

# CLEANING - GENERAL CARE



## GENERAL CARE

**THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES APPLY TO CLEANING, MELAMINE, UV LACQUER, ACRYLIC, LAMINATE, CLEAR COATED STAINED WOOD and PAINTED SURFACES.**

Like any fine furniture, your kitchen cabinets require routine cleaning, including the finishes for Melamine, UV Lacquer, Acrylic, Laminate, or the Catalyzed Conversion Varnish. All products have excellent resistance to foods, beverages, and household agents found in a typical kitchen or bathroom. Keep in mind, these surfaces are scratch resistant, not scratch proof.

Following some simple care and maintenance guidelines, caring and preserving the natural beauty of your kitchen cabinets can be accomplished through regular routine cleaning.

Kitchen cabinets should be cleaned routinely or based on the accumulated mess. Depending on build up, dry dusting may scratch the finished surface. It is good practice to follow the grain of wood when wiping your cabinets. Residues from smoke, cooking vapours, grease, and hand or body oils can be cleaned with a cloth dampened with mild soap and warm water. Even distilled white vinegar in warm water can help. Remember to use a clean, soft cloth such as an old white cotton t-shirt or white micro-fibre cloth.

## COMMON CLEANERS FOR KITCHEN CABINETS

Never use cleaning products containing silicones, waxes, polishes, abrasives, acids, strong alkaline, solvents, alcohol, ammonia, or bleach. These types of products can cause irreversible damage to surfaces. There is a significant variety of cabinet and wood furniture cleaning and care products available to consumers. The most common of which contain either silicones, waxes, or polishes which we do not recommend. Use these at your own risk.

Silicone cleaners are very common and offer a high degree of shine. A side effect of silicone is that it seeps into even the highest quality finishes creating a barrier that will not accept stain or finish. This makes it impossible to re-finish or touch up when it may be required.

Wax-based cleaners are not needed on our finishes. Wax cleaners will provide a shine to your finish however, regular use of wax cleaners will result in a build-up of a wax film on the surface making refinishing or repair work difficult. This build-up will also attract other pollutants such as dirt, smoke, and grease in the air. When cleaning is attempted, it will cause streaks and

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smudges on the finish. Many waxes also contain particulates that may damage the finish as well. Therefore, wax-based cleaners are not recommended.

Wood polishes contain detergents to remove dirt. The emulsifiers give it the body to clean and mineral oil is left behind as a barrier for dirt and moisture, while leaving no wax or silicone residue. Between silicone, wax-based, or wood polishes, the wood polisher is the best choice, yet is still not recommended.

Distilled white vinegar is a safe and friendly option. To make the cleaner, mix a 50/50 solution of distilled white vinegar and warm water. Vinegar is approximately five percent acetic acid, which helps break down the structure of some dirt, oils, films, stains, and bacteria. The acidic agent can harm some surfaces, so test it in an inconspicuous area first. **(Not recommended on Melamine, UV Lacquer, Acrylic, and Laminate)**

Dish soap & warm water (not dishwasher liquid): Dish soaps are one of the safest and most effective options for cleaning products. This method is our recommendation for cleaning your Decor Cabinet Company cabinets. Dish soaps are able to degrease, break down solids, effectively remove bacteria, does not irritate the skin, and has a pleasant odor.

**If you're not sure about a cleaner or cloth, always test it on a small inconspicuous area first.**

## HOW TO CLEAN YOUR CABINETS WITH DISTILLED WHITE VINEGAR AND WARM WATER:

1. Combine a 1-to-1 ratio, or equal parts, of vinegar and warm water in a corresponding container. Use the cloth to mix it together. Ring the cloth out so it is wet/damp but not dripping. Limit excess water.
2. Begin by testing on an inconspicuous corner before doing a full-fledged cleaning.
3. Wipe over the greasy surface back and forth with the cloth until clean. If applicable, follow the grain of the wood and limit excess water.
4. For the stubborn messes, repeat the process.
5. In a separate bowl/container with a new batch of the vinegar and water mixture, soak a fresh cloth, and wring it out so it is wet/damp but not dripping. Wipe down the areas you just washed to remove any remaining grease and excess mixture left behind. As mentioned above, limit excess water.
6. Repeat if needed.
7. Afterwards, immediately dry the surfaces thoroughly with a clean dry cloth. This will prevent streaking.
8. Allow to air dry.

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## HOW TO CLEAN YOUR CABINETS WITH DISH SOAP AND WARM WATER:

1. Apply a few drops of dish soap to a bowl of warm water as you would for washing dishes by hand.
2. Begin by testing on an inconspicuous corner before doing a full-fledged cleaning.
3. Dip the cloth and swish it around. Squeeze the cloth in the mixture until suds form. Wring the cloth out so it is wet/damp but not dripping. Limit excess water.
4. Wipe over the greasy surface back and forth with the soapy cloth until the soil is removed. If applicable, follow the wood grain.
5. Repeat if needed.
6. For those stubborn messes, apply a squirt of dish soap directly to the cloth under warm running water, then gently rub the greasy surface.
7. Using a separate bowl of clean warm water, soak a fresh clean cloth, then wring it out so it's wet/damp but not dripping. Wipe down the cabinets and remove any remaining residue, with limited excess water.
8. Immediately and thoroughly dry the surfaces with a clean dry cloth. This will prevent streaking.
9. Allow to air dry.

## WEAR AND TEAR AROUND KNOBS AND HANDLES:

Frequent use of cabinet doors and drawers can cause wear around knobs and handles. No matter how often we wash our hands, human skin always contains natural oils that keep our skin protected from drying out. It is most noticeable after touching your hands to glass, stainless steel or any another similar surface. Oil from your skin, food, hand lotions, hand creams and some detergents can break down a finish. Over time, constant transferring of various oils to wooden furniture can gradually leave a stain or break down the finish entirely. With cabinetry in particular, the handles and knobs and the surrounding finished surface will show the most deterioration due to frequent usage. On a flat finish, trying to wipe these areas down may cause a greasy spot to appear and will only result in polishing the area even more. This is more so with painted surfaces or with a lower gloss, clear or opaque finish.

The finish may start to show a polished or glossy area where the wood surface is repeatedly in contact with fingers rubbing against the finish from opening or closing the cabinet door. This is normal "wear and tear" and is not considered a defect. This is not as evident on a higher gloss finish. As mentioned earlier, the best thing to do is clean with mild dish soap and warm water regularly.

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## BASIC CARE TIPS: (DO'S AND DO NOT'S)

### Do's:

- Wipe up spills, spatters and splatters promptly and dry completely. Especially in areas near the sink, stove, dishwasher, on joints, and around any cut outs.
- Clean one cabinet at a time.
- Clean routinely to avoid long term damage from water, food, smoke, grease, and oil build up.
- Wipe up mustard spatters immediately as mustard will stain some finishes very quickly.
- Keep the finish dry.
- Clean with a white lint-free cloth or microfiber towel (Microfiber towels are not recommended on Acrylic or UV Lacquer material).
- Use a mild detergent or soap and warm water (not dishwasher liquid).
- Follow up with clean water after cleaning with any type of cleaning solution.
- Wipe gently when cleaning with a damp cloth or dry cloth.
- Use the pulls or knobs to open and close cabinet doors and drawers. This will prevent long term damage and/or gloss areas forming around the pulls and knobs.

### Do Not's:

- Do not soak the surfaces when cleaning.
- Do not use coloured cloths or microfiber towels.
- Do not wipe cabinets with a dishcloth or sponge as these can contain harsh soaps, grease and/or soils that damage the finish.
- Do not scrub or rub excessively in one location. This will cause the finish to be polished creating a shinier surface in that one place. This is especially important with low sheen finishes.
- Do not use products with bleach, ammonia, silicone, waxes, polishes, or abrasive additives.
- Do not allow water or liquids to be in contact with finished surfaces for prolonged periods of time.

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- Do not use abrasive cleaning pads (scotch bright), sponges, magic erasers, steel wool, etc.
- Do not allow oven cleaners to contact the finish.
- Do not place kitchen appliances where heat is directed onto the finished surfaces.
- Avoid steam from kettles, boiling pots, etc., to be directed at the underside of cabinets or bottom.
- Do not drape damp clothes over cabinet doors. This moisture will cause permanent damage over time.
- Do not use steam cleaning machines.