

Care & Maintenance Guide for Oiled Wood Flooring

Index

1. Introduction
2. Understanding Oiled Wood Flooring
3. Everyday Care
4. Weekly Cleaning Routine
5. Choosing the Right Cleaning Products
6. What to Avoid
7. Dealing with Spills & Stains
8. Protecting Your Floor from Everyday Wear
9. Seasonal Changes & Natural Movement
10. Refreshing the Oil Finish
11. Deep Cleaning & Restoration
12. High Traffic Areas
13. Pets, Children & Everyday Living
14. Underfloor Heating Considerations
15. Common Mistakes to Avoid
16. Troubleshooting
17. Final Thoughts

1. Introduction

There's something wonderfully natural about oiled wood flooring. It has a softness to it that feels far less "finished" than lacquer, and instead lets the character of the wood really shine through.

It's often chosen for its warmth and authenticity, especially in homes where you want that relaxed, lived-in feel.

While it does need a little more care than some other finishes, it's also incredibly forgiving and easy to refresh — which is part of its charm.

2. Understanding Oiled Wood Flooring

Unlike lacquered flooring, oil doesn't sit on top of the wood. Instead, it soaks into the surface, protecting it from within while leaving the grain visible and natural.

This means:

- The finish looks more organic
- Small marks blend in more easily
- The floor can be repaired in small areas

However, it also means the surface is slightly more open, so regular maintenance is key to keeping it protected.

3. Everyday Care

Day-to-day care is simple and doesn't take much time.

A quick sweep or vacuum will remove dust and dirt before it has a chance to build up. These small particles can act like sandpaper over time, so keeping on top of them really helps.

It's one of those small habits that keeps your floor looking fresh without much effort.

4. Weekly Cleaning Routine

For a deeper clean, a weekly routine works beautifully.

Use a **slightly damp mop**, making sure it's well wrung out rather than wet. Too much water is one of the main things to avoid with oiled flooring.

A cleaner designed specifically for oiled wood floors is ideal. It will clean the surface while helping maintain the protective finish.

5. Choosing the Right Cleaning Products

Using the right products makes a noticeable difference over time.

Recommended:

- pH-neutral wood floor cleaners
- Cleaners designed for oiled finishes
- Microfibre mops or soft cloths

These will clean gently without stripping away the oil.

6. What to Avoid

Oiled flooring is natural, so it's best to avoid anything too harsh.

Avoid:

- Steam cleaners
- Excess water
- Bleach or ammonia-based cleaners
- Harsh chemical products

These can dry out the wood and reduce the effectiveness of the oil finish.

7. Dealing with Spills & Stains

Spills are part of everyday life, especially in busy homes.

The key is to deal with them quickly.

Blot the spill with a soft cloth rather than wiping it around. This helps prevent it from spreading or soaking into the wood.

For tougher marks, use a suitable wood floor cleaner. One of the benefits of oiled flooring is that small areas can often be treated without needing to redo the entire floor.

8. Protecting Your Floor from Everyday Wear

A few small adjustments can go a long way in protecting your flooring.

- Use felt pads under furniture
- Place rugs in high traffic areas
- Avoid dragging heavy items
- Keep pet nails trimmed

These simple steps help reduce wear and keep the floor looking its best.

9. Seasonal Changes & Natural Movement

Wood naturally responds to changes in temperature and humidity.

You may notice slight expansion in warmer months and contraction in cooler conditions. This is completely normal and part of having a real wood floor.

Keeping a consistent indoor environment will help minimise these changes.

10. Refreshing the Oil Finish

This is where oiled flooring really stands out.

Over time, the surface may begin to look slightly dry, especially in busy areas. This is simply a sign that it needs refreshing.

Applying a maintenance oil will:

- Restore the natural appearance
- Enhance the grain
- Provide continued protection

High traffic areas may need attention every 6–12 months, while quieter rooms can go longer.

11. Deep Cleaning & Restoration

Every so often, your floor may benefit from a deeper clean.

This usually involves:

- Using a specialist cleaner to remove built-up dirt
- Reapplying oil to refresh the surface

The lovely thing about this process is that it brings the floor back to life without the need for full sanding in most cases.

12. High Traffic Areas

Hallways, kitchens, and living spaces naturally experience more wear.

You might notice these areas looking slightly duller over time, but this is easy to manage with more frequent maintenance.

A quick refresh of oil in these spots can make a noticeable difference.

13. Pets, Children & Everyday Living

Real homes come with real life, and oiled flooring handles this surprisingly well.

Small scratches and marks tend to blend into the natural grain, rather than standing out. This makes it a lovely choice for busy households.

And if something does mark the surface, it can often be repaired locally, which is always reassuring.

14. Underfloor Heating Considerations

If your flooring is used with underfloor heating, a gentle approach is best.

Avoid sudden temperature changes and increase heat gradually. This helps prevent the wood from drying out too quickly.

Keeping temperatures stable will help maintain the condition of both the wood and the oil finish.

15. Common Mistakes to Avoid

A few simple things to keep in mind:

- Using too much water when cleaning
- Skipping regular maintenance
- Using the wrong cleaning products
- Ignoring when the floor needs re-oiling

Catching these early keeps everything simple and stress-free.

16. Troubleshooting

Floor looking dry or dull

This is usually a sign that it needs re-oiling.

Light scratches

Often improved with a gentle re-oil in that area.

Stains

Treat locally with the correct cleaner and reapply oil if needed.

17. Final Thoughts

Oiled wood flooring is all about natural beauty and character. It's not meant to look overly polished, and that's exactly what makes it so appealing.

With a little regular care and the occasional refresh, it will continue to age beautifully, developing even more warmth and depth over time.

It's a finish that truly feels at home in a lived-in space.

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