

Protect Your Investment: How to Take Care of your New Cabinets

So you finally completed your cabinet project and things are finally getting back to order. You've got all the dishes, glasses, linens, clothes, etc. to put back where they belong and you are ready to be finished. However, before putting all of your items back, we've put together a comprehensive cabinet care guide to make sure that you'll be able to enjoy your cabinets for years to come. You've likely spent a good deal of money getting them to look just right so why take chances? Put the extra time in to protect your investment and you'll be glad you did.

Cabinet Cleaning Guide

When cleaning your cabinets there are some very important things to keep in mind to make sure you don't cause damage. The first thing is to make sure you have the right cleaning solution. We recommend using products such as Spic and Span Pine Cleaner, Guardsman, Fantastik or Murphy's Wood Cleaner. It is important to make sure that any cleaner you use is a mild detergent and does not contain ammonia or bleach as this will cause damage. This is especially true when cleaning the glass components of cabinets. If you need to clean the glass, make sure the glass cleaner does not seep into the wood. You may even need to remove the glass panels to clean them so that no harmful chemicals touch the cabinet surfaces. Further, when shining up the finish on your cabinets, make sure you don't use a product that contains silicone as this will cause wax build up which hurts the finish and is also difficult to remove. To improve shine, we recommend products like Pledge or Lemon Wood Plus.

Once you are certain you are using the correct cleaning solution, the next step is to make sure you are using the proper cleaning utensil. You should never use anything abrasive such as steel wool or gritty soap pads. This is not like cleaning your pots and pans. Your best bet is to use a soft cloth. Don't use a cloth that you use to clean your other dishes with as it may contain grease or other materials that will be harmful to your cabinets. Lastly, if you first wipe the cabinets with a soft damp cloth, be sure to follow it up with a dry cloth to remove any moisture or wetness.

Long Term Cabinet Care

Follow the simple guidelines below to keep your cabinets looking brand new over time:

- Dust, clean, and shine your cabinets at least once every 1-2 months
- If at all possible, avoid direct sunlight on your cabinets for extended periods of time. You may need to use window treatments or curtains to block the sun. Excessive and prolonged sunlight will cause the finish to fade.
- Avoid excessive heat. Make sure your oven is properly sealed if you have cabinets above it. Hot air rises and if not properly sealed it could cause damage.
- Avoid excess moisture. If you have cabinets above a dishwasher, make sure the dishwasher is sealed and that the steam isn't hitting the cabinets. If you spill, clean it up quickly and don't leave any water behind. Also, don't drape your wet dish towels over your cabinet doors. Water is a cabinet's worst enemy as it can cause warping, fading or even rotting.
- Avoid excessive weight. Don't overload the shelves of your cabinets. Too much weight can cause them to bend or sag over time.
- Fix chips and scratches. If you see any small chips or scratches, many home stores sell wax pencils you can use to remove them. They are easy to use and very inexpensive.
- Keep an eye on hardware (hinges, handles, etc). You should periodically check the screws and hinges in your cabinet hardware. Tighten when necessary to avoid more severe damage.