

Care and maintenance for a UV oiled wooden floor

It is important to remember that timber is a living material. The wooden floor, although no longer growing as part of a tree, is still very much a part of its environment, responding to light, temperature, humidity, and wear. The general rule is that a proper wooden floor takes four seasons to settle into its environment. It is normal to see some movement in the boards, as some gaps do open up owing to fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Also, as the floor ages, the colour will mellow and deepen. This is no cause for alarm; it is a natural process due to oxidation of the wood and finish, and the ultraviolet light present in sunlight. This same process is occurring to your painted surfaces, upholstery, furniture, and rugs.

Precautions

- Humidity control is most important. Our timber flooring is dried to have a moisture content of between 8% and 11%. **The optimum relative humidity of the air in a room with timber flooring should be between 50 and 65%.** This ensures minimal shrinkage and expansion of the timber. We recommend that you buy a hygrometer combined with a programmable humidifier / vaporizer and keep a close eye on humidity levels especially during the cold, dry winter months.
- Temperature control is also important. No timber likes to be over heated and baked dry. The recommended temperature in a room with wooden flooring is between 20 and 25°C Celsius.
- If you have under-floor heating the recommended optimum relative air humidity and temperature levels should be observed at all times. In addition we advise that the under-floor heating system is kept on at a constant temperature throughout the year. It is wise to avoid fluctuations in temperature from extremes of cold to hot. If the heating system temperature needs to be increased or decreased we advise this is done in stages of no more than 1°C per day.
Please also see our information sheet "*Under-floor heating with wood flooring*"
- Sharp objects such as high heels, chair and table legs can dent your floor. Whenever possible protect your wood by fixing felt or rubber pads under items being sat upon or dragged across the floor.
- Special notice should be given to high traffic areas - entrances, walkways, corridors and areas in front of sinks. The floor may need extra protection - a mat for instance - and more frequent re-oiling.

Your floor is finished with UV oil. Oil is the traditional finish for wood flooring and wood finished by this method possesses a soft, natural sheen and mellows with age. A penetrating oil finish does not sit on the surface of the wood but rather sinks into the grain. It is more forgiving of scratches and scuffing, as wax can be rubbed into the odd scratch, virtually erasing it.

The finish on your wooden floor should provide years of protection against reasonable wear and tear. Day to day maintenance should be carried out using a soft broom or a regular vacuum cleaner. It is very important to note that care must be taken to prevent any excess moisture coming into contact with the floor. Oiled floors, because of their more porous nature, should not be cleaned using excessive amounts of water.

Spot cleaning with a damp cloth or light mopping is perfectly acceptable. A mild detergent can be used; bleach or abrasives cleaners are not suitable. We recommend Osmo “*Wash and Care*” for regular cleaning and a liquid wax for periodic refreshing and revitalising. Specialist products and applicators are available from the Solid Floor showrooms.

UV oiled floors will need to have a coating of “*Care Oil*” reapplied to them periodically. The frequency with which this is necessary will depend on the amount of wear on the floor and on your own preferences. High traffic areas such as hallways may need more frequent applications.

The method for re-oiling is as follows:

Apply a thin coat of the maintenance oil either by hand with a soft cloth or using an applicator. Do not apply the “*Care Oil*” directly to the boards. If using a cloth put the product on the cloth and rub it into the timber. If using an applicator put the product in a plastic bucket or box, wet the applicator and distribute smoothly on the floor.

You need about 1 litre of “*Care Oil*” for an area of 50m². It should dry within a few hours but will continue to harden over the next 5 to 7 days. The floor can be walked upon as soon as it is dry but avoid using too much water on the floor for the next 7 days.

Stubborn stains or marks can usually be removed using fine steel wool (grade 0000) in conjunction with the oil. Deep scratches in the timber can be coloured in using a stain. All cleaning materials mentioned above, including buffing machines, can be obtained from Solid Floor.

After a number of years you may wish to have the oiled surface sanded down and re-finished. You could then choose to re-oil the floor or have it stained first or even re-finished in lacquer. Solid Floor offers sanding and re-finishing services.

For details of all products and services please contact us