



handcrafted european wood floors

GUIDELINES

## Signature French Oak Wood Floors Care & Maintenance

Signature handcrafted Vintage French Oak wide-plank hardwood floors are meant to last for generations and require very little effort to ensure that they do. Unless otherwise specified, our floors are sealed with a renewable oxidative or UV-cured hardwax oil finish. The hardwax oil is an all-natural, non-pollutant, non-toxic, no or low VOC product with no biocides, no preservatives, and is lead-benzene free. The oil is produced in Europe from natural materials such as vegetable oil and natural waxes made from purified, renewable natural raw resources. The wood's open grain structure allows the floor to breathe. This has a regulatory effect on moisture, ensuring a healthy room climate, keeping within the spirit of wood's natural hydroscopic characteristics. The special features of this finish allow its oils to penetrate deeply into the wood pores to enhance, while the wax remains on the surface, maintaining a beautiful natural satin-matte finish and creating a protective layer. By sealing the wood with hardwax oil, the ultimate color of the floor will be enhanced and flourish with time. Hardwax oil has the most environmentally friendly benefits as wood finish and contributes to a healthier living environment.

A hardwax oil finish is water repellent and does not watermark, and will not crack, flake, peel, blister or panelize like polyurethane or water-based (laminated plastic looking) finishes. The hardwax oil is stain-resistant against wine, beer, cola, coffee, tea, fruit juices and milk. The floor will thrive over time while it patinas. Taking care of the floor through the process of reapplication will partly retain its essence thereby making it quite easy to maintain.

### DAY-TO-DAY FLOOR CARE & MAINTENANCE

Below is a quick checklist for daily maintenance to keep your custom floors clean while avoiding common mistakes that could cause damage.

- **Tracked-in dirt is like sandpaper** on hardwood flooring. Use a walk-off or entry rug at every outdoor entrance to catch grit. Vacuum or shake out the rugs regularly.
- **Avoid a build-up of damaging grit** by sweeping or vacuuming your floors often, taking care to use the “bare floor” setting or attachment. Dry dust-mops with soft cotton cloths may be used as well. Homes with pets might require this daily.
- **Wipe up spills quickly** to keep your floor unmarked, smooth and level. Wood is a natural material that swells when it absorbs water and shrinks when it dries. If needed, spray a small amount of our approved spot cleaners and use a soft rag to make sure nothing remains on the surface.
- **Avoid spiked heels.** They strike a floor with more force per inch than an elephant's foot. Spike heels in disrepair are especially harmful to your floor. Cleats, spikes and other sport shoes can also cause dents on any floor surface.
- **Dogs & Animal Care.** Keep nails clipped. Dogs running through the house will scratch any finish. Put down a mat to stand between your pet's water dish and your wood floor.
- **Area Rugs.** Installing a rug directly on hardwood without a pad can lead to floor damage, slipping hazards, and reduced rug life. Never use rugs with a rubber or abrasive backing, as these can damage or discolor a floor. At Signature, we recommend **Durahold® Plus** rug pads, trusted by floor professionals and clients alike, for their unmatched performance.



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**i** Our company offers **Durahold® Plus** rug pads upon request, which can be cut to size to fit perfectly under your custom rug. For more information, please visit our website page and download [\*\*Rug Installation Manual for Wood Floors\*\*](#).

- **Avoid exposing your floor to direct sunlight** for an extended period of time as it may dry and fade your wood floor. Close curtains or blinds to limit direct sun exposure.
- **Use felt tap-in glides on your chairs.** Round-headed plastic chair glides and narrow wheels on furniture legs can scratch or permanently dent your floor. Spread the weight by using commercially made tap-in felt protectors or furniture coasters to prevent scratches and dents. Do not use self-adhered felt protectors as they don't stay in place.



**i** Our company offers Furniture Floor Protection Service upon request. To learn more, please download [\*\*Furniture Protection Service\*\*](#) brochure.

- **Do not use steam cleaners.** They are not recommended for use on natural wood floors.
- **Do not place porous flowerpots** or vases on your hardwood floor. Leaking water may cause permanent damage to your floor.
- **Do not ever wet mop a wood floor.** Standing water can dull a finish, damage the wood and leave a discoloring residue.
- **Maintain your home temperature of 60°–80° F and Relative Humidity (RH) between 35–55% year-round.**

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### Tips on Vacuuming Your Wood Floors

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Regular vacuuming is an essential part of maintaining the natural beauty and longevity of your handcrafted hardwood floors. Follow these simple tips to keep your floors clean and protected:

#### 1. Use a Hardwood Floor-Safe Vacuum

Choose a vacuum specifically designed or safe for hardwood floors. It should have:

- A “**hard floor**” setting (which turns off the beater brush/roller).
- **Rubber wheels** to avoid scratching the finish.
- A **soft-bristle brush attachment** for delicate cleaning.

#### 2. Vacuum Frequently in High-Traffic Areas

Dust, sand, and grit can act like sandpaper underfoot. Vacuum at least 2-3 times a week in entryways, hallways, and kitchens to prevent fine particles from scratching the floor.

### 3. Avoid Vacuums with Aggressive Beater Bars

Rotating brush rollers can damage the Hardwax Oil finish and scratch the wood. Always disengage or avoid vacuums with stiff-bristle or non-removable rollers.

### 4. Go With the Grain

Whenever possible, vacuum in the direction of the floorboards. This helps lift dirt from between planks and minimizes streaks.

### 5. Clean the Vacuum Wheels and Brushes Regularly

Check the underside of your vacuum for trapped debris or grit that could scratch your floor. Clean it before each use if needed.

#### Need Help Choosing a Vacuum?

Our **Top Recommended Vacuums for Wood Floors** guide is available upon request. Please contact us if you'd like a copy.

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## Tips on Washing Your Wood Floors

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Washing your hardwood floors properly is essential to preserving their durability, natural beauty and protecting the Hardwax Oil finish. Follow the steps below to ensure effective cleaning.

### 1. Wash Weekly or Biweekly

Depending on foot traffic, clean your floors every **1 to 2 weeks** using:

- **Fresh, room-temperature water**
- **A well-wrung, damp mop or applicator** (never wet)

During cleaning, always **rinse your mop or applicator frequently** in a separate bucket of clean water. This prevents dirt from being re-spread, which can cause haziness or streaks.

### 2. Be Seasonally Mindful

Wood is a natural material and reacts to seasonal changes in humidity:

- **In hot, humid months (summer):**

After mopping, immediately dry the wood floor using a clean, soft, and absorbent **cotton cloth**, wiping in a gentle circular motion. This prevents excess moisture from soaking into the wood during periods of high humidity.

- **In cold, dry months (winter):**

You may allow a thin layer of residual moisture to **soak into the hardwood floor**, helping to rehydrate dry wood. However, always avoid puddles or pooling water.

### 3. Always Use Approved Cleaning Products

Only use **Wash & Care Floor Soap (concentrate)** specifically formulated for floors finished with Hardwax Oil. **Never use:**

- Oil soaps
- General floor cleaners
- Detergents
- Vinegar, ammonia or acidic containing cleaning solutions



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**GUIDELINES**

These products can leave behind a non-removable residue or strip the protective top finish leaving the wood vulnerable to staining and damage.

#### **4. Avoid Excess Moisture**

Always use a **damp (not wet)** mop or applicator:

- **Squeeze out all excess water** before applying it to the floor.
- Never allow **standing water** or excessive dampness to remain on the surface.

#### **5. Skip the Steam and Scrub Tools**

Do **not** use:

- Steam mops
- Abrasive scrubbers (Scotch-Brite, Mr. Clean Magic Eraser, Scrub Daddy, etc.)
- Harsh pads or brushes

Instead, use soft microfiber mops or cotton cloths to gently clean and dry the floor.

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### **LONG TERM FLOOR CARE & MAINTENANCE**

Below is a quick-reference checklist to help ensure your custom hardwood floors perform beautifully for generations.

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#### **Signature White Glove Floor Maintenance Services**

Your handcrafted hardwood floor deserves special treatment. While it is virtually maintenance free, requiring only dusting and occasional washing, we do recommend a rejuvenation maintenance service every 5 to 10 years, or possibly more often in high traffic areas or commercial applications. Our floors can be rejuvenated without sanding, avoiding dust pollution, toxic fumes, unnecessary expense and hassle.

Our White Glove Maintenance Service includes furniture removal, saving you time and money. Our craftsmen inspect your flooring carefully and perform surface touch-ups and the application of all-natural, non-pollutant and non-toxic hardwax oil. Should your floor suffer any kind of damage, we prefer to repair and save it. In cases of more serious incidents, we will offer an estimate for replacing the damaged floor pieces.

Please allow 5-7 days to complete the rejuvenation project.

This is what you can expect when scheduling our White Glove Maintenance Service:

- Complimentary assessment of your handcrafted floor to determine the level of rejuvenation and any necessary repairs (pre-rejuvenation).
- Photographing and measuring precise placement of furniture and décor for placement after completion.
- Careful removal of furniture from work areas.
- Deep cleaning of your wood floor.
- Meticulous hand inspection of the entire work surface for scratches or damage.
- Hand re-staining and stain touch-ups where required.
- Hand application and buffing of deeply penetrating hardwax oil to smooth away surface scratches, moisturize the wood and bring back its original luster.
- Returning furniture and décor back into place, in most cases within 48 to 72 hours after final hardwax oil application.



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## Living with Your Natural Wood Floor

### Color Change

Natural wood will undergo color changes over time due to exposure to sunlight, heat, air conditioning, and other environmental factors. This is a normal aging process. To help minimize uneven color change, consider using blinds or drapes to protect the floor from excessive sunlight.

Be aware that areas covered by furniture or rugs may remain lighter than the exposed portions, since they are shielded from light and air. This contrast is not a defect. To promote a more uniform appearance, we recommend periodically rotating rugs and rearranging furniture to allow the covered sections to gradually adjust in color.

### Seasonal Gaps

Seasonal gapping, particularly in wider planks, is a normal characteristic of wood flooring and not considered a defect. Wood naturally expands and contracts in response to changes in humidity and temperature throughout the year.

To minimize dimensional movement, it's important to maintain your home's temperature and relative humidity within the recommended range for wood flooring.

### Surface Checks

During winter, when indoor air is drier, minor surface cracks — also known as checks — may develop. These typically close up again in the summer when humidity levels rise. This is a natural behavior of wood and not a manufacturing defect, especially in the absence of structural issues.

### Learn More

For more ways to protect and maintain your hardwood floors, visit the **Guidelines** section of our [Downloads Page](#) to read:

- [\*\*Importance of Maintaining Proper Humidity for Wood Floors\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Understanding Seasonal Cracks in Wood Floors\*\*](#) – Why Patience is Key
- [\*\*Rug Installation Manual for Wood Floors\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Water Damage Floor Instructions\*\*](#) – What to Do When Unfortunate Water Damage Occurs

### Need Help?

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