



The Floor Care & Maintenance Guide

Love your floors for years to come!



We don't just deliver floors—we provide peace of mind.

Whether you've just completed a renovation or are a first-time home buyer, knowing how to care for your new floors may be unfamiliar.

Many homeowners don't realize that every flooring material has its own care requirements—and that traditional cleaning methods may not be safe or effective for today's advanced surfaces. That's why we created this guide: to offer clear, practical care instructions tailored to your specific flooring type. With the right steps, you'll not only preserve the look and feel of your new floors but also protect the investment you've made.

But this guide is more than a manual—it's part of the ongoing commitment Floor Coverings International® has made to you as your trusted, local flooring partner, offering expert-level support before, during, and long after installation.

Thank you for trusting us. We're proud to be part of your home—today and for years to come.



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Care and Maintenance

Caring for Carpet

There's nothing like the comfort of a carpet to make your house feel like a home. Today's carpets are designed to do more—resist stains, stay soft, and hold up to the daily chaos of pets, play, and everything in between. With a few simple habits and the right cleaning schedule, you can keep your carpet looking fresh and feeling cozy for years to come.

Care Checklist

Spot Clean Accidents Immediately

- Blot (don't rub) stains with a clean, white cloth.
- Use a carpet-safe stain remover.
- Rinse with water and blot dry.

Vacuum Regularly

2–3 times per week for high-traffic or pet areas

- Invest in a quality vacuum certified through the Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval/Green Label [Vacuum Cleaner Program](#). Use slow, overlapping strokes and pay extra attention to areas with heavy foot traffic.
- For most carpet styles, use a vacuum with a rotating brush or combination beater/brush bar that agitates the carpet pile and mechanically loosens soil. Test the beater/brush bar in an inconspicuous location before regular use to make sure it doesn't produce excessive fuzzing.

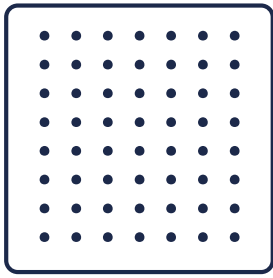


- Carpets with longer yarns—such as shag and berber—use suction-only vacuum or a vacuum with an adjustable brush lifted away from the carpet, so the fibers do not wrap around a rotating brush.

Edge Cleaning

1 time per week

- To maintain your carpet from corner to corner, use the vacuum edge tool to clean along baseboards and in corners where soil tends to settle and collect.



Care and Maintenance

Caring for Carpet



Monthly Reminders

Deodorize Naturally

- Sprinkle baking soda, let sit for 15–30 minutes, then vacuum.
- Keeps carpets fresh between deeper cleanings.

Trim Snags

- Use scissors to carefully trim loose fibers instead of pulling them.

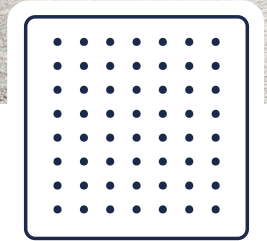


Deep & Professional Cleaning

Frequency: Every 6–18 Months

- Have your carpets professionally steam cleaned to remove deep dirt, allergens, and buildup.
- Ensure the use of high-powered, truck-mounted systems—not DIY rental units.
 - The rental units often lack the suction required to remove all the liquid, which can lead to mold and mildew growth on the pad underneath.
- Remember to keep receipts for warranty purposes.
- Most carpet warranties (including pet-friendly collections) require professional cleaning at least once a year to stay valid.





Care and Maintenance

Caring for Carpet



Stain Quick-Tips

Stain Type

How to Clean

Pet Accidents

Blot, then use enzyme cleaner; rinse with water.

Coffee or Wine

Blot with cold water, apply diluted vinegar or carpet-safe stain remover.

Mud

Let dry, vacuum, then dab with mild dish soap & water.

Grease or Oil

Sprinkle with baking soda, vacuum, then clean with mild dish soap.

[Click here](#) for a step-by-step recommendation for your exact spill or stain. These techniques will work on any manufacturer carpet.



Things to Consider with Kids and Pets

- For areas where kids and pets spend the most time, consider adding a rug pad beneath area rugs to protect against accidental spills and hard bumps.
- Choose pet and kid-friendly carpet styles like Shaw's LifeGuard® or Pet Perfect™.



Care and Maintenance

Caring for Hardwood

Hardwood floors bring natural warmth, elegance, and timeless appeal to your home—but they do require some mindful care to keep them looking their best. With the right habits and a consistent routine, you can protect your floors from wear, scratches, and moisture—especially in busy households with kids, pets, or heavy traffic.

Care Checklist

Weekly

- Sweep or dry mop 2-3 times per week to remove grit that can scratch.
- Vacuum with a hardwood floor attachment.
 - Avoid beater bars.
- Mop that is “lightly” dampened (less is more) with a hardwood-safe cleaner 1 time per week or as needed.
 - Avoid soaking the floor. Less water is best.

Monthly

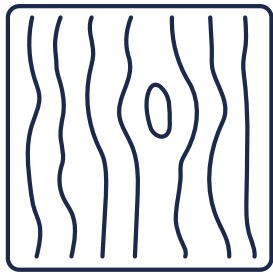
- Check for buildup in corners and edges.
 - Use a soft-bristle brush to gently clean.

Seasonally

- Rotate area rugs and furniture to prevent uneven wear and sun fading.
- Evaluate high-traffic zones for damage or scratches.

Every 3–5 Years

- Professional recoat or refinish to maintain durability and appearance.
 - Recoating is needed when high-traffic areas or areas susceptible to moisture begin to look dull or cloudy. This is a sign that the wear layer is deteriorating and needs to be recoated.
- Since recoating does not remove the existing wear layer, this is always preferred to complete refinishing unless that is necessary to address scratches deeper than the wear layer itself or to change the color of the floor itself.
 - Many modern hardwood floors are prefinished and utilize enhanced finishes such as aluminum oxide. Ideally you don’t want to sand this away unless you have to.



Caring for Hardwood

General Care Tips

Dust Regularly

Dust and dirt can act like sandpaper on hardwood. Daily dusting with a microfiber mop or cloth prevents buildup and helps avoid fine scratches. Aim for at least 2–3 times a week in high-traffic areas.



Use Furniture Pads to Prevent Scratches

Furniture is destined to move, even if just slightly, as a part of everyday life. These small shifts can lead to scratches and scuffs on your hardwood. Simply apply soft, adhesive pads to the bottoms of chairs, tables, and furniture legs. They create a buffer between the furniture and your flooring, helping prevent damage while still allowing for easy movement.



Maintain Consistent Humidity

Maintaining consistent indoor humidity is essential for preserving the beauty and durability of hardwood floors. Because wood naturally expands and contracts with changes in moisture, fluctuations in humidity can lead to gapping, cupping, or even buckling over time. Keeping humidity levels stable—ideally between 35–65%—protects the structural integrity of your flooring.

» Tip: Use humidifiers in dry months and dehumidifiers or AC units during humid seasons to maintain the ideal environment for your hardwood floors all year-round.



Use the Right Materials

Different hardwood finishes need different cleaners. Always check your floor's **warranty** or manufacturer's guidelines first. Use pH-neutral, hardwood-specific cleaning solutions. Avoid vinegar, ammonia, steam mops, or oil soaps—they can dull or damage the finish.

» Tip: Test any new product on a small, hidden section before applying it across the whole floor.

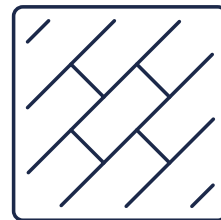


Avoid Steam Mops on Hardwood Floors

Excessive heat and moisture can cause damage. Steam penetrates joints and can cause cupping, swelling, or finish degradation. Almost all hardwood warranties are voided if a steam mop is used.



Care and Maintenance



Caring for Laminate

Laminate flooring offers the warmth and charm of real hardwood, but with added durability for easier upkeep, making it a smart choice for busy households, pet owners, or anyone looking for style without the additional maintenance.

Made primarily from high-density fiberboard topped with a photographic image and a clear protective wear layer, laminate is specifically designed to mimic the natural beauty of wood. With just a little regular care, your laminate floors can stay clean and beautiful for years to come.

Care Checklist

Sweep or Vacuum Regularly

Dust, dirt, and debris can scratch the laminate's surface if left unchecked. Sweep with a soft-bristle broom or vacuum using a hard floor setting (without a beater bar) at least a few times per week — more often in high-traffic areas.

Mop with Care

Laminate should never be soaked. Use a damp (not wet) microfiber mop and a laminate-safe cleaning solution.

- **Avoid steam mops on laminate floors.** Most manufacturers recommend against steam mop use. Even waterproof laminates can be damaged by too much heat or moisture, leading to peeling, separation, or warping.



Caring for Laminate

General Care Tips

Clean Spills Immediately

Wipe up liquid spills as soon as they happen with a dry or slightly damp cloth. Laminate is water-resistant, not waterproof, so acting quickly is the best way to avoid damage.

Avoid Harsh or Abrasive Cleaners

Skip bleach, ammonia-based products, and abrasive pads or scrubbers — they can dull or damage the protective wear layer. Stick to cleaners specifically labeled safe for laminate flooring, or use a mix of water and a drop of mild dish soap.

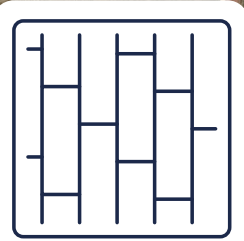
Use Furniture Pads and Rugs

Protect your floors from dents and scratches by placing felt pads under furniture legs and using rugs or runners in high-traffic areas. Be sure rugs have a non-slip backing that won't trap moisture underneath.

Control Sunlight Exposure

Laminate can fade over time with prolonged direct sunlight. Use blinds, curtains, or UV-filtering window film to reduce sun exposure and preserve the color of your floors.





Care and Maintenance

Caring for Luxury Vinyl Plank & Tile

Luxury vinyl flooring is crafted from durable synthetic materials like polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and designed to replicate the look of natural wood or stone—combining beauty with resilience. Its water resistance and low-maintenance appeal make it a popular choice, but even the toughest floors need a little care to stay looking their best.

Care Checklist

Sweep or Vacuum Daily

Dust, dirt, and debris can dull your vinyl flooring and cause fine scratches over time, especially in high-traffic areas like entryways and kitchens. To prevent this, sweep, dry mop, or vacuum daily. If daily vacuuming isn't feasible, a robot vacuum can be a convenient solution for keeping your floors clear of grit.

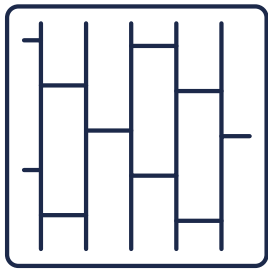


Avoid steam mops on luxury vinyl.

Excessive heat and moisture can damage the wear layer or cause edge curling. Many luxury vinyl warranties exclude coverage for steam-cleaning related damage.

Clean Spills Immediately

Although luxury vinyl floors are waterproof and offer 24 to 72 hours of moisture protection, it's important to wipe up spills as soon as they occur. Standing liquid can seep into seams, potentially causing buckling, lifting, or mold growth beneath the surface. Prompt cleanup ensures your floors stay safe, clean, and long-lasting.



Caring for Luxury Vinyl Plank & Tile

General Care Tips

Avoid Abrasive Cleaners

It may be tempting to use strong cleaners or stiff brushes for a deeper clean, but these can actually harm your LVP or LVT floors. Abrasive products can scratch and dull the surface, reducing the overall lifespan and appearance of your flooring. Instead, stick with non-abrasive, pH-neutral cleaners and use soft cleaning tools like microfiber cloths or mops to maintain the finish without causing damage.

Limit Direct Sunlight and Extreme Heat

Like many home surfaces, luxury vinyl flooring can fade or discolor when exposed to prolonged direct sunlight or high heat. To protect your floors, use curtains, blinds, or UV-filtering window films to reduce sun exposure. Also, be mindful of heat sources such as space heaters or floor vents, and avoid directing hot air directly onto vinyl surfaces for extended periods.

Use Furniture Pads

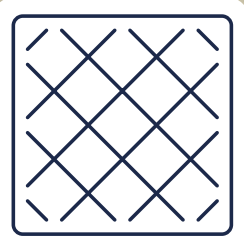
Even small movements—like sliding a dining chair—can leave lasting marks on your LVP or LVT without proper padding. To protect your LVP or LVT, place felt furniture pads or soft protectors under the legs of chairs, tables, and heavy furniture.

- Always lift furniture instead of dragging it across the floor.





Care and Maintenance



Caring for Tile

Your tile floors are more than just a surface — they're the foundation of your home's daily life, enduring everything from playful kids and energetic pets to everyday spills and messes. Proper maintenance not only keeps them looking beautiful but also protects your investment and ensures a clean, safe space for your family.

Care Checklist

Clean Tile Floors Regularly

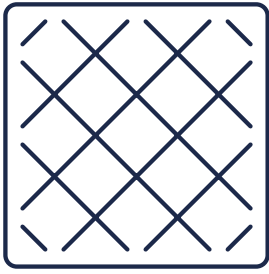
Dirt, grit, and debris can scratch and dull tile surfaces over time. Sweep or vacuum your floors a few times a week to remove loose dirt. Mop every other week after thorough vacuuming. Steam mops are generally safe to use on ceramic and porcelain tile, as these materials are heat and moisture-resistant. However, it's important to always refer to the manufacturer guidelines.

Change Your Cleaning Solution Frequently

Avoid mopping with dirty water, which can leave a hazy soap film and grime on your tiles. Refresh your mop water often, and always sweep before mopping.

Use Non-Abrasive Cleaners

Even if your tile is scratch-resistant, harsh or abrasive cleaners can damage or dull the finish over time.



Caring for Tile

General Care Tips

How to Care for Porcelain Tile

Porcelain tile is durable, water-resistant, and often made to mimic wood or stone. It is important to know that care differs slightly depending on whether your porcelain tile is polished or unpolished:

- **Unpolished (Unglazed) Porcelain Tile:** Use a soft-bristle brush with a mixture of warm water and vinegar to gently scrub the floor. Keep the surface wet for a few minutes, then rinse with hot water and dry with a clean microfiber towel.
- **Polished (Glazed) Porcelain Tile:** Wipe with hot water and scrub stains with a bristle brush. Clean with a diluted vinegar solution or a gentle tile cleaner. Rinse with hot water and dry thoroughly.

Always consult your manufacturer's care instructions to avoid damage or voiding your warranty.

How to Care for Ceramic Tile

Ceramic tile floors are straightforward to maintain:

- Mix warm water with mild dish soap to create a gentle cleaning solution.
- Use a flat mop or microfiber cloth to clean the floor.
- Buff dry with a clean cloth to remove residue and speed drying.

How to Clean Grout

We use a stain-resistant grout that does not require sealing. A high-performance penetrating grout sealer may still be applied if desired for extra protection. Please keep in mind that grout sealing does not prevent grout from getting dirty, but prevents grout from becoming stained. Grout will still need to be cleaned regularly. Our recommendation is to use a company that specializes in grout cleaning.

» Things to Consider with Kids and Pets

- **Choose the Right Sealant:** If your grout isn't sealed, consider applying a sealant to protect it from spills, stains, and odors—especially important with pets and kids.
- **Avoid Slippery Surfaces:** For homes with running toddlers or energetic pets, matte or textured tiles offer better slip resistance than highly polished tiles.





Care and Maintenance

Pet and Kid-Friendly Living

How to Protect Your Floors from Life's Little Messes

From muddy paws to snack-time spills, your floors go through a lot. But with the right habits and a few simple precautions, you can protect your investment—and keep your home clean, safe, and comfortable.

Everyday Habits for a Cleaner Home

Keep Nails Trimmed

Long nails can leave scratches, or snags in carpet, especially over time. Regularly trim your pet's nails, and consider walks on pavement to naturally file them down and reduce the risk of surface damage.

Use Mats and Rugs in High-Traffic Areas

Place rugs or mats at entryways and in busy zones where children and pets frequently play. These help catch dirt, debris, and moisture that might otherwise get tracked onto your floors.

Contain Food and Water

Place food and water bowls on waterproof mats to catch spills before they reach the floor. This not only protects your floors but also makes daily cleanup easier.

Use Felt Pads

Attach felt pads to the bottom of furniture legs, toy bins, and baby walkers to prevent scratching and make sliding smoother—especially on hardwood or tile.

Clean Accidents Promptly

Whether it's a juice spill or a puppy potty mishap, quick cleanup is key. Promptly blot and clean to avoid staining, odor, or moisture seeping into seams or subfloors.

Vacuum Frequently

Crumbs, pet hair, and small debris are not only unsightly but can cause micro-abrasions over time.



Care and Maintenance

Warranties

Partnering with Leading Flooring Manufacturers

Floor Coverings International® partners with leading manufacturers like **Shaw Floors** and **Mohawk** to bring you the highest quality flooring options on the market. These trusted brands are known for their innovation, durability, and design excellence, ensuring that every project meets the highest standards. Our manufacturers also offer warranty coverage for product defects, ensuring that issues like stains on a stain-resistant carpet are addressed. It's important to note that these warranties generally do not cover regular wear and tear.

By working directly with these industry leaders, Floor Coverings International® provides exclusive selections, cutting-edge materials, and expert guidance to help customers find the perfect flooring for their homes.

Full Coverage, Full Confidence

Since you purchase your flooring and installation together from us, you're fully protected! And if any issues arise, we handle it and represent you directly with the manufacturer.



Floor Coverings International® offers a warranty of at least one (1) year on installation and workmanship with extended warranties available at select locations.* Most competitors only cover one year or less.* Also, products showcased in the Mobile Flooring Showroom® come with a factory-direct limited warranty provided by the manufacturer. These guarantees will cover manufacturer defects and typically last for up to 10 years.

**This guarantee may vary based on project location or for commercial-grade installations.*