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Care and Maintenance Guide

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Preventative Maintenance

Cabinets should be treated like fine furniture. A few simple steps will not only extend the life of your custom kitchen but also keep it looking like new. Use a clean, microfiber cloth for regular dusting (packaged dusting sheets are not recommended). Clean your hardware with a solution of warm water and mild dish detergent applied to a damp microfiber cloth (brass and silver cleaners are not recommended). Dry your hardware and surrounding area immediately.

Shelf Capacity and Rotation

Recommended maximum loading for shelves is 15 lbs per square foot and 65 lbs per drawer. Avoid door mounted storage accessories unless the cabinet has specifically designed for this feature. Once every six months, remove, clean, and flip your shelves. This will extend the life of your shelves and help prevent warping and sagging.

Appliances and Heat/Steam Damage

Heat and steam can damage many components of a kitchen. When cooking always turn on the vent on your range hood or over-the-range microwave. Avoid placing hot items or electric appliances directly on the countertop, use protective insulating. When using heat and/or steam producing appliances such as toasters, crock pots, kettles or coffee makers always pull them out toward the edge of the countertop so they are not directly below the upper cabinets - this will prevent damage to cabinets' finish, edging, and doors. The heat generated when using an oven's self-cleaning feature is much greater than during normal cooking. If this heat escapes from the oven, it can damage your cabinets. To minimize the risk to your cabinets pull out your oven by approximately eight inches and remove cabinet doors and drawers adjacent to, or directly above, the appliance before using its self-cleaning feature.

Sunlight Exposure

Consider the use of blinds or shades to prevent discolouration of your cabinetry. Exposure to direct sunlight tends to darken the color of natural wood products. Sunlight can also fade painted surfaces, laminated surfaces and Thermofoil surfaces.

Water Damage

Quickly cleaning spills and splatter prevents damage caused by prolonged exposure. Prolonged exposure to spills, including food, water or other liquids can cause permanent discolouration or damage. Avoid draping damp or wet dish towels over the doors of cabinets. Over time, this moisture can cause permanent water damage to the door. Extra attention is required around susceptible areas such as sinks, dishwashers, waste cans and food preparation areas.

Stained Wood

Nature creates, but never duplicates – no two pieces of wood are exactly alike, even from the same tree. Due to the difference in natural colour and grain, each piece of wood will react differently to the finishing materials used (colour may vary even within the same component). Wood characteristics (grain patterns, knots, mineral deposits etc.) are natural occurrences in wood surfaces and are not considered defects. Some wood species will darken naturally with age. Exclusive Cabinetry and Millwork is not liable for the change in appearance of any product due to this aging process or discolouration due to exposure or to cigarette smoke.

Routine Care

Everyday cleaning can be performed using a slightly damp microfibre cloth, wiping the surfaces dry. For best results, wipe in the direction of the wood grain. Do not use a dishcloth to wipe your cabinets - it may contain remnants of grease or detergents. Mild soap and water applied with a clean cloth can be used to remove oil, grease, or other materials from the surface. All soap residues should be removed from the surface using a clean, damp microfibre cloth. Dry surfaces immediately after cleaning - give special attention to areas around the sink and dishwasher. Do not use waxes, polishes (such as Pledge), strong detergents, ammonia solutions, bleach and abrasive cleaners.

Heat, Steam and Humidity

Caution must be used when dealing with heat or moisture around any wood products. Steam, water or heat that comes close to or in contact with any wood product will absorb causing multiple issues. Exclusive Cabinetry and Millwork will not warranty failures of this nature. Care must be taken when using toasters, portable grills, kettles, coffee makers and other heat/steam generation appliances to ensure that upper cabinets are not subjected to excessive heat or steam. Excessive humidity levels may affect the wood and could cause warpage, swelling, and/or shrinkage of the cabinet doors. To reduce this risk avoid sharp changes in temperature, we also recommend keeping relative humidity in your home between **35% and 50% all year round**. Raised panel door styles are susceptible to panel shrinkage if exposed to low humidity but will return to their natural shape as the humidity returns to proper levels. This shrinkage is not considered a defect. Exclusive Cabinetry and Millwork will not warranty product failure caused by excessively humid conditions; all wood products need low stable moisture conditions in order for the joints to remain tight.

Water Damage

Wipe up any liquid spills promptly. Avoid draping damp or wet dishtowels over the doors of cabinets. Over time, this moisture can cause permanent water damage (peeling or discolouration) to the door. Don't use too much water when cleaning. Excess water use can damage your cabinets and is not covered under warranty.

Painted HDF

HDF (High Density Fiberboard) cabinet doors are finished with an Oil-based Painted Finish. This finish is very durable, but improper care will cause premature wear. The paint that is applied cures to a very hard finish. If a sharp impact occurs to the finish, it may cause a chip. Chips in the paint should be touched up as soon as possible. If any moisture penetrates the painted finish down to the HDF Substrate, swelling can occur. This would be considered routine maintenance of the product and would not be considered a warrantable item.

Routine Care

Cabinet grade Painted products may be cleaned with a solution of warm water and a small amount of mild dish detergent. Wipe clean with a soft cloth dampened in the water/detergent solution, followed by a clean, damp microfiber cloth to remove any soap residues and dry immediately with a soft cloth to avoid streaking - give special attention to areas around the sink and dishwasher. Do not use a dishcloth to wipe your cabinets - it may contain remnants of grease or detergents. Avoid cleaning with products containing bleach, ammonia or silicone. Though this finish is very durable, repeated use of harsh chemicals may damage your lacquer finish.

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Water Damage

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Polymer or Polyester

Thermofoil doors and cabinets with Polymer or Polyester surfaces are manufactured using materials that are designed for easy care.

Routine Care

Thermofoil products can easily be cleaned by using mild soap and must be rinsed and wiped with a dry microfiber cloth. Clean all spills immediately using a soft cloth dampened with clean water, and then dried immediately. Do not use your dishcloth to clean your cabinets, because it may contain grease, detergent, or other household chemicals that may damage the cabinet surface. Avoid accumulations of dirt such as grease or dust to avoid chances of permanent stains. Do not use abrasive pads or steel wool to clean your products. Never use chemical products such as paint thinners, bleaches, products containing acetone, or any cleaning product containing solvents or abrasives which may cause permanent damage. Do not use wax on Thermofoil cabinets.

Heat and Steam

Avoid exposing Thermofoil products to sources of extreme heat (85°C/185°F). Precautions must be taken when using certain electric countertop appliances. Toasters, kettles, portable ovens and all other appliances creating heat or steam can affect nearby surfaces. Be sure to place these appliances to avoid affecting surfaces situated above the appliance. Exclusive Cabinetry and Millwork will not warranty damage of this nature.

Water Damage

Wipe up any liquid spills promptly. Avoid draping damp or wet dishtowels over the doors of cabinets. Over time, this moisture can cause permanent water damage (peeling or discoloration) to the door. Don't use too much water when cleaning. Excess water use can damage your cabinets and is not covered under warranty.

Glass Door Cabinets

Extra care is required when cleaning glass doors. Spray an ammonia-free glass cleaner on a clean microfiber cloth or paper towel before applying to glass surface. Do not spray cleaner directly on the glass – this can cause damage to the cabinet finish and seep behind mullions. Don't use cleaners containing sodium hydrochloride, phosphoric acid or sulfur.

Laminate

Plastic laminate countertops are a durable man-made surface, but like any product they can be damaged by abuse, neglect or carelessness. Never kneel, sit or stand on your countertop as this may cause cracking and will void the warranty. Miter joints are assembled using a construction grade adhesive and silicone to support the joints. Joints are susceptible to swelling when water or moisture get into the joint. Avoid any water or moisture from getting anywhere near the joints. Swelling of any miter joints would not be cause for a warranty claim.

Routine Care

Clean your countertop with a damp cloth or sponge and a mild detergent. Don't use cleaners containing ammonia, bleach, or abrasives. Wipe the countertop with clean, damp cloth and dry the surface with a non-abrasive cloth. Abrasive cleaners and products such as steel wool should never come in contact with the laminate.

Stain Removal

Difficult stains can be removed using a mild household cleaner and a soft bristle brush. Rinse thoroughly and dry to remove any residue. Never use cleaners containing acid, alkali or sodium hypochlorite. Hair, textile and food dyes can cause permanent stains. Wipe up immediately and rinse several times with water. Do not use abrasive cleaners, powders, steel wool, sand paper or scouring pads on the laminate surface.

Minor Damage

Ceramic and abrasive objects can cause scratches and premature wear. Do not chop, slice, pound, or hammer on the laminate surface. Sharp utensils will scratch or slice the surface. Heavy blows may crack or gouge the surface. Use cutting boards, chopping blocks or other protective elements when working on the countertop.

Heat Tolerance

Do not place hot items directly on the laminate surface, use protective insulated pads. Extreme heat can cause cracking, blistering, burns, and discoloration – these are irreparable. Avoid using electric heat sources such as kettles, skillets, and irons directly on the laminate surface.

Water Damage

Wipe up standing water immediately. Water that is allowed to sit on the countertop for any length of time, especially near mitre joints, can penetrate and cause the core of the counter top to swell and delaminate. Be careful in areas where sinks, dishwashers, coffee makers, toasters or kettles are located on or near a mitre joint. Wipe off water or other liquids immediately. Damage caused by excessive water in the seam area is not warrantied.

Granite

Granite is a 100% natural product, with every stone having its own unique qualities and characteristics. These range from natural pitting to areas of crystal deposits embedded within the stone as well as the stone's unique motion and patterns, therefore it is not always possible to be matched across a joint or corner area. All these qualities give stone its original character and uniqueness. Your new countertops have been treated with a penetrating sealer. The sealer bonds to the stone and acts as a repellent to help prevent absorption, yet at the same time it lets the stone breath and release moisture. The seams in your granite countertop have been joined together with an epoxy and are totally water proof. Never kneel, sit or stand on your countertop as this may cause cracking and will void the warranty.

Routine Care

Clean stone surfaces with a neutral cleaner, stone soap or a mild liquid dishwashing detergent and warm water; use a soft cloth. Do not use harsh chemical soaps or cleaners. Too much soap will cause streaks and leave a film. Wipe the surface thoroughly with warm water and soft cloth. Do not clean the surface with products containing lemon, vinegar, acids or abrasives.

Stain Removal

Stone products have many tiny pores that are susceptible to different liquids such as oils and red wine, if left for a long period of time may leave a temporary ring. In most cases this will fade with time and will not harm the stone. When using oils, lemon juice and red wine it is best to wipe up the spills as soon as possible and leave the top to air dry. To remove stains and spills use a paper towel to blot the stain as quickly as possible – avoid wiping a spill as it will cause the stain to spread. Avoid leaving even a small spill, because it may stain and spread. Use a household cleaner and nylon bristled brush to remove the stain. Rinse the surface thoroughly after cleaning and dry with a soft, clean cloth.

Heat Tolerance

Granite possesses excellent wear resistance and heat resistance, but hot items may cause cracking or discolouration. If it's too hot to touch with your hand, do not put it on the countertop.

Sealing your Granite

It is recommended that you seal your granite countertops once per year. Granite sealers can be purchased at your local hardware store. Follow the directions on the product. Depending on the product, this process usually takes between half an hour and an hour. Sealing your granite will provide more protection from staining.

Quartz

Quartz is a homogeneous and solid mineral-filled polymer material so that it is easy and convenient to care for and maintain. Simple routine maintenance is required to keep it looking new. Its hard, nonporous surface makes Quartz simple to clean. Never kneel, sit or stand on your countertop as this may cause cracking and will void the warranty.

Routine Care

In most cases, soap and water or a mild detergent is all that is required for cleaning. Do not use abrasive cleaners or pads. Thoroughly wipe the surface with clean, damp cloth to remove residue and dry with soft, clean cloth.

Stain Removal

Wipe up staining foods and liquids immediately, this will make clean up much easier. For stain removal apply household cleaner to the stained area. Gently rub the stained area in a circular motion with a damp cloth. Wipe the area with a clean damp sponge or cloth to remove any residue followed by a dry cloth. Never use steel wool on your countertop. To remove hard water deposits, use a wet cloth with a mixture of one part vinegar to three parts water. Dry the area with a clean, dry cloth.

Heat Tolerance

Hot pans and heat producing appliances may cause discoloration or cracking which will void the warranty. If it's too hot to touch with your hand, do not put it on your counter top – use a cutting board or similar protective shield underneath the item.

Acrylic

Acrylic countertops are solid surface non-porous, fully manmade material with a high resistance to heat. Never kneel, sit or stand on your countertop as this may cause cracking and will void the warranty.

Routine Care

In most cases, soap and water or a mild detergent is all that is required for cleaning. Do not use abrasive cleaners or pads. Thoroughly wipe the surface with a clean, damp cloth to remove residue and dry with soft, clean cloth.

Stain Removal

To remove stains apply a kitchen cleaner to the stained area. Gently rub the stained area in a circular motion with a damp cloth. Wipe the area with a clean damp cloth or sponge to remove any residue, followed by a clean, dry cloth. Do not expose the surface to harsh chemicals, if contact occurs flush countertop with water. Never use steel wool on your countertop. To remove hard water deposits, use a wet cloth with a mixture of one part vinegar to three parts water. Dry the area with a clean dry cloth.

Minor Damage

A scratch that can be felt by touch should be addressed by a professional fabricator. Always use a cutting board instead of cutting directly on the surface. Use felt pads on canisters, pottery, etc. to prevent scratching on the surface.

Heat Tolerance

Always use a hot pad or trivet with rubber feet to protect surface from heat. Hot pans and heat producing appliances may cause discolouration or cracking which will void the warranty.

Adjustments and Troubleshooting

Door Adjustments

Cabinetry doors can be adjusted in a number of ways to fine-tune the positioning of each door individually. The diagrams below outline a few simple adjustments that can be made to rectify simple door alignment issues. Adjustments can be made using a #2 pozi-drive screwdriver, or alternately, a #2 Phillips screwdriver.



Door Removal and Soft-Close Operation

Cabinetry doors can be removed from the cabinet as required. The soft closure hinges in your cabinetry can be adjusted to alter the rate of closure on all doors. Please note that bi-fold corner cabinet doors will not feature a soft-close device.



Touch Ups

Your original cabinetry has been delivered with a touch-up kit for corrections of minor damage after installation. Please contact us if additional touch-up stain/paint is required.

Reporting a Concern

It would be our pleasure to discuss and review any concern you may have regarding our products. When contacting either a home builder or our office please have your home address, date of cabinetry installation.

Residential Builder

If you have purchased your home from an affiliated Residential Builder please contact their office directly to report a concern or warranty claim. They will evaluate the issue and take appropriate action.

Retail Client/Home Renovation

Please contact our office by phone, fax, e-mail or in person to report an issue or claim. We will assess your concern and provide service work as necessary.