Keeping it Clean: Tips on Cleaning Floors

Mary N. Harrison

It's important to keep floors clean. Dirty floors are unhealthy, especially for children who are on the floor more often.

You Need:
• Broom
• Mop
• Water
• Detergent
• (Optional) wax for specific types of floors
• (Optional) electric broom or vacuum cleaner

Daily Floor Care
• Use mats inside and outside the entrance to catch tracked-in dirt and protect the floor finish. Mats can be cleaned easily. Use non-skid mats.
• Sweep hard surface floors and especially those in the kitchen and dining area or use an electric broom.

• Wipe up spills and sticky spots immediately.
• Vacuum carpeted areas where there are children or pets.
• Protect the floor when moving heavy furniture.

Weekly
• Mop bathroom and kitchen floors.
• Vacuum carpeted floors at least once a week to remove dirt. Clean in the corners carefully.
• Wash mats and small rugs.
• Use an electric broom to clean hard surface floors and vacuum carpets.

Monthly or More Often
• Apply floor finish or “wax” floors.

Archival copy: for current recommendations see http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu or your local extension office.

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**Care Tips**

**Vinyl flooring**
- Use an all-purpose cleaner solution or water-based cleaner and polish for routine care.
- DO NOT use solvent-based cleaning products or waxes. It damages the vinyl.
- Do not allow greases or oil to get on the floor and do not use oiled mops or dust cloths.
- If a vinyl-backed floor mat with a colored lining or a throw rug is used on vinyl floor covering, the vinyl floor covering will become permanently stained.

**Carpet**
- Vacuum weekly. Areas where children and pets play should be cleaned daily. Dirty carpets can cause children with respiratory problems to get sick.
- Clean wall-to-wall carpet with an upright vacuum cleaner or a canister cleaner with a carpet beater.
- To remove stains, blot the spill carefully. DO NOT rub. Work from the outer edge toward the center. You may need to use a carpet stain remover.
- To remove odor sprinkle with baking soda. Let stand about 20 minutes, then vacuum.

**Resilient floor**
- Sweep or dust mop daily.
- Damp mop with mild detergent, then rinse with clean water to remove normal household dust. Wax occasionally.
- Wipe up spills immediately. Some household substances and food permanently stain resilient floor covering.

**Asphalt or rubber**
- Use mild detergent to mop. Rinse with clean water.
- Use water-based wax or polish regularly.

**Wood**
- Do not use water on natural finished wood.
- Wipe up spills immediately with a soft cloth.
- To clean, use a liquid wax for wood floors or a solvent cleaner. Use wax or a polish specifically formulated for wood.

**Compressed wood laminated flooring (ex, Pergo®)**
- Damp mop, but do not let it get water soaked.
- Do not wax.