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Care & Maintenance Brochure

Please read prior to using your new cabinets

Failure to comply may void your warranty.

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Care & protection of your new cabinets

Congratulations on the purchase of your new cabinets!

We suggest you observe the following hints to keep your new cabinets looking new and bright for many years to come. Failure to comply may void your warranty.

- Bench joins - heat and water can do damage to bench joins over a period of time. Avoid the use of kettles, frypans, toasters, coffee machines, steamers, etc. Over or near these joins. These appliances should have boards under them as radiant heat may damage your new surface.
- Overhead cabinets - avoid placing pot plants on the top of overhead cabinets as watering can result in drips or overflow which over time can cause damage to your cabinets.
- Melamine surfaces - all-purpose cleaners such as nifti or spray'n'wipe can be used on melamine surfaces.
- Extra-strength windex is recommended as a long-term cleaner. Some textured surfaces will benefit from periodical cleaning with a soft cloth and a soft nailbrush.
- Timber surfaces - use a soft cloth dampened with warm, soapy water to clean timber surfaces and follow with a non-silicone based, good quality, furniture polish (maveer or cedar oil). Oiled timber (teak) benefits from the application of a good quality oil periodically, e.g. Scandinavian teak oil or similar. (Take care to follow manufacturer's specifications when disposing of used oil rags.)
- Appliances - keep appliances that produce steam and/or heat away from underneath overhead cabinets. If possible, place appliances under rangehood.
- Avoid excessive water around the base of the cabinets taking particular care when cleaning the floor.
- If uncertain, contact the ACFA industry professional you purchased your cabinets from.

ACFA strongly recommends that any advice from this care & maintenance brochure be trialled on an inconspicuous part of your cabinets before you commence your care routine.

If you require any further advice or to arrange for any maintenance please don't hesitate to contact your cabinet supplier (see front cover for contact details).

Laminate (high pressure laminate bench tops and melamine doors – all types)

Laminate is a hardwearing material, but like all materials, it can be damaged if used without care and maintenance. The following information should help you maintain the laminate surface with minimum time and effort.

Cleaning

A wipe over with a clean soft damp cloth should be sufficient to keep all laminate surfaces clean. Soiled or light stains are removed with warm soapy water or with a common detergent, such as Mr. Muscle, dissol, nifty solvent, or a bathroom cleaner such as flash liquid, bathroom plus or extra strength windex. None of these contains abrasive or strong acidic or alkaline ingredients.

It may be necessary to use a brush similar to a tooth or nail brush where the surface is a textured or embossed finish. Wax or other polishes are unnecessary and should not be used on decorative laminates.

Stains

Spills of any nature should be wiped up as soon as they occur. Most laminates are resistant to many household products, but they are not absolutely stain proof. Most laminates are unaffected by normal household reagents such as detergents, non-bleach washing powders, nail polish remover, petrol, methylated spirits, mineral turpentine, fly spray, grease and shoe polish.

Immediate action

Immediate attention must be paid to the following to avoid stains:

Tea, beetroot juice, red wine, fruit juices, hypochlorite bleach, hydrogen peroxide solution in any concentration, mineral acids, caustic solution, sodium bisulphate, potassium permanganate in any concentration, berry juices, silver nitrate or silver fluoride solutions, gentian violet in any concentration, mild silver protein, laundry blue, dye or iodine solutions (alcohol containing 1% iodine).

If stain damage does occur, endeavour to remove by either the normal cleaning method or appropriate solvents. If the stain persists, apply a mild abrasive such as white toothpaste applied with a soft cloth or toothbrush. Never use a harsh abrasive or steel wool.

Stains such as residual lacquer, paints or adhesives can generally be cleaned without difficulty, particularly if the material has not been allowed to harden. Some special types of adhesives and paints harden chemically and become insoluble and infusible quite rapidly. These are cyanoacrylates, 'two pot' epoxy resins, acid hardened urea and resorcinol glues. These must be removed before setting takes place as they cannot be dissolved without affecting the laminate.

Common adhesives and paints can be removed with the following materials:

- 1 Alcohols (methylated spirits, methanol)
- 2 Aromatics (xylene, petrol)
- 3 Aliphatics (mineral turpentine, kerosene)
- 4 Oils (mineral oil, vegetable oils)
- 5 Ketones (acetone, nail polish remover)
- 6 Ether-alcohols (cellosolves, carbitoles)
- 7 Paint thinners (being a mixture of above)
- 8 Lacquer thinners (without the addition of acid)

Note: acidic based paint strippers must not be used

- Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 can normally remove oil paints (if the stain is reasonably fresh).
- If aged, they can generally be removed by more aggressive solvents such as 5, 6 and 8.
- Enamels generally require solvents from groups 2, 5, 6 and 8.
- Contact adhesives, if not too old and cured, can be removed by 2, 4, 5 and 8.
- Poly vinyl acetates p.v.a. Adhesive types can generally be removed with soap and water and solvent groups 1 and 3.
- Paraffin wax residue from candles should be scraped off, taking care not to scratch the surface in the process. Any residue still present can be ironed out through blotting paper.

Danger: some of the above listed solvents are extremely flammable and vapour is harmful. Some important information:

- Keep away from heat sparks and open flame.
- Keep containers closed.
- Avoid prolonged breathing of vapour
- Avoid prolonged or repeated contact with skin.
- Keep containers closed.
- Avoid prolonged or repeated contact with skin.
- Use adequate ventilation.

Scratches and cuts

Chopping and cutting directly on the surface can damage laminate. A cutting board or chopping board, heavy metallic board or earthenware should always be used. Sliding objects can cause scuffing on the surface. Fine scratches or scuffmarks can often be removed by the application of a good quality car polish.

Burns

Most laminates will withstand boiling water and temperatures up to 150c. However, we strongly recommend the use of a protective mat or chopping board to prevent the surface being scorched, damaged or the contact adhesives being reactivated.

Irons, kettles, fry pans, toasters, coffee machines, steamers, pans or dishes taken from the oven or hot plate may have a temperature in excess of 155c. If by accident a slight scorch mark appears, it may be possible to remove using the method under the heading 'stains', applying a mild abrasive such as toothpaste with a soft toothbrush or cloth.

Should the damage be severe, replacement of the area would be the only satisfactory solution.

Thermo-formed doors

Do not use abrasives, solvent-based or cream cleansers to clean your thermo-formed doors. Do not allow hot objects, such as saucepans or irons to come in contact with your thermo-formed doors. Thermo-formed doors are low maintenance and can be easily cleaned using warm soapy water and a soft cloth or sponge (a toothbrush may be useful for hard to reach areas) - always towel dry afterwards.

Stubborn stains and marks (such as ball point ink) should be removed immediately by gently wiping the surface with methylated spirits. Excessive heat, hot gases, steam and fumes produced by cooking appliances such as wall ovens, hotplates and dishwashers, can lead to damage to your thermo-formed doors and panels, such as delamination and discoloration.

To avoid such occurrences, the following precautions should be taken:

- Regularly check the condition and function of the door seals around wall ovens and dishwashers so as to avoid leakage of heat and fumes.
- Never allow heat, hot gases and fumes produced by wall ovens to come into contact with cupboard doors and panels surrounding the oven. It is recommended that (if possible) the wall oven be installed with a rear ducted exhaust. In the case of front panel exhaust, a heat deflector will need to be used.
- You should always operate the rangehood exhaust fan when using your bench top hot plates. High temperatures and cooking fumes will cause damage to surrounding cupboard doors and panels unless an efficient exhaust is used.

Doors

Stipple satin and gloss two pack polyurethanes - often incorrectly referred to as 'imperite'

- Clean up any spillages immediately.
- Do not use abrasives, solvent-based or cream cleansers to clean your painted doors; they can be easily cleaned using warm soapy water and a soft cloth. More stubborn stains can often be removed with ammonia based cleaning products, like extra strength windex. A small inconspicuous area should be trialled prior to full application.
- At no time should these cleaning items be left to soak on the surface as surface staining will occur.
- Doors and panel subject to excessive heat and cooking fumes may discolour. Please follow the guides as for vinyl wrap doors to prevent lasting damage.
- Painted doors can be damaged by mechanical damage. Avoid contact with sharp and or hard objects, like cutlery, pots, pans and utensils. Clean up any spillages immediately
- Refer to general information section (page 9) for more information.

Solid timber doors

Don't be alarmed if your timber doors move. Timber is a natural product that will absorb moisture and expand or contract. Excessive heat may cause shrinkage. The moisture content in your doors will, with time, vary in response to changes in the relative humidity

of the surrounding air. To help avoid this, utilise your rangehood whilst cooking, and open your doors and windows if you have evaporative air conditioning. The uv rays in sunlight will discolour your timber doors. Red coloured timber will turn slightly brown, whilst light coloured timbers will gain a honey coloured appearance. There is no remedy for this occurring.

If you notice shrinkage, (which is a natural occurrence), within the centre panels, we suggest you purchase a bottle of marveer, o'cedar oil or goddards cabinet makers polish (all available from your local supermarket or hardware store), or purchase a pressure pack can of mirotone glow. Apply these polishes to the exposed timber area with a clean white rag. This will enhance and protect the timber surface.

To ensure that your surface finish remains in perfect condition, the above polishes should be applied at three monthly intervals for the life of the product. Particular attention should be directed to the end grain areas of your doors or bench tops (as applicable). Refer to general information section (page 9) for more information.

Natural timber veneers

Wood veneered products which have been properly finished, are easy to maintain. Kitchen furniture can usually be cleaned by wiping with warm soapy water; while a furniture maintenance oil will enhance the appearance and longevity of most furniture finishes. Refer to general information section (page 9) for more information.

Solid timber bench tops

Additional information for solid timber bench tops. Timber is a natural product. Colour and grain variation are considered natural. Most solid timber bench tops are designed to float (not be glued) at a change of direction. This is not considered faulty workmanship. Height variations of +/- 2mm are standard industry tolerances.

Care should be taken around joins. Any accidental damage to the surface should be resealed immediately to prevent the ingress of moisture. Refer to general information section (page 9) for more information. Post formed/square edged and timber edged bench tops (as applicable and in addition to laminate information (page 3)

Particular care should be exercised with post-formed and square-edged bench tops in the area of joins. Whilst the bench tops are manufactured using quality high moisture resistant substrate, swelling of the joins may occur if they are subject to excessive water or heat. Avoid the use of irons, kettles, fry pans, toasters, coffee machines, steamers etc. Over or near the joins. These appliances require boards under them as radiant heat may damage the surface. Any water spills that occur near the joins should be cleaned up immediately.

Solid surface products

General information

Solid surface bench tops can easily be kept clean using a sponge and warm soapy water. Solid surface bench tops are non-porous and most spills and stains simply wipe clear. Unlike many other surfaces it is recommended that you use a foam pad with a gritty cleaner, like Ajax every four to six weeks. This will enable you to remove small day-to-day scratches.

Even though small accidental knife scratches can be easily repaired, solid surface bench tops should not be used as chopping boards. Solid surface materials will blunt knives and a wooden or polyethylene chopping board is a more useful kitchen resource. Solid surface bench tops are more heat resistant than most other bench top materials but still hot pots pans or casserole dishes should not be applied directly to their surface. Serious damage may occur if extreme localised heat is applied.

Stains cuts or scratches

For stains like coffee, cordial, food colouring, beetroot and ink etc., use an abrasive gritty cleaner such as Ajax and a sponge pad. Should this fail to remove the most stubborn stains, then the following procedures are recommended:

- Matte finish - sand with 220 grit sandpaper using a sandpaper cork as the base to the bench top surface. Sand until the stain, cut or scratch is removed
- Satin finish - sand with 220 grit sandpaper, using a sandpaper cork as the base to the bench top surface, until the stain, cut or scratch is removed, follow this with 400-grit sandpaper - then restore the surface finish with a non-abrasive cleaner and grey (448) scotch-brite pad.
- Gloss finish - contact your fabricator or supplier for expert assistance.

Fabricated stone (granite, marble & reconstituted stone)

General information

Steel supports may have been incorporated in opening apertures of your sink, hotplates, dishwasher etc. However, because of the reduced amount of stone left, the area immediately surrounding these areas is more vulnerable to accidental damage and/or abuse.

Do not under any circumstances sit or stand on stone bench tops. Marble, granite and reconstituted stones are not unbreakable. If you believe your fabricated stone bench top is faulty or damaged, please consult with an appropriately experienced and qualified stone mason.

Granite

General information

Granite is a hard but porous stone. Variations in colour, grain, structure and veining are to be expected. Small holes, pot marks, fine cracks, crystals, and imperfections are common in many granite colours and are unavoidable.

Granites come in varying slab sizes, and as such, joins in bench tops may be unavoidable.

Cleaning

A granite surface can be safely cleaned with mild soap and warm water. Avoid any kind of chemical cleaning products. To refresh a granite surface, clear car wax can be used. Granite might stain if it comes in contact with many household items.

Granite might scratch if it comes in contact with another stone, (especially granite and diamonds). Granite might crack if it comes in contact with extremely hot items. Particular care should be taken with hot oil. Granite might crack if it is abused or misused in any way.

Maintenance tips

In the event of accidental damage or abuse by scratching or cracking, there is very little that can be done to rectify the surface.

Marble

General information

Marble is a soft porous natural stone. Variations in colour, grain, structure and veining are to be expected. Small holes, pockmarks, fine cracks and imperfections are common in many marble colours and are unavoidable.

Marble comes in varying slab sizes and as such, joins in bench tops may be frequent. Marble can be scratched and stained easily. Marble can be scratched and stained with almost any household item. Marble may crack if it comes in contact with hot materials. Marble cracks easily if abused or misused. Marble is only recommended in low traffic or limited use work areas. In cases where the surface has been stained, scratched or cracked, there is little chance of satisfactory rectification.

Cleaning

To keep a marble surface clean, mild soap and warm water should be used. Avoid any kind of chemical cleaning products. To refresh a marble surface, clear car wax can be used.

Maintenance tips

For the removal of fresh stains on a marble surface, pure methylated spirits or pure chlorine can be used. Put methylated spirits or chlorine on a clean white cloth and leave it on the stain for at least 24 hours. Repeat this process as many times as required to dissolve the stain.

Please note: chlorine on polished marble surfaces may create dull spots.

Specialised machinery operated by a qualified stone mason can be used for the removal of light scratches.

Engineered stone (reconstituted stone)

Engineered stones are generally 91% to 95% quartz based. They have outstanding properties that ensure ease of maintenance and longevity. They will withstand exposure to tea, soda, wine, vinegar, lemon juice and strongly coloured spices.

Ink and dye based products like permanent markers will permanently mark, and as such should be avoided. As with any surface, reconstituted stone can be permanently damaged by exposure to strong chemicals and solvents that undermine its physical properties.

Do not use products that contain trichlorethane or methylene chloride, such as paint removers or strippers. Avoid any highly aggressive cleaning agents like oven cleaner that has high alkaline/h levels. Should the surface be accidentally exposed to any of these damaging agents, rinse immediately with water to neutralise the effect.

Heat resistance

Most engineered stones can tolerate moderately hot temperatures for brief periods of time. Prolonged exposure will result in discolouring or other types of damage. Users should avoid direct contact between very hot pots and the surface. Excessive localised heat may damage the surface or cause hairline cracks to appear. The use of an insulator/hot pad especially when using cooking units such as electric fry pans/woks/kettles is necessary to avoid damage.

Cleaning

For every day, routine cleaning of engineered stone, most manufacturers recommend wiping the surface with soapy water (a mild detergent) and a damp cloth or alternatively use a quality 'spray and wipe' type cleaner. Adhered materials such as food, gum, nail polish, or dried paint can be scraped away with a plastic putty knife. For more extensive staining, please consult with the stonemason or manufacturer of the product. To avoid dulling the surface's shine, take care not to use an abrasive cleaner.

Polishing

Reconstituted stone keeps its lustrous gloss and ultra-smooth surface without polishing.

Kick boards

Avoid excessive water around the base of the cabinets and the kickboards. Never flood the kitchen area and take particular care when washing floors. Wipe moisture off immediately. Failure to follow instructions may cause kickboards to swell and/or be discoloured by mould. Resultant damage will not be covered by warranty.

Overall information

- Read the manufacturer's 'how to care for...' brochure.
- Do not use abrasive, solvent based, silicone based or cream cleansers.
- Clean your doors using a damp soft cloth or sponge, not a scourer.
- Towel dry all moisture off doors after cleaning.
- Do not allow hot objects, such as saucepans or irons, to come into contact with your finished surfaces.
- Regularly check the condition and function of seals around dishwashers and ovens so as to avoid leakage.
- Cleaning products which contain silicone, e.g. Mr. Sheen should be avoided, as they render surfaces difficult for recoating.
- Any accidental damage to the surface should be re sealed immediately to prevent the ingress of moisture

What action should you take if you find a fault in your cabinet project?

Your cabinet manufacturers/supplier should be contacted as soon as you identify a possible fault or failure in your cabinet project and request their advice.

Notes

ACFA strongly recommends that any advice from this care & maintenance brochure be trialled on an inconspicuous part of your cabinets before you commence your care routine.

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It is important that you retain your contract/order, plans and specifications and any warranty certificate that you may have. It is recommended that you keep this care and maintenance brochure with those documents or attach them to this page.