



Maintaining the Home

Wood Floor Care and Cleaning

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Sealing

Wood floors should be protected with a sealer. Penetrating sealers go into the wood pores and worn spots can be resealed.

Lacquer, shellac and varnish stay on top of the wood. If the sealant wears off in high traffic areas, the whole floor usually has to be sanded and refinished.

Prevent scratches when moving furniture by putting heavy socks over the legs.

Cleaning

Vacuum floors often to keep dirt from grinding into or sticking to the finish. Wipe up spills immediately. A damp (not wet) cloth may be used on a well-sealed wood floor to wipe up food spills or mud. Wipe the floor until it is dry with a cloth or paper towel.

Clean when necessary with a solvent-based liquid wax for wood. Follow the directions on the container. Solvents remove dirt and old wax and leave a thin wax coating, which must be buffed. You can either:

1. Apply with a dry cloth, rubbing the floor and refolding the clean part of the cloth as dirt is taken up.
2. Apply with a cloth over a long-handled wax applicator, rubbing and refolding cloths as above .

3. Use an electric polisher, which can be rented. Change to clean brushes or pads as dirt and wax are taken up. Buff the wax left on the floor immediately if buffing by hand or after 20 to 30 minutes if with electric polisher.

This material was adapted from publications produced by Michigan State University. Michigan State Cooperative Extension publications can be found on the Web at <http://www.msue.msu.edu/msue/>.

*This resource is one in a series on **Maintaining the Home** which include:*

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Make a Basic Toolkit for Simple Home Repairs
Selection and Use of Home Cleaning Products
Discovering the Secrets of Successful Storage

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Fireplace and Chimney Care

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Air Conditioner
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How to Unclog a Toilet
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