protective mat should be used for furniture or chairs with castors.

### Minor Repair Instructions:

In the event that accidental damage occurs to one of the planks, minor scratches or dents can be repaired using a Flooring Touchup or Color-fill Kit. This special touchup kit is a filler material, color coordinated to the color of your floor that when used properly, the repaired area is often invisible. The repaired area will hold up to foot traffic and wear just like the rest of your laminate flooring.

### Glueless Laminate Board Replacement Repairs

- 1) Shaw glueless laminate may be assembled and disassembled several times.
- 2) Carefully disassembled glueless joints will retain their original locking integrity during re-assembly. New replacement plank(s) should be acclimated in the replacement area for at least 72 hours, to allow them to equalize to the conditions of the flooring in the room where the replacement(s) will take place.
- 3) Remove baseboard, wall base, or quarter-round as needed to replace the damaged board(s). Take the flooring apart, 1 row at a time, by lifting the rows to detach them; then separating the individual boards.
- 4) Be sure to stack the individual planks in the proper order for re-installation. This usually eliminates the need to cut planks for start or end of the row lengths.
- 5) Replace the damaged board with a piece from the edge of the original installation.
- 6) Insert the properly acclimated new plank(s) along the outer edge of the original flooring installation during re-assembly. This minimizes the chance that a newer plank might stand out from the wear condition of the original installation.
- 7) Re-install the baseboard, wall base, or quarter round, and the replacement-repair is complete.



## Maintaining Laminate or Hardwood Flooring in Heavy Use Areas

The key element in the maintenance of Laminate or Hardwood flooring in heavy use areas is to keep the flooring surface free from smeared or streaked areas, which then lead to increased maintenance rather than less since streaked or smeared areas also attract dust and dirt to stick to the flooring surface. Sticky areas of flooring cause trouble in two ways; one, the area attracts dirt; and two, the sticky dirt transfers to shoe traffic and spreads the soil and grit around a wider area.

The use of protective walk-off mats in areas around beverage service, entry doorways, vending areas etc. will help with everyday tracked in dirt and other spots and spills that once on the flooring surface, attract dirt more readily.

Shaw Hard Surfaces Technical would advise that your maintenance staff adopt "Dry Cleaning" methods for maintaining your Laminate or Hardwood flooring product in heavy use areas. This regimen would involve the following methodology:

1. Once or twice daily **dry** dust-mopping of the Laminate or Hardwood flooring surface using a premium grade **cotton** dust mop head. Even shoe scuff marks can be removed from the pre-finished Laminate or Hardwood flooring surface using a dry cotton dust mop. (We do not see optimum results when using synthetic or blended fiber dust mop heads.)
2. Spot clean any sticky areas on the flooring using a three step method of applying a mild, neutral pH cleaner like Shaw's **R2X Hard Surface Cleaner**, to a cotton cloth; using that cloth to clean the sticky spill area, and then buff-drying the sticky spill area with a dry cotton cloth to prevent residue from the cleaning process to remain on the surface. (This "buff-dry" anti- residue step is very important to keeping the flooring appearance clean [not smeared], and uniform!) There is no need to wet mop the entire flooring area for one or two spills. Spot clean and thoroughly dry the spill areas, and continue dry cleaning the rest of the flooring using the dust mop.
3. Small, slightly sticky areas can also be removed using the dry dust mop; but remember, when the dust mop head begins to tack or grab to the floor, (does not glide easily), it is time to switch out for a replacement one.
4. The cotton dust mop heads used for daily cleaning should be routinely removed from service, laundered, (hot water washed and thoroughly rinsed and dried), and then placed back into service. Purchasing several cotton dust mop heads and setting up a rotating use schedule is easiest on the maintenance team, and provides additional back up equipment so you are prepared for those heavy traffic or inclement weather days.

**Remember:** Frequent routine dry dust-mopping and spot cleaning / buff drying of problem areas can be accomplished much more quickly, and with much less risk of slippery surface areas, than wet or damp mopping of the entire flooring surface.