

Cabinet Cleaning and Care Guide

Thank you for choosing Superior Cabinets. Here is some important information to keep your cabinets clean and adjusted to protect your investment. Whether they are made of Wood, MDF, Laminate/Melamine, or Thermofoil, here are some daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly maintenance tips as part of the regular required homeowner maintenance.

DAILY AND WEEKLY MAINTENANCE



Liquid spills should be cleaned up right when they occur on or in your cabinetry, and it's best to avoid letting spills dry on your finish. For everyday clean-up on cabinets, clean them by wiping them with a slightly damp soft microfiber cloth, and then immediately dry them with a dry soft cloth to remove any excess residual moisture. For stubborn stains, you can also add a small amount of mild dish soap to your water to help remove oils and grease from your cabinetry. Afterwards, remember to immediately wipe them dry with a soft cloth.

Pay special attention to areas around your sink and dishwasher, as these wet zones may need to be cleaned more often. Wipe any standing water on countertops, especially around the sink, faucet/taps, and countertop miters. Standing water can negatively affect your countertop seams and clouding can occur, especially on darker-coloured granite countertops, resulting in a white haze from hard water mineral deposits.

Check the insides of the cabinets and areas that have plumbing weekly. This includes sinks, dishwashers, and fridges that have a plumbed line for a water dispenser. Even a small, unnoticed spill or small plumbing leak from a sink or appliance can cause permanent damage. Water damage (swelling) occurs when liquids are left sitting on the inside of the cabinet floor and on the top, face, and back of the cabinet door and drawer fronts. If you see any moisture or standing water, wipe them up immediately, as it's best to avoid letting spills dry.

MONTHLY MAINTENANCE

To keep your cabinetry looking good, it's recommended to wipe them down once a month, using the same techniques mentioned previously. Areas around handles or knobs can get very sticky from grease, hand oils, and grime. This will also happen near the cooking zone, as grease from cooking can build up on cabinet fronts, especially those close to the stove or cooktop. Removing this residual grease is extremely important to do monthly, as leaving this to build up can be difficult or sometimes impossible to remove even after a few months or years, depending on cooking behaviours.

SPRING AND FALL MAINTENANCE

Spring and Fall are good times to visually inspect the reveals and margins on cabinet doors and fronts, as some basic adjustments may be required. Remember, any moving parts [doors, drawers, pull-outs] will need to be adjusted.

As part of regular required homeowner maintenance, it's good to perform adjustments on your cabinet door and drawer fronts twice a year. This ensures that things are properly aligned and performing correctly, and there are no binding doors or fronts, which can cause permanent damage. Remember, moving parts including door hinges, drawer glides and pull-outs need yearly adjustments, as this is natural with usage, shifts, and humidity changes in the home.

Maintaining balanced humidity in the home is important for your cupboards, as some cabinetry substrates or types tend to expand during humid seasons [Spring & Summer] and contract during dry, cold seasons [Fall & Winter]. Ideal humidity levels are 40-50%, which should be maintained throughout the year and not following these guidelines can void your manufacturer's warranty.

REMOVING STUBBORN FINGERPRINTS



It's recommended to avoid any touching of the cabinet fronts. The decorative cabinet hardware is there to use for opening and closing and is essential to protect the cabinetry finish from hand oils. For stubborn contamination from hand oils or visible fingerprints on your cabinets that can't be wiped off without deeper intervention, here are two advanced methods to consider.

[DISCLAIMER] These methods are only to be used for any cabinets finished with a professional furniture finish top coat, such as a two-component or a catalyzed conversion varnish. Do not use these methods on any unfinished or wood alternative materials like Thermofoil,

Laminate, TFL, or Melamine, as abrasives, solvents, lacquer thinners, or any products containing acetone will permanently damage these substrates. If you aren't sure what substrate your cabinet fronts are made from, always consult with a professional first.

Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer: This can sometimes remove fingerprints, depending on how contaminated or severe. This can be done by dabbing some alcohol-based hand sanitizer on a clean, dry, microfiber cloth, then wiped into the surface, and then left to evaporate.

Mineral Spirits: This method can also help remove contamination in the finish or top coat. This can be done by dabbing a small amount onto a clean, dry cloth, then wiped into the surface, and then left to evaporate. Mineral spirits can be purchased from any home building supply, big box, or paint store. If you try this method, it's recommended to test on an inconspicuous area, such as the inside of a cabinet door, or on a samples/test piece,

if you can. Always use the recommended Personal Protective Equipment [PPE], including gloves and follow the recommended safety procedures, including having proper venting, as this is a solvent.

OVER-THE-COUNTER CLEANERS



There are many over-the-counter cabinet cleaners available that can help remove dirt, oil, and grease. If you try one, it is recommended to use a brand that is PH-balanced, formulated for all purposes, and is suitable for various substrates/types, including wood and laminate cabinets.

Spray the cleaner on your clean, soft microfiber cloth and then wipe the surface, rather than spraying it directly onto the cupboards and then wiping. Test on an inconspicuous area or on the inside of a cabinet door first, as some household cleaners and chemicals can cause permanent damage to the cabinetry finish, which can sometimes be unrepairable. In that case, you may need to hire a professional touch-up technician.

CLEANING CABINET INTERIORS



As an industry standard, most cabinet interiors or cases are made of Thermofused Melamine, also known as Thermally Fused Melamine. This is a durable, cleanable, and long-lasting material for cabinet case/box construction, especially if taken care of. Cabinet interiors should be cleaned/wiped with a slightly damp soft cloth, and immediately dried with a dry soft microfiber cloth to remove any excess residual moisture. Remember, always dry the surface immediately after cleaning, as excessive water left behind may seep down into the seams, which will cause irreparable damage to this material. When cleaning cabinet hinges, use a soft dry cloth or a cotton-tipped swab in the smaller areas.

CLEANING HARDWARE [HANDLES/KNOBS]

High-quality decorative cabinet hardware is typically finished with a protective coating, but this doesn't make them invincible. Decorative cabinet hardware should be cleaned/wiped with a slightly damp soft cloth, and immediately dried with a dry soft cloth to remove any excess residual moisture. It is also important to dry the areas around the cleaned handle or knob immediately after. You can also protect the finish on your handles and knobs by avoiding contact with jewelry, as finger rings can quickly chip away at the protective coating and permanently wear or erode the finish.

CLEANING GLASS DOORS

If you have glass inserts in your cabinet doors, they may be cleaned with window cleaner. Spray the cleaner on a clean cloth and wipe the glass clean. Never spray window cleaner directly on the door, as over-spray of the cleaner may damage the finish on the cabinetry surfaces. If you get some of the cleaning product on the cabinetry surfaces, wipe immediately with a damp cloth followed by wiping with a dry cloth.

Things to Avoid

Water and Moisture with Cabinetry: Never hang a wet dishcloth or dish towel over any cabinet doors or fronts. Eventually, the moisture will cause permanent damage to your door. Do not leave any standing water, moisture, or liquids inside cabinet cases or on drawer bottoms. Again, all spills should be cleaned up right when they occur, as water, liquids, or moisture and cabinets do not go well together.

Touching Cabinet Fronts: Touching cabinet fronts will eventually contaminate the cabinet finish from hand oils, showing visible fingerprints that can't be wiped off without deeper intervention. This can happen on all cabinet substrates/types but is especially true for matte and dark cabinet finishes which can contaminate in a matter of a few months from touching them. Your decorative handle hardware is there to protect your cabinets from touching, so use them to avoid any hand contact.

Brass or Silver Cleaners on Hardware: These are not recommended for cleaning your cabinet handles, knobs, drawer slides, or decorative hardware. Some of these cleaning solutions contain harsh chemicals that can permanently damage the finish on your hardware.

Magic Eraser: Do not use a magic eraser or a melamine sponge on cabinets or countertops. This includes your cabinet doors/fronts, hardware, hinges, glides, or interiors. When a magic eraser is wet it's equivalent to a 3000 – 5000 grit sandpaper, so this is never recommended.

Cleaners or Abrasives: Avoid using harsh detergents, or cleaners containing ammonia, silicone, or bleach additives. Never use abrasive cleaners, scouring pads, wipes (antibacterial or any kind), or powdered cleaners on any type of cabinetry or countertops.

Furniture Waxes or Polishes: It's important not to use any furniture wax or furniture polish on your cabinetry. These products will contaminate or mar your factory finish or top coat.

Self-Cleaning Appliances: Self-cleaning appliances create a great deal of heat during the cleaning process, and residual heat or heat escaping through seals or gaskets can cause major damage to your cabinets. This feature heats the oven far beyond normal cooking temperatures, around ~470° Celsius [~878 Fahrenheit], and this excessive heat is terrible for cabinetry and laminate countertops. Therefore, we don't recommend using the Self-Cleaning feature on an oven or any heat-omitting appliance.



If you do decide to use this feature, it's always recommended to pull the range/stove/oven out a minimum of 12" out from the wall. It's also recommended to completely remove upper, lower doors and drawers that are directly beside the appliance while the self-cleaning feature is in use.

Appliance experts are seeing a shift away from the high-heat self-cleaning option, as some manufacturers are adding a new additional Steam Cleaning option in certain models, also known as Low-Temperature Cleaning. This new steam cleaning feature offers a chemical-free, shorter, odorless experience that uses less power, perfect for intermittent cleaning. Some appliance experts feel that appliance manufacturers will eventually be fully switching over to the steam cleaning/low-temperature cleaning option in the future, but time will tell.

Steam and Heat Releasing Appliances: Appliances that release heat and steam will damage your cabinetry if placed too close. Small appliances such as air fryers, kettles, coffee makers, pressure cookers (instant pot), toaster ovens, and any countertop appliances that produce excess heat and steam should be pulled out beyond the upper cabinetry so that steam does not touch the cabinet fronts or cases/boxes. Click [here](#) for more information on the impacts of heat and steam on cabinets.



For some cabinet types like Thermofoil or Melamine/Laminate, it's recommended that a filler or heat shield be installed between any door and drawer front and a range/stove/oven. Failure to do so will void your warranty, therefore, it's recommended to consult and plan your dream kitchen with a Professional Kitchen Designer. [Read more on the impacts](#)

[of heat and steam on cabinets.](#)

Summary

This routine maintenance will keep your cabinetry looking good, enhances functionality, and prolong their life. Wipe up spills and standing water right away. Don't let things go uncleaned for too long, as this will cause future difficulties. Your cabinets aren't maintenance-free, and any moving parts will require adjustments. Avoid exposure from excessive heat and water. Kitchens are one of the most used areas of the home, so it's important to devote the time to keep them clean and adjusted to protect your investment.

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[ADJUSTING DRAWER GLIDES](#)

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[COUNTERTOP CARE AND MAINTENANCE](#)

[THE IMPACT OF HEAT AND STEAM ON KITCHEN CABINETS](#)

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