

SPOTLESS

HARDWOOD FLOORS

Polish your cleaning routine by incorporating these easy dos and don'ts.

BY LESLIE CORONA



STOCKSY

Do This...

ENFORCE A NO-SHOES POLICY

Our experts agree that this will dramatically reduce the amount of dirt and debris on your floors.

PUT MATS OUTSIDE AND INSIDE THE DOOR

Depending on where you live, your floors may need extra protection during the winter from the ice-melting salt used on paths and sidewalks. The outdoor mat will help knock away clumps; the indoor one will soak up slush. Place a boot tray right next to the mat to limit transfer even more.

DRY MOP OR VACUUM EVERY FEW DAYS

Use a microfiber pad or a vacuum that's safe for wood floors, and put your vacuum on the bare-floor setting. If you have pets or a lot of foot traffic, you might want to dry mop or vacuum daily.

GIVE FLOORS A DAMP RUBDOWN ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH

Fill a spray bottle with water and lightly mist the surface, then wipe it up with a microfiber mop or cloth. (Do this step immediately after dry mopping or vacuuming.)

OUR EXPERTS

MARC BACHER, FOUNDER AND CEO OF STUGA, A HARDWOOD FLOORING COMPANY

ANGELA BROWN, FOUNDER OF THE TRAINING COMPANY SAVVY CLEANER

BRETT MILLER, VICE PRESIDENT AT THE NATIONAL WOOD FLOORING ASSOCIATION

BOOST ONLY AS NEEDED

If you feel you need a little more than plain water in some areas—around the kitchen island, say—use a gentle cleanser made specifically for wood floors. Just test an inconspicuous spot first.

CAMOUFLAGE SCRATCHES

Cover imperfections with wood markers. In a pinch, rub the meat of a walnut over the blemish. Its natural oils can coat and darken it.

But Don't Do This

USE VINEGAR ON YOUR FLOORS

Even when diluted with water, the acidity can break down a floor's finish over time.

MOP TOO OFTEN OR WITH TOO MUCH WATER

Water can warp the wood and weaken any glue. If your floors don't dry within a minute, you're using too much.

APPLY CLEANERS WITH HARSH INGREDIENTS, LIKE AMMONIA

They can damage both the finish and the wood. If you have prefinished or engineered wood plank flooring, this can void your floor's warranty.

...With These

SHOE RACK

A slim, tall option, like the Tower Shoe Rack (\$55; theyamazakihome.com), is perfect for small entryways.

DRY MOP

Attach a reusable pad to the curved mophead in the Maker's Mop Bundle (\$70; makersclean.com). Stains are easier to rub away because of its shape.

HARDWOOD CLEANER

A cleaning classic, Bona (from \$7; amazon.com) doesn't leave residue or streaks.

HARD-FLOOR VACUUM

Stray crumbs lurking in tight nooks will meet their match with the Dyson Omni-glide (\$400; dyson.com), which features a 360-degree rotating head.

WOOD MARKERS

You can use the filler sticks and markers in the Wood Furniture Repair Kit (\$11; thomasvillewoodcare.com) to cover small nicks.

