

Flooring Care & Installation Warranty



Empire Today® Flooring Product Care

Thank you for choosing Empire® for your flooring needs. We know that installing flooring is a substantial investment in your home. This package will help you properly care for and maintain your product by developing a regular maintenance schedule. These recommendations can help you maximize the life of your purchase.

We look forward to helping you maintain your carpet or area rug for years to come and protect your investment using easy care recommendations.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Empire guarantees the workmanship on all of its installations for one year. To retrieve the manufacturer's warranty for your new flooring, please either visit the Warranty Information link on the product care website or call 800-588-2300. Our Empire Customer Service Representatives can assist you with obtaining the proper manufacturer's warranty for your newly installed flooring. Empire is not responsible for installations which are not performed by professional installers selected by Empire.

Note that the care and maintenance information shared in this package is provided for customers who have purchased flooring through Empire. The information has been provided by our manufacturers. Empire is not responsible for the information obtained from the manufacturers, the effectiveness of the care information or for inappropriate application or use of the information shared in this package. Please call Empire Customer Service at 800-588-2300 if you have any questions about the information provided or any other product concerns.





maintenance

Flooring experiences general wear with use over time. The following are a few general things to keep in mind, regardless of the flooring type you may have in your home.

- **Avoid Sharp Objects**
Sharp or pointed objects can leave indentations or scratches on your floor, potentially damaging your product.
- **Watch Your Feet**
Don't walk on your floor with stiletto heels, spiked golf shoes, or cleats.
- **Watch Your Pet's Nails**
Keep your pet's nails trimmed to prevent them from scratching your floor.
- **Protect the Floor When Moving**
Use a dolly when moving heavy furniture or appliances. It is recommended that you 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.





hardwood flooring

Maintenance

- **Rearrange your rugs and furniture:** Periodically rearranging your area rugs and furniture will allow the floor to age evenly. UV sunlight affects varied species of wood differently. Some species will change colors drastically, especially in the first 90 days. Be certain to periodically move the furniture to minimize and evenly distribute these changes.
- **Investigate using a color fill or color sealant to repair minor hardwood floor damages:** These special products should be coordinated to the color of your floor. In most cases when they are properly used, they will make the damaged areas less noticeable.
- **Color fill:** This is used for repairing minor nicks, scratches and gouges in hardwood or laminate flooring. It is also used for filling in nail and screw holes in hardwood or laminate moldings.
- **Color sealant:** This is used to fill the expansion space at the perimeter of hardwood or laminate flooring. It is also used to fill the space around door facings and other vertical surfaces.

Protection

- **Use protective mats:** High quality entry and exit mats will help collect the dirt, sand, grit and other substances (such as oil, asphalt, driveway sealer) that can otherwise be tracked onto your floor. It is recommended that you do not use rubber or foam backed plastic mats because they can possibly discolor the floor. To prevent slippage, you should use an approved hardwood rug underlayment.
- **Use floor protectors with furniture:** Use floor protectors with all chairs, tables and furniture that come in direct contact with your flooring. It is not recommended that you use rollers or castors on your new flooring because they may cause scratching and indentations.
- **Maintain a relative humidity level:** Maintain a normal indoor relative humidity level between 40% and 50% throughout the year to minimize the natural expansion and contraction of the wood. Improper room conditions can lead to many permanent issues with hardwood that include face checking, cracking and problems with expansion.
- **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.
- **Non-heating season (wet):** An air conditioner, dehumidifier or periodic heating system activation can maintain humidity during the summer months. Avoid excessive exposure to water during periods of inclement weather.





laminate flooring

Maintenance

- **Vacuum frequently:** Frequently vacuum using a non-beater bar vacuum cleaner or dust mop to remove dirt and grime.

Protection

- **Use protective mats:** High quality entry and exit mats will help collect the dirt, sand, grit and other substances (i.e., oil, asphalt, driveway sealer) that can otherwise be tracked onto your floor. These substances can damage the floor. Use non-staining walk-off mats by the entrance of all outside doorways.
- **Use floor protectors with furniture:** Use floor protectors with all chairs, tables and furniture that come in direct contact with your flooring. It is not recommended that you use rollers or castors on your new flooring because they may cause scratching and indentations.

ceramic flooring

Maintenance

- **Post-grout clean up may be necessary:** Grout haze is a film that is left behind on the surface of the tile as part of the final grouting process. This can usually be worked off of the surface after the grout has achieved its initial 12 to 24 hour cure period. The removal of the haze can be difficult, but the most successful method of cleaning is to use a cleanser with Sulfamic Acid. This is a mild acid that attacks and breaks down cement smears. There are several products on the market called grout haze removers, and they usually contain Sulfamic Acid.
- **Continued grout care is key to maintaining the ceramic floor:** Grout is the material used to fill the spaces between the individual tiles, and it needs to be cared for in order to ensure the ceramic floor's longevity. Neither sealing the grout nor using a 100% Epoxy Grout will guarantee against surface build up or discoloration of the grout. It needs to be cleaned on a periodic basis to remove any surface build up. This can be done by using a daily concentrated household or commercial cleaner, depending on the application.
- **Use a professional strength cleaner:** 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.



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Protection

- **Affix felt or similar pads to the legs of furniture:** In order to prevent furniture from scratching or dulling the surface, affix these pads to any metal, iron, wood or plastic furniture. Exterior metal furniture which rests on tile floors or patios may rust and cause staining.
- **Use protective mats:** High quality entry and exit mats will help protect your ceramic tile from premature wear. You can also place these mats at heavy pivot locations such as in front of the kitchen sink or stove. Mats will also help to collect dirt, sand, grit and other substances (i.e., oil, asphalt, driveway sealer) that can otherwise be tracked onto your floor.

vinyl flooring

Maintenance

- **Minimize initial floor traffic:** Traffic should be kept to a minimum during the first 24 hours of installation to allow the floor to properly set.
- **Remove dirt frequently:** Loose dirt should be swept from the floor to avoid scratching the surface.

Protection

- **Use protective mats:** High quality entry and exit mats will help collect the dirt, sand, grit and other substances (such as oil, asphalt, driveway sealer) that can otherwise be tracked onto your floor. These substances can damage the floor. Use non-staining walk-off mats by the entrance of all outside doorways.
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cleaning

The following cleaning recommendations should be used only after familiarizing yourself with the manufacturer's care and maintenance warranty.

hardwood flooring

Recommended "Do's":

- Use a damp cloth to blot spills and spots as soon as they occur. For tough spots, such as oil, paint, markers, lipstick, ink, tar, or cigarette marks, it is recommended that you use acetone/nail polish remover. Put the remover on a clean white cloth to apply then, wipe the spot after application with a damp cloth. You should always avoid allowing liquids to stand on your floor
- Sweep, dust or vacuum the floor regularly with the hard floor attachment on your vacuum (not the beater bar) to prevent the accumulation of dirt and grit. Accumulated dirt and grit can potentially scratch or dull the floor's finish
- Occasionally wipe the floor with a damp mop or cloth
- Periodically clean the floor with cleaning products made specifically for hardwood floor care

Recommended "Don'ts":

- Use oil-based, wax, polish, or strongly ammoniated or abrasive cleaners
- Use steel wool or scouring powder. It is recommended that you always avoid allowing liquids to stand on your floor
- Wash or wet mop the floor with soap, water, oil-soap detergent, or any other liquid cleaning products. This can potentially cause swelling, warping, delamination, and joint-line separation, potentially voiding the product's warranty
- Use any type of buffing machine, which can potentially scratch the flooring

Other care instructions:

- For tough substances that may stick to your floor, such as candle wax or chewing gum, harden the spot with ice and then gently scrape the substance off with a plastic scraper (wipe with a lightly dampened cloth after scraping)
- For tough stains you may need to use a heavy duty stain remover made specifically for hardwood floors



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- For bamboo flooring (available only in select markets), cleaning agents that are specially formulated for bamboo can be used
- Always remember to follow the product manufacturer's directions for use

laminate flooring

Recommended "Do's":

- Remove loose dirt by using a vacuum attachment for laminate or a dust mop
- Use any reputable laminate floor cleaner, following the manufacturer's recommended guidelines, and please avoid the use of water
- Use "soap-free" cleaners on a regular basis to help keep your floor looking beautiful for many years
- Wipe up spills immediately, and avoid allowing liquids to stand on your laminate floor
- Establish a more frequent dust mopping or vacuuming schedule if you have high-traffic or sandy areas
- For tough substances that may stick to your floor, such as candle wax or chewing gum, harden the spot with ice and then gently scrape the substance off with a plastic scraper (wipe with a lightly dampened cloth after the substance is removed)

Recommended "Don'ts":

- Use abrasive cleaners, steel wool, soap based detergents, waxes, polishes, or scouring powder which may scratch or dull the flooring surface
- Use any type of buffing machine, which can potentially scratch the flooring

Other care instructions:

- Footprints and dirt can be easily wiped away with a moist cloth. For best results, ensure that you wring the cloth well prior to using. It is recommended that you remove any wet spills immediately to avoid liquid penetration into the seams of your flooring

ceramic flooring

Recommended "Do's":

- Clean your new floor with a damp mop once a week or more, depending on the amount of traffic. Heavy traffic areas should be mopped more often than once a week
- Use an all-purpose, non-oil based household or commercial cleaner. Ensure that the cleaner is compatible with the grout cleaner recommendations in the maintenance and protection



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section. You can also use a cleaning solution of one cup of white vinegar to two gallons of tap water

- Cleaning spills off of ceramic tiles is generally easier than other types of flooring. The entire area should be cleaned and scrubbed with a cleansing solution by using a cotton mop, cloth, sponge, or non-metallic brush. The entire area should then be rinsed with clean water to remove any residue left on the flooring from the cleaning solution
- Sweep or vacuum your tile floor prior to mopping to remove any dust or debris

Recommended “Don’ts”:

- Use a detergent or soap because it may dull the surface and potentially promote the growth of mildew

Other care instructions:

- Routine cleaners used on your ceramic flooring should never contain acids or ammonia because they can discolor the grout and/or damage the grout and the glazed surface of the tile
- You should allow your new ceramic tile and grout to set and dry for at least 72 hours after installation before damp mopping it

vinyl flooring

Recommended “Do’s”:

- Ensure that all cleaning recommendations that involve odorless mineral spirits and isopropyl alcohol are carefully followed, due to the flammability of the solvents
- Keep traffic clear of any cleaned or treated areas for a minimum of 30 minutes

Recommended “Don’ts”:

- Wash the floor with an abrasive cleaner. Avoid using the following: soap-based detergents, abrasive or mop-shine products, ammonias, bleaches and vacuums with rotating beater bars

Other care information:

- The following are recommended options for addressing various vinyl cleaning challenges.



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Stains and spills:

- Option #1- Clean area with a designated vinyl flooring cleaner
- Option #2- Rub the area with isopropyl alcohol
- Option #3- For rust stains, use lemon juice or a cream of tartar solution

Paint and solvent spills:

- Option #1- Clean area with a designated vinyl flooring cleaner
- Option #2- Rub lightly with odorless mineral spirits or paint thinner

Substances that will not wipe off (i.e., candle wax, adhesives, chewing gum):

- Option #1- Remove excess with fingernail
- Option #2- Clean area with a designated vinyl floor cleaner
- Option #3- Rub lightly with odorless mineral spirits or isopropyl alcohol

Scuff and smudges:

- Option #1- Rub with fingertip or an erasure
- Option #2- Clean area with a designated vinyl flooring cleaner
- Option #3- Rub lightly with odorless mineral spirits or isopropyl alcohol





frequently asked questions

Our Frequently Asked Questions section lists the questions and answers we're most often asked about your newly purchased product.

hardwood flooring

Can I have my Empire hardwood floors refinished?

Many hardwood floors can be refinished. Empire's hardwood floors can also be screened and recoated several times, depending on the product. Hardwood flooring is designed for long-term durability, but at some time it may require refinishing depending on its age, wear and tear.

Can Empire provide hardwood flooring refinishing services?

Empire does not provide hardwood flooring refinishing or screening services. It is recommended that you research a local certified flooring refinishing service.

Who do I contact if my hardwood flooring is becoming discolored?

Certain species of hardwood floors tend to darken due to photosensitivity; this is especially prevalent in exotic hardwood. Please contact Empire Customer Service at 800-588-2300 with any questions

Where can I find my manufacturer's warranty?

Most product warranties can be accessed via www.empiretoday.com/warranties. If your product warranty is unavailable on the site, please contact Empire Customer Service at 800-588-2300.

Does Empire repair or service existing products beyond the warranty expiration date?

Empire does not usually repair or service existing products unless the issues fall within the product and installation warranty specifications. Please contact Empire Customer Service at 800-588-2300 for more details.





laminate flooring

Who do I contact if my laminate flooring is experiencing some signs of unevenness?

Please contact Empire Customer Service at 800-588-2300 if you are experiencing any product issues.

Can laminate flooring be refinished?

Laminate flooring cannot be refinished.

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Who should I contact regarding a product or installation issue or concern?

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ceramic flooring

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