

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

SPC HYBRID VINYL FLOORS



www.harmonytimberfloors.com



CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF YOUR HARMONY SPC HYBRID VINYL FLOORING

AVOID DIRECT SUNLIGHT

SPC hybrid vinyl flooring will change colour on exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. The amount of change is dependent upon the amount of direct and indirect sunlight exposure the flooring is subjected to. Unprotected glass allows the intense morning/afternoon sun to beat directly onto the flooring which in turn will damage the flooring. The incredible heat generated not only cooks the surface of the flooring, thereby degrading the finishes, but also increases the chance of the floorboards expanding, causing the floorboards to buckle or separate when shrinking due to cooling down, cupping, crowning, peeling, bleaching etc. As a result it is critical that customers have blinds, curtains or excellent quality window tint installed and ensure that they are closed at the time of the day when most exposed to ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Failure to do this will have an adverse effect on the floor's coating and performance overall. Floor coverings like rugs and mats should not be placed on the newly installed flooring for a period of 6 weeks post installation in order to allow the flooring to stabilize. In order to ensure a uniform appearance for the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring, it would be advisable to reposition rugs, mats and furniture periodically. Areas of flooring unprotected by blinds, curtains or an excellent quality window tint, will almost certainly suffer adverse effects to the coating and performance overall and will not be covered by the product warranty. **Remember, Australia has some of the highest levels of ultraviolet (UV) radiation!**

SPC HYBRID VINYL FLOORING AND WATER

Although SPC hybrid vinyl flooring handles water far better than timber flooring, spillages need to be cleaned up in a timely fashion with a mop or towels. It is also advisable to do maintenance checks around the perimeters of the flooring, particularly against windows, sliding doors, tiles etc. to see if any ingress of water has taken place. It is also important to check areas around the dishwasher and ice-maker fridge for any potential water damage. **Please note SPC hybrid vinyl flooring is waterproof from above only and it is not to be installed in wet areas such as bathrooms, laundries or powder rooms. The presence of water below the flooring will cause issues to the structural stability of the flooring such as cupping, swelling, lock breakage etc. and will not be covered by the product warranty.**

It is also important not to place potted plants directly onto the flooring, even if they have a tray to catch the water. Condensation of the water in the tray could cause stains to occur on the flooring. Similarly, do not place pot plants in bamboo or grass baskets directly onto the flooring, as it has happened that leaching has occurred from the bamboo or grass baskets onto the surface of the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring, leaving distinctive stains.

PETS

We all love our pets, but sometimes they can cause damage to your SPC hybrid vinyl flooring. It is advisable to keep your pet's toe nails clipped in order to avoid scratches to your flooring. Furthermore, pet urine and vomit is highly acidic and if not cleaned up in due course will etch in the coatings of your flooring resulting in damage to the coating. Also it is important to note that when pets run on the flooring they will battle to grip it, so in order to avoid injury to your pets, try to avoid them running on the flooring. Harmony Timber Floors Pty Ltd will not be held accountable for any injuries to pets that have slipped on the flooring.

SHOES AND HIGH HEELS

Many people don't wear outdoor shoes inside for hygiene and cleanliness reasons. They switch to softer indoor footwear and this not only reduces the cleaning required but also prevents tracking abrasive grit and dirt into the home. This grit acts just like sandpaper on your SPC hybrid vinyl flooring. High heels, especially if broken, can also be your flooring's worst enemy, **particularly stiletto heels, which are an absolute no, no!**

TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Proper temperature control will assist in ensuring that your SPC hybrid vinyl flooring retains its structural ability. Methods to assist in temperature control include circulating the air with fans, opening windows and doors, running air conditioners etc. **Do not leave your home closed up for long periods of time as this could have an adverse effect on the flooring. When extreme cold, heat, dry or wet weather is present, steps need to be taken to control the temperature in your home in order to ensure that the flooring retains its structural stability. The optimal temperature to maintain where possible is 24 degrees Celsius. Furthermore, the Relative Humidity should be controlled between 30% and 70% at all times, in order to ensure the flooring performs optimally. It is highly recommended that customers install a hygrometer in their home to monitor Relative Humidity.** It is normal for flooring to expand and contract seasonally, however insuring that the temperature is controlled will help reduce the amount of expansion and contraction. It is also important to consider how electronic items are installed and stored, as the heat they generate can damage the flooring. Furthermore, where the flooring has been installed near a fireplace or heater, care needs to be taken, as the heat generated by the fireplace or heater could impact on the flooring by causing it to expand and resulting in floorboards buckling or separating when shrinking due to cooling down, cupping, crowning, peeling, etc.

FURNITURE PROTECTION

In almost all cases, when called in to assess the condition of a customer's SPC hybrid vinyl flooring, we find the most of the damage tends to occur around and underneath the dining table from poorly or unprotected feet on the chairs. The same applies to bar stools and office chairs on wheels. These areas are subject to a lot of wear and tear, with constant scraping of chairs in and out can quickly degrade the coating on the flooring. Most customers have diligently placed felt protectors on the bottom of the feet of the dining chairs and bar stools, only to have them knocked off or damaged over time, leaving the hard wood or metal tip exposed. The best types of furniture protection are the hard plastic cups containing the felt pad that have a nail or pin that can be hammered into the feet of the chairs itself. They don't fall off and should wear extremely well. With furniture legs, it is not so much weight but movement that damages the floorboards as they are abrasive. However, there are a number of other alternatives on the market to consider. It is up to the customer to regularly check their furniture for wear and tear of their floor protection. Underneath office chairs that have wheels, it is critical to place a good quality, non-staining mat or rug, as the wheels will severely damage the floors coatings. When moving any furniture it is important to check that the protection place on the furniture is in place and in good condition.

FURNITURE

Do not place excessively heavy items of furniture such as a baby grand piano, heavy bookcase or billiard table etc. on the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring, as it could cause expansion issues, fractures or breakages to the locking system. Do not place weights of more than 150kgs directly on the joints as it could cause the locks to fracture or break. Furthermore, periodically move furniture around will allow any possible changes in colour to the flooring to have a more uniform effect.

RUGS AND MATS

Good quality, non-staining mats placed inside and outside all entrance doors are the next best solution to prevent tracking abrasive dirt and grit inside. Good quality, non-staining mats placed in high traffic areas such as at the kitchen sink or in hallway, greatly assist in the reduction of wear and tear to these areas. Move good quality, non-staining rugs and mats periodically, as ultraviolet (UV) light can change the colour of the exposed SPC hybrid vinyl flooring giving the floor an uneven appearance. Furthermore, it is important to not place rubber-backed or latex-backed anti-slip mats underneath rugs and mats. It is also important to consider the backing on your rugs and mats, insuring that they are non-staining and not made of rubber or latex. Coconut and grass fibre mats can also cause staining on your flooring. Place good quality mats at the entrance to the flooring. The aim of a good quality matting system is to remove dirt/grit and moisture from the feet of people entering the building to prevent that material scratching or wearing away the finish film. **Underneath office chairs that have wheels, it is critical to place a good quality, non-staining rug or mat, as the wheels will severely damage the floors coating.**

PROTECTING OF NEWLY INSTALLED FLOORING DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

Never cover newly installed SPC hybrid vinyl flooring with plastic or non breathable products, as it could cause the flooring to sweat and have an adverse effect on the structural stability of the product. Always use breathable products like Ram Board or similar, in order to allow the flooring to breath. Please also visit the Australasian Timber Flooring Association website at www.atfa.com.au for a comprehensive guideline on how to covering flooring during the construction process.

CLEANING AND CLEANING PRODUCTS

Prior to mopping, vacuum or sweep your flooring. Before commencing the use the vacuum or broom, it is important to check the vacuum head and broom are free of sharp objects, exposed screws etc. When cleaning your flooring, place the recommended quantity (usually half a cap full) of Parquetpro Cleaner in a 500ml spray bottle. Wet the micro fibre mop head and wring it out. Then mist spray the solution in the 500ml spray bottle onto the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring and mop. Run fans, open windows to introduce a breeze or run air conditioning to assist in drying the flooring in a more timely fashion once mopped. When the mop head gets dirty, rinse it out. Do not machine wash the mop head as it causes them to degrade quicker. **Do not use a steam mop on your SPC hybrid vinyl flooring! Steam mops force steam (moisture) into small incisions or breaks that appear in the surface of your floor, causing the finish to peel and delaminate.** All finishes degrade over time, a process that is accelerated by heat. Furthermore, avoid wet mopping of the floor, which can leave excess moisture or streaking as well as increase the likelihood of slipping. If using a cleaning product from another supplier, ensure it is a neutral floor cleaner and follow their instructions.

Never ever use common household products like all-purpose household cleaner, window cleaner, steel wool pads, aerosol furniture polish, wax or similar products to clean your SPC hybrid vinyl flooring. Some are too abrasive and will scratch the surface of the flooring, whilst others will make your flooring dangerously slippery and could leave a film of silicone or wax on the flooring. A lot of people might think methylated spirits or kerosene is all right to use. They are not! Any type of petroleum distillate will degrade the finish of the flooring over time and eventually cause it to look irreversibly dull and drab. It is best to use the finish suggested by Harmony Timber Floors Pty Ltd, following the directions for use. However, if unavailable, then some warm water with a little mild, neutral PH detergent added works well. Again mist spray or squeeze the mop out and dampen mop only. Some choose to buff the floor with a soft cloth afterwards to ensure no water is left on the flooring. Run fans, open windows to introduce a breeze or run air conditioning to assist in drying the flooring in a more timely fashion once mopped. SPC hybrid vinyl flooring can be slippery when wet, so it is important to ensure that care is taken not to use too much water when cleaning. To remove stubborn or sticky marks, do a test patch using little methylated spirits or white vinegar, mixed with water and applied to a clean rag. Harmony Timber Floors Pty Ltd suggests using a product Parquetpro which is a PH Neutral cleaning agent, which can be directly purchased from them. Other PH Neutral cleaners can be used and the manufacturer's instructions followed accordingly.

REGULAR INSPECTIONS

Many customers have unrealistic expectations about the life and durability of SPC hybrid vinyl flooring. Some customers expect the flooring to be bullet proof and to never mark or wear, to be impervious to spillages and moisture, or to never requiring any form of maintenance. It is better to create realistic expectations upfront by explaining clearly that the SPC hybrid vinyl flooring is a long term investment. If routine cleaning and maintenance is carried out and the flooring is protected from various elements such as the sun and moisture, customers can expect to have many years of pleasure from their flooring. Basic routine maintenance including sweeping, vacuuming and mopping with a barely moist micro-fibre mop using the manufacturer's recommended cleaner, will remove the buildup of dirt and grit. Failure to routinely clean the flooring, which if left will leave the dirt to accumulate and act as an abrasive resulting in wear occurring to the floors coating. Do flooring regularly for any signs of damage or wear and tear, taking the appropriate action where necessary. This step alone can save you much heartache and money. Early intervention in most cases means minor problems are able to be fixed without major expenses occurring. Please feel free to call Harmony Timber Floors Pty Ltd for advice on 1300 725 257 or 07 55 206 701 if you have any concerns. Also please feel free to consult the ATFA website www.atfa.com.au.