



General Maintenance



A L A I R

LIVING BETTER STARTS HERE™



Protecting Your Investment

Protecting your investment begins with proper care. We have included a maintenance and care checklist of items that you should be frequently reviewing throughout the year. Quite often things can be forgotten about, especially if they are out of sight, like the saying goes “out of sight, out of mind.” The maintenance & care checklists we have prepared, we hope will make it easier on you to keep your home well maintained. With all items in your home it is best to reference the suppliers guidelines, please reference those documents before taking any maintenance projects on any aspect of your home

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Floors

Hardwood

It is important to maintain your hardwood floors. They can be a beautiful investment that may increase the value of your home. Homeowners often think of moisture damage is caused just by flooding incidents in their homes or large amounts of liquid being spilled on their hardwood floors. While these are possible and should be dried up immediately, moisture damage can also stem from climatic changes in the humidity levels in your home during the warmer months. Ensure that your home is kept at a reasonable level for air conditioning and humidity control throughout the year. In the colder months when the air is much dryer, heat can cause the opposite affect and cause planks of wood to pull apart at the seams. Once again, keep humidity levels consistent to keep your wood flooring from reacting drastically. There are many ways to keep your hardwood floors shining, from wood soaps and cleaners, to waxes that you can buff on. A solution as simple as water and vinegar sprayed on a sponge mop will clean your floors effectively while also protecting the finish, without damage. For that lustrous look, many hardwood flooring experts suggest natural products like olive oil as opposed to wax-based cleaners. To protect your floors from daily activities that cause scratches, consider using cloth furniture protectors under the legs and feet of your tables, chairs, and heavy furniture. Although, many homeowners feel scratches and natural wear can add character to their hardwood flooring.



Carpets

Protecting your carpet from daily wear and tear, dirt, stains and spills through proper care can help prolong your carpet's life. It is important to vacuum frequently and thoroughly. Most carpeting wear is caused by dirt and oily soil; frequent vacuuming will reduce the build-up. Test your carpet before scrubbing, extracting, or spotting. All carpets are different, some carpets are very sensitive to acid type cleaners and will lose their color quickly.

Laminate

Laminate flooring is extremely durable and easy to care for. Small stains can be removed quickly and easily with just a damp cloth. That being said, laminate needs to be cleaned regularly in order to prevent it from getting scratched and warped. Using harsh cleansers can create streaks or damage the laminate. See below for simple tips to care for your laminate flooring.

- Mats will help to protect against abrasions in high-traffic areas with lots of dirt, such as entry ways.
- Protect furniture legs with felt pads to guard against scratching. Please note, you can void your warranty should you decide not to use felt pads.
- Office chairs with wheels should use class W, soft castors.
- Take extra caution in areas with flower pots, vases, and near water faucets. Standing water should be avoided at all costs.
- When cleaning, make sure the cloth is damp and not soaking wet.



Tile

Tile is known for its water resistance and easy cleaning. With the right maintenance routine, your tile floors will look great and hold their value for your home. Tile is strong, durable, and easy to replace if sections become chipped or cracked. One of the most important aspects of cleaning your tile floor is making sure dirt and spills do not have a chance to soak in. Clean up spills and tracks of dirt as soon as possible with a mop or cloth. Hot water and a mild household detergent will do the trick as well. Please note, spot test with any detergent before use. Regular maintenance is important, such as sweeping, vacuuming, and a light mopping in your bathroom, entryway, or kitchen tile floors. A quick sweep or vacuum removes the dirt and debris before it can become embedded in the tile or grout. Mopping with warm water and using a manufacturer-recommended cleaning product also enhances your tile's gloss, shine and color.

Glazed Tile

- Clean regularly with an all-purpose, non-oil-based household cleaner that's compatible with cleaning grout joints. Use an everyday multi-purpose spray cleaner to remove soap scum, hard water deposits, and mildew on wall tiles in your bath or shower.

Unglazed Tile

- Use concentrated tile cleaners that have a neutral pH for regular cleaning. These will safely remove grease, oils, and normal day to day spills - just check to be sure the cleaner is intended for the application, use, and traffic level.

Tips for Preventing Damage

- Test powders and sealants on small area before cleaning the full area.
- Use a sealer on grout joints shortly after installation and use products compatible with cleaning grout joints.
- After cleaning, rinse the entire area with clear water to remove any cleaning solution residue.
- Have any damaged or broken tile removed and replaced only by a qualified tile contractor.



Walls and Trim

Paint

When properly applied, high quality paint will protect and make your home look beautiful for years, although there are many things that can ruin its appearance and durability. Like many components of your home, paint needs to be properly maintained and cared for. After selecting the cleaner of your choice, to clean your walls, it is important to test a small area to ensure it is not going to cause any damage. It is recommended to wash the walls in your home at least once every year.



Wallpaper

Maintaining the wallpaper in your home can be as easy vacuuming. A soft brush attachment is best, especially if the wallpaper is textured. Depending on the area you live in, and how much dust is produced, dust every few months with a microfiber cloth. Wallpaper that is located in your kitchen will need wiping more regularly, dusting is not enough. Every few months a light wash is in order. Use a damp sponge with a small amount of dish soap, make sure the sponge isn't too wet, this can cause the wallpaper to loosen.

Backsplash & Wall Tiles

A backsplash is a great feature to add to your kitchen as it saves your walls from stains. That being said, it is important to frequently maintain your backsplash to keep that nice shiny look. Keep in mind that each type of backsplash will require a different type of maintenance.



Tile Backsplash

- It is recommended to use white vinegar to clean your tile backsplash. A soft cloth will work well to wipe the tile down. Sometimes tough stains are left behind, for these make a paste with baking soda and water and scrub. Rinse thoroughly with clean water and use a clean cloth to dry the tile to avoid water spots.

Steel Backsplash

- Again, vinegar and water are recommended to wash your steel backsplash as it works well to remove grease and dirt. Make sure to rinse thoroughly with water. Take a stainless-steel polish and apply with a soft cloth.

Marble Backsplash

- For marble, it is important to use the right cleaner as it can become easily discolored. Wipe the backsplash first with a damp cloth and then immediately dry to avoid water spots. Using water and dish soap, wipe down the marble and scrub away stains. Rinse thoroughly.

Stone Backsplash

- Use a damp, soft cloth to wipe down stone. Water and dish soap work great on stone. Rinse with warm water and polish with a dry, clean cloth.

Glass Backsplash

- Once again, vinegar and water are recommended to clean your glass backsplash. Using a soft, clean cloth, wipe down backsplash.

Baseboard Moulding

Cleaning your baseboards is not a favored task by many, but cleaning your baseboards makes a big difference and goes a long way to making a room look dust-free and clean. One thing to keep in mind is that house work stirs up dirt, so save the baseboards for last, that way you are not wasting time and effort cleaning the same thing twice. Remove as much dirt as possible. Using a vacuum with a brush attachment will work the best. Begin to remove any stains and grime with warm water and dish soap.

Cabinets

Cabinet Door & Drawer Fronts

It is always best to start by cleaning the outside of your cabinets using warm water and dish soap.

- Using a cloth or sponge, dip into your bucket of warm water and dish soap and wring out.
- Clean one side of the cabinet then repeat step above.
- Continue this process until your cabinets are clean.
- Vacuum the inside of your cabinet, crumbs and dust build up easily.
- Empty your bucket of dirty water, refill with fresh water and vinegar.
- When wiping the inside of the cabinet it is important not to let water pool, make sure your cloth is damp.
- With tough build-ups, you may use baking soda by pouring some on your wash cloth or sponge.

It is recommended to clean your kitchen cabinets once a week, and the inside every few months.

Cabinet Hardware

Kitchen cabinet hardware can collect a lot of build-up over time. Remember, each time you open your cabinets & drawers you are transporting dirt from your fingers onto the hardware. An easy way to clean your cabinet hardware is to disassemble them from the cabinets. That way there is no chance of missing any small details on the knobs or the back of your handles.

- With a screwdriver, remove all knobs from cabinets & drawers.
- Find a bowl big enough to place the knobs in, fill with soapy water and soak for 30 minutes.
- Using a soft-bristled toothbrush, scrub the knobs. For any wooden knobs use a soft cloth.
- Paying attention to the grooves of the knobs, work the toothbrush or cloth over the knobs removing grease and dirt.
- Wooden, glass and porcelain knobs, allow to dry completely.
- Assemble knobs back onto your cabinet drawers.

Countertops

Laminate

The benefit of laminate is that it is easy and simple to clean. You should be wiping your laminate counters daily with warm water. Laminate can last the life of a kitchen with proper maintenance. However, without care it can scratch and stain, use a cutting board at all times.

- Be wary of high heat or hot materials, as it is more like a wood counter in that it can be scorched and marked. A trivet for hot pans/trays should always be used.
- Certain spills will permanently stain laminate. Always be quick to wipe up your spills.
- Use a soft cloth to wipe the surface clean, getting rid of both dirt and dust.
- Making a paste, using baking soda and water, can remove most stubborn stains.

Quartz

Quartz is made from one of the hardest minerals on earth, making quartz countertops the most durable option for kitchens. There are some maintenance procedures to follow to ensure your countertops maintain their brightness. It is important to avoid quick changes in temperature and hard pressure. Always use non-abrasive cleaners.

- Wipe up spills as soon as possible.
- Using a soft cloth and mild detergent (non-bleach and non-abrasive) to wipe your countertop.
- Use a glass cleaner and soft sponge to clean up dried or heavy stains. For a good cleaning, spray a liberal amount of cleaner on the counters and let stand for 10 minutes. Wipe away with a soft cloth.
- For anything that needs to be scraped off, use a plastic putty knife.

Marble

Cleaning your marble countertops on a regular basis is an important step to protect them from becoming stained and scratched. Apply sealer to your marble countertops. Sealer soaks into the inside of the marble protecting the countertop from liquids and anything else that may soak in.

- Wipe away any spills and stains right away.
- Use a baking soda and water recipe to clean.
- Apply sealer directly to the surface.
- Using a clean cloth, spread the sealer across the countertop.
- Soaking for 3-5 minutes.
- Wipe away sealer.
- If this procedure has not removed all stains, repeat.

Granite

Granite is a popular choice for a countertop as it is durable, fashionable and does not require much maintenance. That being said, it does need some care to secure its good condition. As natural stones can be porous, this care includes the annual use of a sealer, and proper cleaning.

- Blot up spills immediately.
- Using warm water and dish soap, clean your countertop.
- Rinse well with clean water and dry with a soft cloth.
- Avoid high temperatures - this will damage your stone.



Wood

Wood countertops are a popular choice for homeowners. Wood offers a natural beauty that will increase the appearance of any room. Wood countertops are said to be easily marked by stains, cuts and burns. You can protect your wood countertops from these issues by following these steps:

- Keep countertops clean from stains, build-ups and dullness.
- Pour generous amounts of warm mineral oil onto the countertop (make sure to use a food-grade oil, cooking oils should not be used). Oil will help prevent warping and cracking. Using a rag, rub the oil into the wood. Allow oil to soak for 20-30 minutes. Wipe with a cloth to remove excess oil. Fill in cracks with wax.
- Seal countertop to protect it from liquids. Select a urethane that is Health Canada/ FDA approved.

Appliances

Refrigerator

The refrigerator is likely the most used appliance in your kitchen as well as the largest consumer of energy. Proper maintenance will cut your energy consumption and extend the life of your fridge.

- Clean off the condenser coils twice per year. Condenser coils remove heat from the fridge and the freezer. When dust and dirt attract to the coils, it is harder for the fridge to remove that heat.
- Clean and replace the gasket as needed. The gasket is the rubber seal that outlines the fridge and freezer doors. Clean periodically with a universal cleaner.
- Clean the interior weekly with a damp warm cloth.
- Deodorize your fridge to remove odors.
- Replace the water filtration system at least every six months.

Stove & Oven

Your oven and stove are your most used appliances in your home. Proper maintenance is necessary for minimum cleaning. One of the easiest things to do to keep your oven clean is to place a drip tray at the bottom.

Oven

- Depending on how much you use your oven, it will need to be cleaned at least once, and as many as four times, per year.
- Remove the racks from the oven, even if you are using the unit's self-cleaning tool. The self-cleaning cycle can warp your racks.
- Soak racks in the sink for 10 minutes. With a sponge, scrub the racks clean.
- Be sure to unplug your oven first if you are cleaning by hand. Remember your oven is an electrical appliance, so be careful with liquids

Stove

- Using a cloth or a sponge, apply a light duty, non-abrasive cleaner. Be sure to apply the cleaner to the cloth/sponge rather than directly to the surface.
- If the control knobs are removable, then take off and soak to clean.
- If the control knobs are not designed to be removed, you will simply have to wipe them as well as you can.

Gas Stove

It is important to follow a regular schedule when cleaning your gas stove as they are easily dirtied. Cleaning as you go is the best way to save yourself from a big mess.

- Start by removing grates and soaking them in hot, soapy water.
- Wipe stove of any crumbs.
- Spray your stove top with cleaner (vinegar and water), wipe down with a clean cloth.

- For the tough stains, simply apply dish soap to a small brush (toothbrush) and scrub away. Wipe the mess away with a damp cloth.
- Remove the burner caps and soak in warm, soapy water. If they are greasy, use dish soap and a scrub brush to remove the residue. Apply this method when washing the grates as well.
- Remove the burner heads by lifting straight up. Wash/wipe away any grease and food that was underneath them.

Electric Coil Stove

Cleaning an electric coil stove can be a bit of a pain. They are easy enough to wipe, but removing stains and spills can be a hassle.

- Start by ensuring that you have not recently used your stove.
- Remove the burners and unplug them.
- With warm water and dish soap, use a sponge/cloth to wash the separated burners.
- To remove tougher stains, you will need a stronger cleaning agent.
- With a sponge/cloth wipe out the drip pans while you have the burners removed.
- When it is cleaned to your needs, put the burners back in.

Wall Oven

Ovens will run better and produce better baked goods when they are clean. To prevent damage, do not use abrasive or corrosive cleaners or applicators such as steel wool or scouring pads.

- Before cleaning/self-cleaning, remove the racks from the oven, soak in warm water and dish soap. Using a sponge/cloth to wipe them down.
- Wipe down the surface of the door outside, rinse surface.
- If you are cleaning by hand, use a mixture of vinegar and warm water to wipe down the inside of the oven.
- After the self-clean is complete, using a soapy sponge/cloth, wipe down the inside of the door. Wipe out the remaining water from the inside of the oven. Scrub the inside of the oven with a soapy sponge/cloth until the grease is removed.

Range & Fume Hood

Range hoods tend to get dirty very fast, depending on how much you are using your stove, and also the area you live in. In more humid areas, like coastal environments, cleaning more frequently is necessary to maintain the finish. It is recommended to wipe down the outside of your range hood weekly.

- Disconnect power to range hood.
- Surfaces should be cleaned with warm water and dish soap using a soft cloth.
- Filters should be replaced every 3-6 months. Unless you have a stainless-steel filter. In that case, clean with dish soap and soft cloth.
- For exposed surfaces on the inside and outside, a damp cloth with degreaser should get the grease and grime off. Be careful not to get degreaser into the exhaust fan motor or the light fixtures as this may interrupt the normal function.
- Vent hood cleaning should be done at least every few months to prevent buildup.

Microwave

An important part of keeping your appliances in working order involves proper maintenance. Simply following easy procedures can prolong the life of your microwave and ensure that it operates effectively and safely. Most people do not realize that food and liquid splatters can absorb energy.

- Wipe down the inside of your microwave weekly with warm water and dish soap.
- For tough to get spots, try heating a cup of warm water in the microwave for 60- 90 seconds. The steam should loosen any build up