



THE KITCHEN SPECIALISTS ASSOCIATION

CARE AND MAINTENANCE DOCUMENT FOR KITCHEN FINISHES

This document has been compiled by the Kitchen Specialists Association with input from a variety of our supplier members. The purpose of this document is to ensure you, the consumer, are fully aware of the care and maintenance that is required to look after the kitchen finishes you have selected. Please be advised that the longevity of your kitchen relies on you following these care and maintenance directives. It is important to note that the KSA will be unable to assist in any dispute where these directives have not been adhered to.

Once hand-over of the work has been done it is the responsibility of you, as the customer, to ensure you read and understand the correct way to clean and maintain your kitchen. The kitchen company and/or material supplier/manufacturer is entitled to void any guarantee if care and maintenance has not been followed.

The advice below is generic and designed to cover most products but it is vital that you heed all maintenance instructions issued to you by the supplier as they may vary slightly from the advice listed below.

DOOR AND PANEL FINISHES

1. Melamine

General Cleaning - Using a mild household cleaner wipe down the door or panel with a soft cloth taking care not to rub too hard. Use a soft dry cloth so as not to leave any residue on the door or panel. You may also use Methylated Spirit on a soft cloth, using a circular cleaning motion. Thoroughly clean the area with a damp cloth (water and *mild* detergent only) to remove any residual Methylated Spirits. Always ensure that you refer to the recommendations provided by the cleaning product manufacturer before use.

To ensure that your material warranty will not be void, DO NOT use any of the following: Commercial Cleaning Products, Abrasive Cleaners, Scouring Pads or Abrasive Papers, Acids and Alkalis, Solvents, Thinners, Turpentine (Turps), Ammonia, Bleach, Acetone, or any other cleaning agents containing organic solvents or the above mentioned products. Avoid contact with sharp instruments.

The use of a cooker hood, or extractor, whenever cooking, is advised. This will help avoid steam and cooking oil vapours from adversely effecting surfaces.

Exposure to excessive water or standing water will cause damage to the substrate and cause the door or panel to 'blow' and warp. Constant exposure to direct sunlight can alter the colour of the melamine over time.

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2. PVC Foil Wrap

For general cleaning, only use a mild soapy solution. Wipe down with a damp cloth and dry with a soft clean cloth. Dust with a soft cloth only. Don't use wax-furniture polish or any cleaning products that contain: alcohol or solvents. Don't use abrasive cleaners, acetone, petrol or glass cleaners as this will damage the surface of the doors. Cooking splashes should be wiped up immediately using a damp cloth. Use a micro fibre anti-scratch cloth when cleaning.

Excessive exposure to heat and damp can cause the wrap to shrink and pull away from the substrate. The use of a cooker hood, or extractor, whenever cooking, is advised. This will help avoid steam and cooking oil vapours from adversely affecting surfaces. Constant exposure to direct sunlight can alter the colour of the wrap foil over time.

3. High gloss laminate / Acrylic

Always keep the protective film in place until installation is completed and all other service providers have finished their projects. The protective film should be removed within 6 months of completion of the job to avoid it ageing and becoming difficult to remove.

For general cleaning use a mild household cleaner. Wipe down the door or panel with a soft cloth taking care not to rub too hard. Use a soft dry cloth so as not to leave any residue on the door or panel. Any spilt chemicals and liquids that can cause stains, must be wiped away immediately using a damp cloth and soapy solution. Repeat this process as necessary. Minor scratches and scuffs can be removed by hand with selected automotive liquid polishes and soft microfiber cloths. The polish must be suitable for painted surfaces. Always adhere to the manufacturer's instructions. Test the polish on an inconspicuous area first to ensure suitability.

Exposure to excessive water or standing water will cause damage to the substrate and cause the door or panel to 'blow' and warp. Constant exposure to direct sunlight can alter the colour of the laminate over time.

4. Ultra matt laminate

Cleaning and care can vary between brands. Use of a micro fibre cloth and a mild solution of a non-abrasive detergent and water is recommended. Some ultra-matt products do show finger-marks easily in highly lit areas, particularly when the material is in a darker colour. These can be polished off with a micro fibre cloth.

Exposure to excessive water or standing water will cause damage to the substrate and cause the door or panel to 'blow' and warp. Constant exposure to direct sunlight can alter the colour of the laminate over time.

5. Veneer, solid timber and hand painted

Use a micro fibre anti-scratch cloth when cleaning. For general cleaning, only use a 5% liquid soap, 95% water solution. Wipe down with a damp cloth and dry with a soft clean cloth. Dust with a soft cloth only, following the grain pattern of the wood. Don't use cleaning products that contain alcohol or solvents. Don't use abrasive cleaners, acetone, petrol or glass cleaners as this will damage the surface of the doors. It's best to use a damp cloth to

remove fingerprints and marks, followed by a clean and dry soft cloth. Cooking splashes should be wiped up immediately using a damp cloth.

You may be aware that wood changes colour when exposed to light; the rate of change being dependant on the species and intensity of exposure. Please be aware that if additional doors are required in the future, a variation in colour is highly probable.

With timber, your door may need upkeep every few months with a wax based product or furniture polish – this will depend on how the company has sealed the product after manufacturing. Please ensure you have checked with your kitchen company whether upkeep of this nature is required.

Excessive exposure to water, steam and humidity can cause the timber/substrate to warp and split. The use of a cooker hood, or extractor, whenever cooking, is advised. This will help avoid steam and cooking oil vapours from adversely effecting surfaces.

6. Duco / Spray Painted Finishes (Matt, Satin, Sheen, High Gloss)

Clean with a soft, clean dampened cloth and wipe dry after cleaning. Don't use cleaning products that contain alcohol or solvents. Don't use abrasive cleaners, acetone, petrol or glass cleaners as this will damage the surface of the doors. Use a micro fibre anti-scratch cloth when cleaning.

Excessive exposure to water and heat can cause crazing of the paint finish and 'blowing' of the substrate. As paint can chip, banging and bumping of the product should be avoided. The product can also scratch if exposed to sharp objects. Please ensure a non-yellowing paint has been used by your contractor to diminish the chances of the paint yellowing. Excessive exposure to light or if the area is locked up and unused for long periods of time can cause the finish to change colour.

Should you need to replace a door/panel down the line the contactor will use a colour spectrometer to try and achieve as close a match to existing doors as possible but a perfect match will be impossible.

WORKTOPS

Your work surfaces can become damaged if mistreated. We would recommend the following basic 'rules' to adhere to: Always use a chopping board. Place hot pans or casserole dishes on protective mats or trivets. Mop up spills immediately, particularly on joins, and around sink and hob cut-out areas. For more detailed instruction for your particular material, please see below.

1. Laminate

Wipe clean with a moist cloth and mild detergent. For more stubborn marks, leave the detergent to soak for a short while before rinsing thoroughly. (Use only a very small amount of water)

Exposure to excessive heat will create a burn mark on the surface. Never place a pan directly from the hob or oven onto the surface.

Excessive exposure to water will cause the substrate to 'blow' and warp.

2. Marble

Marble is calcified limestone, and its polished surface is susceptible to deterioration by the acidic action of some detergents and acidity content such as that which is contained in lemon juice. Red wine and oil will also stain marbles. Marble is generally used in bathrooms for countertops, wall cladding and flooring. It is softer than granite, and can scratch more easily. However; there is a recent swing back to using marble in kitchens, and accepting scratches and stains as a contribution to the “character” of the kitchen. Some Italian residences that are hundreds of years old have traditional marble countertops, and obviously have staining and scratching. The stone’s natural patina (the colour change that occurs over time) enhances rather than diminishes the antique character and beauty of the kitchen and home.

Marble is not always installed with a polished finish, and it is possible to hone or acid-wash the upper surface. A honed finish simply involves the removal of the smooth polished finish with polishing blocks, while an acid-washed finish will leave a slightly textured upper surface. These two finishes prevent damage which would normally happen to a polished marble surface through exposure to liquids with acidity content.

All marble counter-tops should be sealed with a good quality sealer on installation, and should be sealed as often as is necessary (normally every six months – but dependent on the porosity of the specific marble used). If marble is installed in your kitchen, any stain should be wiped up immediately with a warm soapy cloth to prevent obvious staining.

3. Granite

Stone is a natural product and as such it is impossible to guarantee colour and pattern consistency. If you have only seen a sample there may well be a variance in both from the small sample to the large sheet of stone that is installed. The fabricator and supplier have no control over marks and irregular patterns that occur naturally in the stone. For this reason it is essential for you, the client, to go to the supplier and choose your slab in person.

Once installed, granite will be treated with a sealer which reduces its natural porosity, and provides a protective coating. The tops should not be cleaned or used for 48hrs after the application of the sealant. This sealant should be reapplied by your fabricator every 6mths to a year to ensure the stone stays in good condition. Your fabricator will quote you on the cost for this maintenance treatment. Remember, all stone is porous and the sealant only assists to decrease the porosity. Harsh substances like red wine, beetroot, coffee etc. can still leave marks if not cleaned away quickly. Some granites are more porous than others (usually the paler the stone the more porous it is). The more porous stones are more susceptible to staining and can even be stained by water (if it is left standing on the surface for any length of time) and cooking fats and oils.

Clean with water containing soap or a mild or neutral detergent using a soft cloth or sponge. Rinse off with clean water. Polish dry with a soft cloth or a micro fibre surface cloth. Avoid use of abrasive cleaning materials including scouring powders, steel wool or metal brushes. Never use bleach and other chlorine-based cleaners, acids, photographic development liquid, alkalis (caustic soda) and concentrated disinfectants on stone surfaces. If any of these products come into contact with the stone, clean them off immediately. Use of these products can strip the stone of its sealant and make it very porous and susceptible to stains that cannot be removed.

Stone is susceptible to changes in temperature. Any exposure to high heat or excessive cold, as well as an abrupt change in temperature, can cause the stone to go into thermal shock and crack. Do not put a hot pan or pot directly onto the stone.

Stone tops are heavy and place a lot of weight on the cupboards and support legs of the cupboards below. Many people like to sit on their countertops or stand on them to gain access to top cupboards. It must be noted that this excess weight on the stone can cause damage to the cupboards below and can cause them to collapse. This kind of excess weight can also cause the stone to crack if near a cut out, edge or joint.

Please note that should a section of the stone need to be replaced, getting an identical colour and pattern match will be impossible.

It is vital that you sign off your stone with the fabricator as soon as installation is complete.

4. **Engineered stone**

The rules that apply to granite apply to engineered stone as well, except that engineered stone does not need to be sealed once it is installed by the fabricator. The manufacturing process of the stone ensures that this is not necessary. Should the fabricator believe that for some reason the engineered stone needs to be sealed this should only be done with the engineered stone manufacturer's consent to ensure the guarantee is not void.

5. **Solid Surfacing**

Use soapy water, ammonia-based cleaners (not window cleaners as they can leave a waxy build up that may dull the surface) or commercially available solid surface cleaners. These will remove most dirt and residue although stubborn residue will require a little stronger cleaner. Spillages of items with strong pigment like coffee, red wine etc. can leave marks if not cleaned up quickly.

To avoid water marks, clean up spills before they dry.

Disinfecting: Occasionally wipe surface with diluted household bleach and water, with a ratio of 1:100.

Small scratches can be buffed out by the fabricator. Do not put a hot pot or pan onto the surface as it can stain and damage the surface.

6. **Glass and porcelain based products**

General cleaning involves washing with water or a diluted, household detergent such as dishwashing liquid, which is enough to restore the surface to its original condition. Occasionally, deeper cleaning might be needed especially straight after installation when cement may be left on the surface. Any remaining cement can be removed by washing with warm water or very diluted acidic solutions (diluted vinegar).

Be careful when choosing the cleaning agent to use, as in the majority of cases, damage to the surface is caused by using cleaning products that are too strong (high concentrations, hydrochloric acid, etc.). Sometimes using products that are unsuitable for the type of surface, such as cleaning agents with abrasive particles, can alter the appearance of the surface.

Never use an acidic cleaner when the material has just been laid. The acid could react with the cement glue, and even damage the joints. It is a good idea to soak the surface with a small amount of clean water before treating it with any type of chemical.

Rinse the surface immediately after the treatment to remove any remaining chemicals. Occasionally, the product can retain stains from spills. Some stains cannot be removed in the usual way and need specific cleaning procedures that depend on the type of material and kind of stain. In these cases contact the manufacturer and fabricator for assistance.

7. Timber

Always mop up spills straight away and don't leave wet crockery to stand for any length of time. Particular attention should be paid to the sink area; wipe down the work surface after use. Avoid prolonged contact with metals, such as iron and steel, as these can cause black staining of the timber. Wipe clean using a well wrung out cloth dipped in warm soapy water.

Unsealed solid wood work surfaces require slightly more maintenance than other tops as they need to be oiled regularly. Make use of the oil or other product recommended by your supplier to keep the wood supple and prevent cracking. Always follow the grain when applying oil and use a soft dry cloth. If the top has been sealed you may see fine scratch marks in the sealant over time. These can be filled and made less obvious with the use of a wax based product like Mr Min.

Without this care the tops can crack and warp.

CABINET HARDWARE MAINTENANCE:

1. Over a period of time, cabinet doors may become misaligned. Use a screw driver to tighten, or loosen, the easy adjustment screws on the hinge to adjust a door. Always be aware that excess pressure from leaning on or hanging onto cabinet doors may compromise the hinge, or tear the hinge plate off the cabinet. Always take care when opening and closing doors.
2. It is important to never overload drawers, roll-out shelves and adjustable shelves. Excess weight from heavy items may cause the drawers or roll-out shelves to malfunction and may even cause the drawer runners or shelf supports to fail.
3. Keeping your kitchen cabinets clean will prolong their life and prevent the expense of having to replace them. Remember, that the appearance of your entire kitchen has a significant impact on the value of your house, should you ever find yourself in the position of placing your house on the market. By following this simple maintenance guide you will keep your kitchen in the best shape possible, giving it a well-maintained and polished feel.

We hope you enjoy your new kitchen. Please retain your KSA handover certificate that accompanies this document as proof that the kitchen has been correctly handed over to you by your KSA member kitchen company or stone and surface fabricator.