

Hiram Floors



... CARE AND CLEANING GUIDELINES



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General

1 Information



WOOD, A NATURAL PRODUCT

- 1.1** Hiram solid or engineered wood floors are a genuine natural product and are made from the best quality raw materials produced from our local forests.

As the wood for the floorboards is sourced from different forest areas, there may sometimes be natural differences of colour in the timber, rendering the surface lighter or darker irrelevant of treatment and colouration.

Besides the influence of its origin, the wood's surface colour changes through UV irradiation in the first 3-6 months. Thereafter the wood has acquired its definitive shade.

PROTECTION OF THE WOODEN SURFACE

- 1.2** For proper protection of Hiram products we recommend an initial treatment with oils, soaps or hardwax oils. These refining systems are particularly effective in protecting the surface, as they build protection not only on the surface, but also in the wood pores, while at the same time the wood continues to breathe and thus retains its natural characteristics.

A high-quality natural wood floor which has been treated with one of these afore-mentioned systems is fundamentally low-maintenance, though it is also essential to provide regular care to ensure the wood stays beautiful for years to come.

A newly oiled floor should be cleaned only with dry materials in the first 3-5 days, to allow the oil to harden. To provide maximum protection for the wood floor there should be a dry/wet protection area at the entrance. It is essential to avoid any standing moisture, and loose dirt should be removed regularly. We recommend putting felt gliders on movable furniture, so that it does not scratch the surface of your floor.

If possible do not put rubber or latex floor coverings on the wood, as these contain substances which over time leave marks. Harsh, alkaline or solvent-based detergents may also never be used on the oiled surfaces, as they dissolve and/or attack the oil.

Do not use microfibre cloths to clean the floor. They function like fine sandpaper and cause long-lasting damage to the surface.

INDOOR CLIMATE

- 1.3** The ideal indoor climate for a Hiram wood floor lies between 40% and 60% relative humidity and 18 – 25 ° C indoor temperature. This humidity will often be reduced in winter by central heating systems, whereas in the other seasons it may be higher. If major fluctuations in the indoor climate are to be expected, then it is advisable to use a hygrometer.

USE OF LYE

- 1.4** Lye from Hiram is popular as the preliminary stage of soap or oil treatment and is used principally on softwood planks. Lye creates a lighter surface on the one hand, but at the same time it also reduces yellowing of the wood.

Oiled 2 floorboards



Unlike varnish, oil penetrates deeply into the pores of the wood but does not close them. In this way the wood remains breathable. In particular the chemical resilience of the wood is improved by oiling. Because it has been sealed the wood surface is extremely well protected against dirt, stains or liquids, and at the same time the oil enhances the natural grain of the wood.

If the floor is not looked after over a longer period of time, it will show signs of wear and tear and the wood will dry out. The best method of care is to use wood-floor cleaners like oil refreshers or natural wood-floor soaps. High-quality wood-floor soaps are made of natural vegetable fats, which offer excellent protection for oiled, waxed or soaped floors. This soap layer protects against day-to-day wear and tear and gets renewed each time it is applied.

CARE WITH WOOD-FLOOR SOAP

2.1 Take care of your floor approx. every two weeks with wood-floor soap. Tip: It is best to work with two buckets – one containing the soap solution, the other with clear water.

Mix 5 litres of lukewarm or cold water with approx. 100 ml of soap. Always wipe the floor lengthwise along the floorboards and use as little of the soap solution as possible. Leave it to soak in for a short time and then wipe up or scrub clean the dirt with a mop or cloth. Rinse out the dirty mop or cloth in clear water.

Wipe the floor once more with clean soap solution and let it dry thoroughly. Do not wipe again with clear water, as this would remove the film of soap.

FRESHENING UP THE SURFACE

2.2 An oiled floor should be freshened up with Hiram Oil Refresher approx. every 6-18 months depending on wear. Before oiling, clean the floor with diluted vinegar solution or an intensive cleaner. Mix approx. 100ml of 32% acetic acid with 5 litres of lukewarm water. The vinegar content removes particles of soap or dirt more easily. Apply lightly only in order to dampen the floor. Remove dirt or any other residue with a pad or brush. For larger areas use a machine.

If wished the floor can be lightly sanded so that the wood absorbs the oil better. Vacuum thoroughly afterwards. The floor should be completely dry before re-oiling. Always shake the oil in the canister thoroughly and then apply a new coat.

The floor must not look too damp, any excess oil must be removed. After machine oiling the floor is likely to be dry again after approx. 4 hours, after manual oiling approx. 24-36 hours. Avoid getting any dirt or water onto the oil during the drying process.

Soaped

3 floorboards



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INITIAL TREATMENT

3.1 For the initial treatment the ratio of soap to water should be approx. 1:5. Apply the solution evenly over the surface, then clean it off lengthwise along the floorboards to avoid marks or residue. Leave the surface to dry for approx. 20-30 minutes, then soap it again. Thereafter leave it to dry for 12 hours and soap it once more.

In the case of white pigmented soap surfaces the process may have to be repeated a number of times until the floor reaches the desired lightness. If there are visible streaks, footprints or other residual marks on the floor from the first treatment or cleaning, then the soap solution was too strong. In this case the floor needs to be cleaned with water or Hiram intensive cleaner, and the proportion of white pigmented soap should be reduced.

CARE

3.2 If the floor is not looked after over a longer period of time, it will show signs of wear and tear and the wood will dry out. Regular care with a soap water solution is therefore absolutely necessary. High-quality wood-floor soaps consist of natural vegetable fats which give great protection to oiled, waxed or soaped floors. The soap layer protects against day-to-day wear and tear and with each new application regenerates the floor.

Maintain the floor approx. every 2 weeks with natural wood-floor soap from Hiram. For white soaped wood floors, white pigmented soap can also be used from time to time. In this way the lightness of the floor can be controlled.

TIP

It is best to work with two buckets – one contains the soap solution, the other has clear water.

Mix 5 litres of lukewarm or cold water with approx. 100 ml of soap. Always wipe the floor lengthwise along the floorboards and use as little of the soap solution as possible. Leave it to soak in for a short time and then wipe up or scrub clean the dirt with a mop or cloth. Rinse out the dirty mop or cloth in clear water.

Wipe the floor once more with clean soap solution and let it dry thoroughly. Do not wipe again with clear water, as this would remove the film of soap.

Intensive cleaning of 4 floorboards

Intensive cleaners which are specifically meant for wood are suitable for deep-cleaning a very dirty wood floor. The intensive cleaner recommended by Hiram has a water base and is suitable above all for oiled, varnished, waxed or soaped surfaces. It can also be used to clean very dirty wood floors prior to oiling. The wood pores then open, so that it absorbs the colour pigments better and facilitates penetration of the oil.

Using two buckets is recommended, one with a mixture of intensive cleaner and water, and one for rinsing with clear water. Mix 125 ml intensive cleaner with 2.5 litres of lukewarm water. Wipe the floor moist only. Leaving it for a short time to work in will help loosen the dirt.

If the floor is very dirty, scrub by hand with a brush or pad or use a machine. Remove residual dirt with a mop or cloth. Always wipe over again to make sure as little water as possible is left on the surface.

If the floor is very dirty, it may be a good idea to repeat the process. The Hiram intensive cleaner is a high-performance deep cleansing solution, hence the surfaces need to be oiled, waxed or soaped again.