

Maintenance Guide

MAINTENANCE GUIDE

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Following these instructions carefully will greatly impact the life of your floors and whether or not you can take full advantage of the warranty. The normal care and maintenance of pre finished floors is quick, easy, and can be done in two simple steps.

1. The best way to protect hardwood floors is to vacuum them regularly to remove traces of dust and other abrasive materials that stick to the surface. Use the vacuum as often as needed.
2. Spray some hardwood cleaner on a cloth-covered duster. Wipe one section of the floor using continuous and side-to-side movements, horizontally along the length of the boards. Move to another section and repeat with the same side-to-side movement. If the cloth gets dirty, use a replacement cloth. Wash soiled covers as needed. Your floors should be cleaned this way at least once a month.

Caution: Never use any waxes, household cleaners or any oil-based soap to clean your floors, as these products can tarnish or damage the finish, leave a greasy film, make floors slippery and hard to clean. Cleaning pre-finished floors with a mixture of water and vinegar can also oxidize the varnish. We do not recommend using steam dusters.

WOOD AND WATER

Wood fibres expand as they absorb water, and this can damage the wood and varnish of your floors. If water seeps into the floor, it will alter the colour and dimensions of the floor. Some mouldiness may also occur. Hallways and kitchens are both areas where wood is likely to come into contact with water. Special care should therefore be used when hardwood flooring is installed in these areas. Any contact whatsoever with water should be avoided. We do not recommend installing hardwood floors in bathrooms.

Recommendations:

Dust or vacuum your floors regularly to prevent dirt from scratching the finish. If you spill water, any type of liquids or detergent, wipe the floors dry promptly to make sure none of it seeps into the wood fibres. Wood is a product of nature and constantly reacts to temperature variations. Wood expands by absorbing excess humidity in the air and contracts if the humidity level in the air is too low. If the humidity inside the boards is greater than normal, they may buckle slightly. Gaps between boards can appear if there is not enough moisture inside them. Generally, wood returns to its original shape when conditions return to normal. Ideally, the internal humidity level of the wood should be between 6 and 8 %. To help wood maintain its proper shape, we recommend maintaining the temperature inside your home at 20° C (70° F) with a relative humidity level between 40 and 50 %.

Be particularly careful with some types of running shoes and with stiletto heels, especially if the heels are old and damaged. Water and sand can certainly wreck havoc on your floors, but high heels can do severe damage to hardwood floors and other floor coverings. Avoid using rolling chairs directly on the surface of the finish. Use protective carpeting or plexiglas mats. Your pets' claws should be cut regularly to reduce the number and depth of scratches they can make.

Install mats in front of every entrance, inside and outside. This will prevent sand and dirt from accumulating on the floor and will absorb water and snow. To protect your floors from being damaged if you drop any food or cutlery or if water or detergent is splashed, place a mat in front of the kitchen sink, the dishwasher and any work station. Avoid carpets with rubber undersides or those made of heavy material as they can trap air and humidity and tend to accumulate dirt and dust. Place felt cushions under all furniture. This will make them easier to move and reduce the likelihood of your floors being scratched. Check the cushions once in a while to make sure they are clean and well in place. Replace plastic wheels with large rubber or polyurethane wheels. Protect your floors adequately when moving furniture. Take a piece of carpet (with the underside facing up) and place a plywood panel smaller than the piece of furniture on top of it. Place the furniture on the plywood and pull the furniture around.

Place saucers under potted plants to avoid any accidental water spills. Choose glazed ceramic pots instead of porous ones, which tend to let water seep through. Protect your floors from direct sunlight and other sources of intense light. Floors exposed to light rays may change colour. This is a perfectly normal and natural phenomenon. The lighter the wood, the greater the colour change will be. To make these colour changes less noticeable, move throw rugs and furniture around once in a while.

Note : These colour changes are not due to a yellowing finish. These are natural changes in the shade of the wood.

HOW TO REPAIR MINOR BOARD DAMAGES

To make small marks and holes less noticeable, fill the cavities with wood putty. Wipe the excess with a clean cloth immediately and apply a thin coat of urethane varnish. Let it dry for about an hour.

HOW TO REPLACE A BOARD

Choose a replacement board which is a bit longer than the one to be replaced. It should match the adjacent boards perfectly. Using a circular saw or spindle, cut alongside the length of the board's face, approximately 1/2" away from the sides. Make a diagonal cut inside this same cut, from one corner to the next. Take out the middle part of the board with wood scissors. Remove any nails or staples and take away the borders, being careful not to damage any other boards. Remove any construction paper, wood flooring adhesive or residue. Measure the replacement board and cut the tongue part of it. Remove the bottom groove located on the sides and edges of the board. Insert the board and test its measurements. Apply the flooring adhesive to the sub floor. Re-install. Position the board properly with a rubber mallet and wood block.

CAUTION

If you install hardwood flooring over an under floor with central heating, avoid increasing or lowering the temperature of the system by more than 2.8 °C (5 °F) per day when you turn the system on and off.

PRE-OILED FLOORING MAINTENANCE GUIDE

INSPECTION (FOLLOWING INSTALLATION)

After installation, do you face any of the following situations?

- Greyish spots appear in certain areas;
- Strong cleaning products have caused damage to the floor finish;
- Wood dust, dirt, cement dust or grout appear on the floor;
- Drywall dust (gypse) covers the floor;
- The floor has lost its shine;
- The floor has been contaminated by construction debris;
- There are paint stains on the floor;
- The floor was glued and there is still some glue residue.

A simple local repair should do the trick; use the Touch-up and Repair kit.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

You should know that your pre-oiled floor has been designed to be completely film-free on the surface. When washing your floor, make sure not to create a film by applying too much Concentrated Detergent Soap (Ancestral or Mitis). Your pre-oiled floor should have a uniform appearance and regain its original shine without film on the surface..

FIRST MAINTENANCE

For the first maintenance of your new pre-oiled floor, you should be using the Concentrated Detergent Soap (Ancestral or Mitis).

PREPARATION

Check your pre-oiled floors for any sign of damage, deterioration or contamination. You can usually tell which section of your floor has been damaged. Be sure to follow the instructions for use, preparation and application as described on the label to ensure optimal results. Read all instructions carefully before starting the work. Remember: a good preparation is important because the finish helps to enhance the grain and the character of the wood, while eliminating white stains that may have appeared during installation.

- It is important not to use the Concentrated Detergent Soap (Ancestral ou Mitis) or any other cleaning products for this preparation stage.
- Sweep and vacuum your floor to eliminate all traces of dust or dirt.
- Clean the floor with warm water and a well wrung mop, as many times as needed, until the water of your rinsing bucket is clean. Change the water as often as needed. Let dry for about 30 minutes.
- Inspect every area of your floor to look for any damages that may have been caused during installation such as paint stains. If this is the case, use the Impregnating Oil pen included in the Repair kit to repair the damage (a light sanding may also be required to facilitate the repair).

CLEANING YOUR FLOOR

You can clean your floor with warm water and a well wrung mop.

- Vacuum your floor and clean with warm water using a well wrung mop.
- For occasional deep cleaning, every 6 cleanings or so, use the Concentrated Detergent Soap (Ancestral or Mitis). Dilute the product in warm water in the recommended proportions and apply in the direction of the boards with a mop.

MANUAL OIL APPLICATION

The floor to be oiled must be well sanded and perfectly dust free. Use a 120-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed before August 2011; and a 150-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed after August 2011. It is important to note that the sanding affects the degree to which the oils are absorbed as well as the color of various wood species.

Following the sanding of the floor, it is important to protect it from any possible contaminants (footprints, grease, drops of water, etc...)

Required tools :

- Clean cloths
- Applicator
- Paint tray

Application of the Impregnating oil

Using the Applicator or a clean cloth, apply a thin and even coat of the Impregnating oil. It is suggested to work by section, to avoid oil from drying too fast. It is important to spread the oil evenly and to remove any excess with a cloth in order to ensure a uniform finish and to prevent a film formation upon drying. Allow oil to dry 24 hours prior to applying the Satin Finishing Oil. Following application, all tools soaked in Impregnating oil must be immersed in water before disposal to prevent self-combustion.



APPLICATION OF THE SATIN FINISHING OIL

Proceed with the application of the Satin Finishing oil using the same method as with the Impregnating oil. It is essential to wait for the Impregnating oil to dry completely (about 24 hours).

It is very important to spread the oil evenly and to remove any excess with a cloth to prevent the crystallization of the oil from forming shiny spots. Once the floor has been properly wiped, allow oil to dry 24 hours prior to exposing to light traffic. Drying time may vary depending on the temperature and relative humidity. Following application, all tools soaked in Impregnating oil must be immersed in water before disposal to prevent self combustion.

USEFUL TIP:

Following the application of the Satin Finishing oil, avoid washing the floor for a period of 21 days. After this period, thoroughly clean your floor using a well wrung damp mop followed by the use of the Concentrated Detergent Soap (Ancestral or Mitis) for pre-oiled floors.

It is strongly recommended to test the procedure on a small section of the floor prior to oiling the entire surface. This will also reveal how fast the oil will take to penetrate the wood.

APPLICATION OF OILS USING A POLISHING MACHINE

The floor to be oiled must be well sanded and perfectly dust free. Use a 120-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed before August 2011; and a 150-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed after August 2011. It is important to note that the sanding affects the degree to which the oils are absorbed as well as the color of various wood species.

Following the sanding of the floor, it is important to protect it from any possible contaminants (foot-prints, grease, drops of water, etc...)

Required tools:

- Clean cloths
- Applicator
- Low speed (150 rpm) polishing machine
- Paint tray

Application of the Impregnating oil

Using the Applicator or a clean cloth, apply a thin and even coat of the Impregnating oil. It is suggested to wait 15 to 20 minutes prior to removing excess oil with a cloth. 20 to 30 minutes following the application of the oil, use a polishing machine (with "green" pad) at low speed (150 rpm) to ensure a uniform finish.

In cases where colored Impregnating oil is used on hardwood species, perform a polishing test on a small section of the floor, making sure not to alter the color. Allow oil to dry 24 hours prior to applying the Finishing oil. Following application, all tools soaked in Impregnating oil must be immersed in water before disposal to prevent self combustion.



APPLICATION OF THE SATIN FINISHING OIL

24 hours following the application of the Impregnating oil, proceed with the application of the Satin Finishing oil using the same method as with the Impregnating oil. 15 to 20 minutes following the application of the oil, use a polishing machine (with "green" pad) at low speed (150 rpm) to ensure a uniform finish. Once the floor has been properly wiped, allow oil to dry 24 hours prior to exposing to light traffic. Drying time may vary depending on the temperature and relative humidity. Following application, all tools soaked in Impregnating oil must be immersed in water before disposal to prevent self-combustion.

USEFUL TIP:

Following the application of the satin finishing oil, avoid washing the floor for a period of 21 days. After this period, thoroughly clean your floor using a well wrung damp mop followed by the use of the Concentrated Detergent Soap (Ancestral or Mitis) for pre-oiled floors.

It is strongly recommended to test the procedure on a small section of the floor prior to oiling the entire surface. This will also reveal how fast the oil will take to penetrate the wood.

LONG-TERM RESTORATION

In the areas where the floor must be restored, conduct a very light sanding using a 120-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed before August 2011; and a 150-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed after August 2011. Use a pole sander to make the task easier.

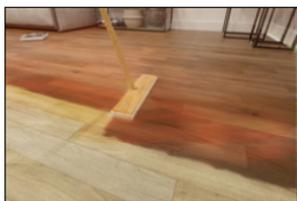
Light pressure of the sander on the floor is recommended. This action will have the effect of scuffing the surface of the floor allowing new oil to be absorbed by the wood fibers. Following a light sanding, clean all the areas to be restored 2 to 3 times with warm water and a well wrung mop. Let dry and begin the application of a thin layer of Satin Finishing oil.

Using an applicator, spread a thin layer of the product (Ancestral or Mitis) on the areas that have been sanded and cleaned.

It is very important to spread the oil as thinly as possible, to prevent too much accumulation of oil on the surface. Let dry 6 to 12 hours before exposing the newly oiled surface to light traffic. The Finishing oil will have the effect of heightening the original color of your floors.

If the Finishing oil treatment has been done in time and the color of the floor has been damaged, it will be necessary to redo the previous steps (sanding and cleaning) then apply a thin layer of Impregnating oil (Ancestral or Mitis) that matches your floor color.

Let dry 24 hours, then apply a thin layer of Ancestral Satin Finishing oil. All tools soaked in Impregnating oil must be immersed in water before disposal to prevent self combustion.



MINOR REPAIRS

The concept of pre-oiled floors permits us to easily do minor repairs locally without creating apparent color variations between the original floor and the repaired section. The repairs are done using the Touch-up & Repair kit (Ancestral or Mitis). Each kit contains one Impregnating oil marker and a small bottle of Satin Finishing oil.

Depending on the complexity of the repair to be done, it is possible to use a scraper or a 120-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed before August 2011; and a 150-grit sandpaper for floors manufactured and installed after August 2011.

If the use of a scraper is required, it will then be important to sand the surface with sandpaper to ensure that all scratch marks created by the scraper are removed.

Using the colored marker (shake well before using), cover the entire repaired surface. If the color of the repaired surface is lighter than the color of your flooring, a second application may be necessary in order to obtain the required color.

Using a clean white cloth, carefully spread and blend the colored oil. Let dry at least 6 hours.

Once the Ancestral Impregnating oil has dried, complete your repair by applying a thin coat of the Ancestral Satin Finishing oil using the small brush included in the Repair kit.

Once again, using a clean white cloth, spread the Ancestral Satin Finishing oil over the repaired section, removing any excess oil. Allow to dry completely before exposing the floor to light traffic. Make sure to immerse the soiled cloths in water before disposal to prevent self-combustion.

Note: It is important to always do the repairs lengthwise in the same direction as the floor planks.

