

South Pacific Timber

TRUE OAK · ENGINEERED OAK FLOORING

Care & Maintenance Guide

How to protect, clean and maintain your True Oak engineered oak floor

Version 1.0 · June 2026 · South Pacific Timber (1990) Ltd · Applies to all True Oak engineered oak collections

Your True Oak engineered oak floor — a pre-finished, tongue-and-groove (T&G) engineered timber — is a natural timber surface that will bring warmth and character to your home for many years. Like all timber, it responds to its environment and to everyday use. This Guide explains the simple, consistent care that keeps the floor performing and looking its best — and the conditions the floor relies on to stay stable.

Caring for your floor protects your warranty

The True Oak Limited Product Warranty requires the floor to be maintained in line with this Guide and kept within the environmental conditions set out below. Keep a simple record of your cleaning and maintenance. If you are ever unsure, contact South Pacific Timber before acting.

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1. Caring for your timber — the environment

Timber is **hygroscopic**: it absorbs and releases moisture from the surrounding air, expanding and contracting as it does. Controlling indoor temperature and humidity is the single most important thing you can do to keep your floor stable and avoid movement, gapping, cupping or fine surface cracking (checking).

1.1 Maintain a stable climate

Condition	Target range	Why it matters
Ambient temperature	16–27°C	Comfortable, stable conditions limit timber movement.
Relative humidity (RH)	40–60%	Risk of movement and hairline checking rises below 35% or above 70%.
Floor surface temperature	Below 45°C	High surface heat from sun or heating accelerates colour change and cupping.

Everyday activities like showering, cooking and drying clothes briefly raise humidity. Use extractor fans or open windows in kitchens, bathrooms and laundries, and consider a humidifier or dehumidifier to hold humidity in range — especially in very dry or very humid parts of the country.

1.2 Protect against sun and UV exposure

Direct sunlight changes the appearance of all timber over time through UV, visible light and radiant heat. Even glass or film that blocks 99.9% of UV still admits visible light and heat, so some natural colour change — darkening,

lightening or yellowing — is expected, and is most noticeable in the **first 1–3 months**. This is a natural characteristic, not a fault, but it can be managed:

- Use layered sun control: solar-control or Low-E glazing (or aftermarket UV film) **combined with** curtains, sheers or blinds, especially on north- and west-facing windows.
- Draw window coverings during the hottest part of the day to reduce heat and UV on the floor and keep the surface below 45°C.
- Do not place rugs or floor coverings for the **first 3 months**; for the first 6 months, rotate rugs and furniture regularly so the floor ages evenly. Timber under a rug receives no light and will age differently.

1.3 Manage humidity and moisture

- Wipe up spills **immediately** — never allow water to stand on the surface.
- Do not flood, soak or wet-mop the floor, and never use a steam mop (steam forces moisture into the joints and can warp or delaminate the floor).
- Use only a dry-to-damp, well-wrung mop or cloth; the floor should be dry within 2–3 minutes.
- Place breathable mats at entrances (inside and out) to catch grit and moisture, and bath mats near showers, tubs and vanities; remove wet items promptly.
- Repair leaks and drips promptly, and inspect coatings and seals periodically (particularly in wet areas), recoating or resealing as recommended.

1.4 Underfloor heating in service

- Keep the floor **surface temperature below 27°C** and the room between about 16–24°C.
- Raise and lower the system **gradually — no more than 2°C per day** (for example 1°C morning and 1°C evening). Never switch a system to full immediately, particularly after installation.
- Use only breathable rugs over a heated floor; solid rubber or vinyl backings trap heat and can cause a hot spot and cupping.
- Some seasonal gapping and minor surface checking is normal with heated floors.

1.5 Everyday protection

- **Furniture & appliances** — never drag, push or roll heavy items across the floor. Lift furniture, fit felt protectors under legs, and use wide non-staining castors or a barrier (e.g. plywood) when moving appliances. Small hard wheels (fridges, freezers) can leave permanent indentations.
- **Mats & rugs** — use breathable (woven) mats and rugs; avoid solid rubber or vinyl backings that trap moisture. Keep the underside free of grit, and make sure mats are fully dry before replacing them.
- **Shoes** — stilettos, sports cleats and embedded grit can dent and scratch timber. Encourage guests to remove shoes.
- **Robot & cordless vacuums** — choose models with soft brushes, clean free-wheeling wheels, moisture control and leak-proof reservoirs; avoid any steam function and locate charging/wash stations off the timber.

1.6 Holiday homes and baches

Homes left closed up for long periods can swing well outside the ideal climate range. Where you cannot air the home regularly, ask a neighbour to help ventilate or run climate control, consider a portable humidifier/dehumidifier appropriate to the local climate, and use a data logger to track conditions. Before locking up: close curtains/blinds, roll up and remove rugs to avoid uneven colour change, and ensure outdoor furniture stored inside is dry and will not scratch or indent the floor.

2. Cleaning and maintenance — residential

Simple, consistent cleaning is the main ingredient in a floor that lasts. The routine depends on your floor's finish — a **factory lacquer (UV-cured polyurethane)** or a **hardwax-oil / matte-oil** finish. If you are unsure which you have, check your order or contact South Pacific Timber.

2.1 Lacquer (UV-cured) finishes

Regular cleaning (weekly)

- Vacuum (soft bristle head, clean free-wheeling wheels) or sweep to remove grit and dust before it scratches the surface.
- Clean with a microfibre spray mop using a **pH-neutral timber floor cleaner** (e.g. Bona). Mop along the board length and leave the floor nearly dry — it should dry within 2-3 minutes.
- Wash and replace the microfibre pad regularly. Do not over-wet, and never use steam or wet mops.

Periodic care

Interval (typical)	Task
2-4 years	Professional deep clean to remove built-up grime and scuffs (e.g. Bona or Kärcher wood-floor scrubber).
5-8 years	Coating refurbishment — a professional light abrasion of the coating, then re-coat with a compatible commercial-grade matte floor lacquer.
7-10 years	Sand and re-coat — where worn or deeply marked, a professional sands back and refinishes with a protective coating system. (Subject to remaining wear-layer thickness — confirm suitability first.)

2.2 Hardwax-oil and matte-oil finishes

- Vacuum/sweep, then clean with a microfibre mop using an **oil-finish cleaner** (e.g. Osmo Wash & Care) — again dry-to-damp only, dry within 2-3 minutes.
- Oiled finishes are maintained by **refreshing the oil** rather than full re-coating: periodically apply a maintenance oil (buffed in) to high-traffic areas to restore protection and sheen.
- For refurbishment, a professional lightly abrades and applies a coat of compatible maintenance oil; for a full restore, sand back and re-apply 2-3 coats of hardwax oil.

3. Cleaning and maintenance — commercial

Commercial floors face heavier, more frequent traffic and need a structured routine. Follow the residential methods above, but more often, and put a planned-maintenance schedule in place.

- Place generous walk-off matting at all entrances to capture grit, the main cause of premature wear.
- Daily/most days: dust-control sweep or vacuum high-traffic zones; spot-clean spills immediately.
- Regularly: damp-clean with a pH-neutral cleaner using auto-scrubbers fitted with soft pads and minimal water; never flood the floor or use steam.
- Plan deep-clean and re-coat cycles earlier than residential intervals based on traffic, and protect the floor during fit-outs with breathable protection.

4. Removing stains, marks and spills

Mark	Recommended approach
Plaster / GIB dust	Do not wet first (it can set). Vacuum the grain with a soft brush head, then wipe with a well-wrung cloth and a diluted pH-neutral cleaner, changing water and cloth every 2–3 m ² . Dry promptly.
Paint spots / adhesive marks	Lift excess with a plastic blade, then gently work with a cloth lightly dampened in methylated spirits — use the minimum needed. Use a toothpick for grain.
Tape residue	Wipe with a 50/50 methylated-spirits-and-water solution on a cloth; do not over-wet.
Heel marks, oil spots, sticky spills	Spray pH-neutral timber cleaner directly on the spot, leave a few minutes, then lift with a soft brush.
Pet accidents	Wipe up, treat promptly with timber cleaner (acidity can attack the coating), repeat as needed, and dry. If staining remains, the board may need replacement.

Never use bleach, ammonia or general household cleaners (e.g. Dettol, Ajax, Jif) on timber — they can strip or damage the coating and permanently mark the floor.

5. Repairing scratches and dents

Shallow scratches

- For a lacquer finish, brush a little compatible matte floor lacquer over the scratch with an artist's brush to seal exposed timber; for an oiled finish, use a dab of maintenance oil.
- Coloured lacquer pens, wax repair pens and colour-matched furniture pens can disguise scratches that have removed colour. Lightly abrade, apply, then burnish off excess.

Medium to deep dents and scratches

- Fill with a colour-matched wax filler stick (melted in with a wax-pen/soldering tool for deeper marks), then seal over the top. For a consistent result, engage a professional floor installer.

Major damage

- Significant damage usually means uplifting and replacing the affected board — even on a glued floor this can be done by a specialist. Tell your installer if you have underfloor heating, as extra care is required. Replacement boards may not exactly match colour, grain or batch.

6. What is normal — and what the warranty covers

Several characteristics are a natural part of owning a real-timber floor and are **not** considered manufacturing defects:

- Variation in colour, grain, knots, sapwood and texture between planks, packs and batches — and slight differences from showroom samples.
- Gradual colour change, fading, darkening or yellowing from sunlight, UV, heat or oxidation.
- Seasonal expansion, contraction, minor gapping and fine surface checking as humidity changes.
- Normal wear — scratches, scuffs, indentations and surface abrasions from everyday use, and gradual loss of gloss.

Where to look

The True Oak Limited Product Warranty sets out exactly what is covered (including delamination and finish-adhesion cover), the conditions of cover, the exclusions, and how to make a claim. Read this Care &

Maintenance Guide together with that Warranty and the Installation Guideline.

7. Frequently asked questions

Can I steam-mop my floor?

No. Steam forces moisture into the joints and can warp, buckle or delaminate the floor.

Is my floor waterproof or spill-proof?

No timber floor is waterproof. The finish is water-resistant for short periods only — wipe up all spills straight away.

Is my floor scratch-proof?

No coating is fully scratch- or dent-proof. Preventative care (mats, felt pads, no shoes, regular grit removal) greatly reduces marks.

Can a glued-down board be replaced?

Yes — a damaged board can be carefully uplifted and replaced by a specialist. Mention underfloor heating, which needs special care.

Why does my floor look slightly different from my sample?

Samples indicate general colour and grain only; natural timber varies plank to plank and batch to batch, and lighting affects appearance.

How do I reduce colour change from sun?

Use UV glazing or film plus curtains/blinds, and rotate rugs and furniture, especially in the first 6 months.

Disclaimer and contact

While South Pacific Timber (1990) Ltd uses its best endeavours to ensure the accuracy of this Guide, it does not warrant that accuracy and gives no warranty other than as expressly provided in writing with the supply of its products. The repair and cleaning suggestions in this Guide are provided as general guidance only; South Pacific Timber is not responsible for any damage or harm resulting from attempting them, and recommends engaging a qualified professional where you are unsure. Nothing in this disclaimer has the effect or intent of contracting out of the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993 or the Fair Trading Act 1986 except to the extent permitted by New Zealand law.

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