

Commercial timber floor maintenance



It is not possible to be able to give a specific day-by-day maintenance schedule but the information noted below will assist professional cleaning contractors to be able to determine a suitable programme. It is general in nature as the frequency and type of maintenance required will be controlled by the nature of the business, the type of use and the traffic levels experienced. Additional maintenance advice is available from efp.

Prevention

Ideally matting should be as large as possible and consist of 2 separate areas; ideally external and internal on larger buildings. The first area removes and allows grit, etc. to drop away from the surface whilst the second area absorbs and removes moisture and fine dust that remains. Failure to remove moisture and dirt can lead to the surface of heavily trafficked areas adjacent to entry points being damaged.

Mats should be at all doorways including service entrances. Research has shown that between 70 - 90% of dirt, dust and grit enter a building via foot traffic and that removal of the material / refurbishment of the flooring can cost in excess of 60% of the maintenance budget.

Other preventative measures include the use of felt protective feet on all furniture legs / bases, lifting equipment rather than dragging it across the surface and avoiding the use of adhesives tapes to hold down cabling.

Cleaning

It is suggested that the following points are considered with regard to the ongoing maintenance process. It should be noted that a high standard of cleaning is required where slip resistant finishes have been used to ensure that their performance is not compromised:

- Dust and grit should be removed from all floors on a daily basis. On larger floors this may be achieved using a scissor mop whereas smaller areas may be more suited to a vacuum cleaner. Dirt and grit will potentially cause scratches if trafficked across a floor and fine surface dust can significantly affect the slip resistance of a floor, particularly when the floor is new or has been recently finished.

- Cleaning should be carried out wherever possible using a machine based system i.e. auto scrubber, buffing machine, etc. In most situations the use of a Tan pad is acceptable to be able to clean a floor. It is possible however that where heavier deposits of material are seen that a more coarse Red pad may be required on occasions.
It is very difficult to clean effectively in a large high use area using a mop. It may be possible to use a mop during very low traffic periods or where 'spot' cleaning is required. Excessive continuous use of aggressive pads, such as red pads, may physically damage or dull the surface of the floor.
In small areas, speciality retail stores for instance, cleaning using a mop may be appropriate with infrequent cleaning using a machine based system.
- Cleaning should be carried out only using a low solids neutral detergent, such as Bona Cleaner, so as to reduce the possibility of residues from the cleaner building up on the floor.
- All spillage, breakages etc. should be cleaned up as soon as possible. This is particularly important where glass or crockery is present. In the same way as it is possible to scratch steel with a sharp edge then it is possible to cut and scratch a coated timber surface. Both the finish and the timber can be damaged.
 - Regular maintenance should include cleaning of the feet of furniture, wheeled trolleys, etc. to ensure that grit and other materials are not trapped beneath them, which could damage the floor. Protective covers on furniture 'feet' should be replaced as soon as they appear to be ineffective or have been 'lost'
- Floors where spillage of food etc. occurs may need to be cleaned occasionally using a slightly alkaline cleaner, such as Bona Deep Clean, to remove stubborn deposits and the build-up of grease and other deposits. In multi-use function halls the deposition of body fat, from sweat, and other spillage can also occur. Such materials may cause the floor to become slippery. The removal process is required infrequently, perhaps 3 – 6 month intervals, dependent upon the use of the floor and the efficiency of the cleaning / maintenance process.

Refurbishment

Ideally a refurbishment programme should be put into place with all coated timber floors. This is built around regular cleaning to remove normal soiling, the use of a maintenance coating, such as Bona Freshen Up, if appropriate and the application of additional coats of finish as required.

It is important that surfaces which have a flat matt sheen or a P3 slip resistance rating are not treated with maintenance coatings or polish as these types of material will change both the sheen and slip resistance characteristics of the floor. It should be expected that the refurbishment regime for floors coated with a slip resistant product will include more frequent recoating works.

Please contact efp for additional information

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