

# CABINET CARE

With proper care, your cabinets will deliver years of beauty, enjoyment and convenience. The cabinets we install are constructed of quality materials and finished with superior coatings. They have undergone rigorous testing prior to shipping. This is your assurance that they will maintain their attractive finish and structural soundness throughout the years of normal everyday use.

As with any product constructed of wood or mica, a few moments of care and a little common sense can go a long way in keeping your new cabinets looking their best. Here are a few simple suggestions to make your cabinet care easier:

- Clean cabinets as needed with a mild detergent or with soap and water (use sparingly) and dry well using a lint-free cloth for both washing and drying
- Wipe up spills, splatters and water spots as they occur, keeping cabinets and countertop surfaces dry
- Give special attention to areas near the sink and dishwasher which come in contact with moisture
- Use cleaners and polishes designed for wood cabinets or mica and clean all surfaces as needed

Mica surfaces are simple and easy to clean. We suggest, for everyday cleaning, using a damp cloth and wipe clean. This will, most generally, eliminate smudges, spills, scuffs and everyday dust. Later, it will be discussed how to remove stubborn stains and cleaners to use and not to use.

Please remember, Mica is **NOT** meant to be a cutting surface! For this reason, it is suggested you use a chopping board when you are slicing, dicing and chopping ingredients for those scrumptious meals you will be preparing in the many years ahead.

Periodically, you should check your hardware for loose screws. Should you find any, **PLEASE** do not over-tighten! They need only to be snugly secure, particularly with your knobs and pulls. Over-tightening will cause them to strip and replacement will become necessary.

Most of the hinges used on our cabinets are the “self-closing” type. Therefore, it is only necessary to move the door to a three-quarter “closed” position and the hinge will close the door the remaining way. This is also true of opening the doors. Open to the three-quarter “open” position. The door will, most often, open itself the remaining way. Do not force doors open any further than the hinge will allow. Do not slam or force the door closed! Doing this will only cause the door hinge to loosen and, in some cases, to pull completely away from the door and/or the face of the cabinet, making replacement of the door and/or cabinet face necessary. Please use reasonable care when opening and closing doors. If you have the “adjustable” type of hinge, you may find it necessary, periodically, to adjust them. Turning the “set- screw”, either clock-wise or counter clock-wise, easily does this.

***“Always treat your cabinets as you would fine furniture”***

## Stopping Problems Before They Occur

**Do not use abrasive cleaners, scouring pads or powdered cleaners.** These materials may penetrate the cabinet finish allowing moisture to enter and cause deterioration.

- Do not use aerosol sprays containing silicones or paste waxes
- Do not leave wet cloths on or near cabinets
- Do not allow over cleaners or other caustic cleaners to touch the cabinets

Wiping up any spills as soon as they occur can prevent most problems. Follow these first aid suggestions for common household accidents. When removing a spot, begin at the outer edge and work toward the middle to prevent the spot from spreading.

### **Food Spots/Water Spots**

Clean cabinets as needed with a mild detergent or with soap and water, use sparingly. Dry well. Use a lint-free cloth for washing and drying. Use cleaners and polishes designed for wood or mica cabinets and clean all surfaces as needed.

### **Greasy Spots**

Rub grease, lipstick, crayon or oil with a damp cloth. Use cleaners and polishes designed for wood or mica cabinets and clean all surfaces, as needed.

### **Chewing Gum/Candle Wax**

Apply a plastic bag filled with ice on top of the deposit until it is brittle enough to crumble off. Use cleaners and polishes designed for wood or mica cabinets and clean all surfaces, as needed.

### **Nick/Dents**

Most nicks and dents can be repaired with a Cabinet Care Kit. A “putty stick” can be used to fill nail holes, minor nicks and dents

### **Scratches/Cigarette Burns In wood cabinets**

Most common scratches or burns can be repaired. Rub the area with fine sandpaper until you have removed the scratch or burn. Re-stain with color matched touch-up stain and apply a light coat of clear sealer finish. Use cleaners and polishes designed for wood cabinets and clean all surfaces as needed.

### **Thermo foil/Laminate Cabinets**

Vinyl wrapped frames give close door-to-frame color match. These rigid frames increase the durability of the cabinets and make them easier to clean. Keep heat away from thermo foil/laminate cabinets.

Follow the above wood cabinet care guidelines for your laminate and thermo foil door styles (except for cleaners/polishes specifically made for wood).

Acrylic **Adhesive Caulk** and plastic **Seam Fillers** are available for these cabinet types in different finishes.

## THE “ABC’S” OF CABINET CARE

**Abrasive** cleaners and tools – for example, sandpaper, steel wool or gritty cleansers – will scratch the surface, damaging both its beauty and its stain resistance. Do not use them. Baking soda may be used with a soft bristle brush on very stubborn spots.

**Airplane Glue:** Hobby glues, such as those used to assemble model airplanes, can be cleaned up easily with the solvents recommended by the glue manufacturers. Then, wipe with mild detergent and rinse.

**Alcohol** will not cloud or stain decorative laminates. Coloring agents in some alcoholic beverages may leave a light stain – you can easily remove it with a mild detergent and water.

**Blackberries:** See **Juices**, page 3

**Bleach:** Mild, household bleach, such as Clorox or Purex, may be used for tough stains. (Label should read: 5% solution of sodium hypochlorite) Pour a small amount of bleach on a wet sponge or paper towel and place it on the stain for no more than one to one and one-half minutes. Then wash thoroughly with clean water. For really tough stains, use a soft bristle brush (on textured finishes) and full strength bleach, scrubbing for no more than two minutes.

**Blueberries:** See **Juices**, page 5

**Bluing:** If you spill bluing on a laminated surface, wipe it up immediately and rinse with clean water. If allowed to stand, bluing may leave a permanent stain.

**Cabinets:** Fine cabinetry, in the kitchen and bath as well as throughout homes, offices and institutions, is more and more being surfaced with decorative laminate, both inside and outside. The sleek European look is a major reason, but fully as important is the easy care. Cabinets surfaced with decorative laminate will never need shelf liners or repainting. Care is the same as for any other decorative laminate surface.

**Catsup:** Wipe up with a damp sponge. If the catsup has dried, wash it off with mild detergent and warm water.

**Candles:** See **Wax**, page 8

**Chipping:** Caused by hitting the laminated surface with a very sharp or very heavy object. Use a chopping block for food preparation to avoid chipping.

**Chocolate:** Washes off with mild detergent and warm water. For dried chocolate stains, if necessary, treat with **Bleach** (see above).

**Cigarette Burns:** A lighted cigarette allowed to remain on a decorative laminate surface could blister it or cause a permanent stain.

**Coffee:** Washes off with mild detergent. For dried coffee stains, if necessary, treat with **Bleach** (see above).

**Crayon:** Most wax crayon marks wash off easily with mild detergent. Some dark colors, especially black, may stain if your laminated surface is very worn. When this happens, clean with an all-purpose cleaner, such as Formula 409, using a soft bristle brush.

**Dawn** is a recommended, mild dishwashing liquid for routine everyday care of decorative laminates.

**Detergents:** Mild, bleach-free detergents, such as Dawn or AJAX dishwashing liquid, are recommended for cleaning decorative laminates. Be sure to use a soft cloth or paper towel, rinsing thoroughly with clean water after each use. Harsh, heavy-duty detergents and those for automatic dishwashers are not necessary. Also, they frequently have added chemicals, which may damage the surface.

**DOW Bathroom Cleaner with Scrubbing Bubbles** is recommended for cleaning laminated surfaces around tub, shower and vanity. It removes water spots and soap residue as well as abrasive cleansers, but without leaving scratches that mar the finish.

**Drain cleaners** contain lye, which will permanently damage any laminated surface. If you spill a drain cleaner, wipe it up immediately and rinse several times with clean water. ***Be careful – the lye will burn your skin very quickly!***

**Drano:** See **Drain Cleaners** above.

**Dyes** for hair, textiles and foods can cause permanent stains. When you use a dye, cover the counter or vanity top with plastic wrap or waxed paper, and then add several sheets of newspaper to absorb accidental spills and drips. If dye spills onto the laminated surface, wipe immediately with dishwashing detergent or an all-purpose cleanser, such as Formula 409.

**Enamel:** See **Nail Polish** or **Paint** page 6

**Fantastic** is an all-purpose cleaner recommended for use on decorative, laminate surfaces.

**Finger-paints** can be easily cleaned up with a mild detergent and warm water.

**Formula 409** is an all-purpose household cleaner, which may be safely used on any decorative laminate surface. Be sure to rinse with clean water after each use.

**Furniture Polish:** Decorative laminates are often used where only occasional dusting is needed for normal maintenance. Some examples are coffee and dining tables, desks and bookcases and wainscoting. Keeping these surfaces beautiful is often easier if you use a light, non-oily furniture spray, such as Favor or Pledge. Be sure to clean the spray off several times a year to prevent build up, which can obscure the beauty of the surface. Ammoniated cleaners, such as Windex with Ammonia-D and Lestoil, are safe to use and are recommended for use on decorative laminate surfaces.

**Glass Plus** is a recommended all-purpose spray cleanser for decorative laminate surfaces.

**Gloss Finish:** A very shiny, reflective finish with the look of lacquer, available on many laminated solid color and patterned laminates. Very easy to care for, but abrasive cleansers and

low quality, stiff paper towels will mar it and lower its stain resistance. Always clean with a soft cloth or soft paper towel.

**Grease:** May be removed easily with an ammoniated cleaner, such as Windex with Ammonia-D or Lestoil or with a general household cleaner such as Grease Relief or Formula 409.

**Grid Finish:** An embossed finish with the appearance of a miniature grid, available on some solid color laminates. Standard care instructions in this booklet may be followed. For grease spots, stains and wax or crayon marks, a soft bristle brush will help cleanup. Decorative laminates with grid finish resist finger marks very effectively. Grid finish shows wear first on high points on its surface and low points may require brush cleanup more often than **Matte Finish** (see page 6).

**Hard Water Stains:** Most stains of this type wash off easily with detergent and warm water. For very tough stains, use a paste of baking soda and water.

**Heat:** Decorative laminate surfaces are very resistant to heat damage. For example, boiling water spilled on the surface will cause absolutely no harm. However, prolonged exposure to high heat can cause blistering and delamination. **Do not set pots or dishes directly from oven or burner on the unprotected laminate surface.** Protect the surface from heat-generating electrical appliances, such as pressing irons, toasters, curling irons and hot curlers and electric slow cookers. A trivet or insulated pad will protect both laminate and appliance from damage.

**Inks:** Most ink for ballpoint pens, felt tip markers and fountain pens may be easily washed off your decorative laminate surface. Do wash immediately with mild detergent or recommended household cleaner. If an ink stain, bleach or a paste of baking soda and water should remove the stain. Sometimes, supermarket ink may transfer from a package onto the countertop. These inks are rarely used nowadays, because they stain readily. If standard cleaners do not remove the stain, try a solvent such as acetone-based nail polish remover or paint thinner. **Follow instructions carefully. Many solvents are extremely flammable.**

**Iodine, Tincture of:** Iodine will stain if not removed promptly. **Bleach** (see page 3) and a soft bristle brush will remove most iodine stains.

**JELLO-O Brand Gelatin** may usually be easily removed with an all-purpose cleaner such as Formula 409.

**Juices:** Most fruit and vegetable juices - oranges, grapefruit and melon, for example - may be easily washed off with water and a mild detergent or general household cleaner. **Juices from berries, peaches, watermelon and tomato may stain if not removed immediately. Bleach** (see page 3) will remove most of these stains easily.

**Knives:** Sharp knives will cut through the protective surfaces of decorative laminates; marring their beauty and lowering both wear and stain resistance. Use a chopping block for food preparation. **Never use a knife or metal scraper to remove a spot!**

**Lestoil** is a recommended all-purpose cleanser for use on decorative laminates.

**Lipstick:** Clean up with a general household cleaner, such as Formula 409.

**Lysol Brand Disinfectant Basin/Tub/Tile Cleaner:** A recommended cleaner for decorative laminates on vanity, tub surround and other bathroom surfaces.

**Makeup:** Most makeup is easy to clean up with a mild household detergent or a general cleaner. For make-up containing dyes – some mascaras, some theatrical makeup – an ammoniated cleaner or solvent may be necessary.

**Matte Finish:** A soft textured, mildly reflective finish available on most decorative laminates, generally recommended for work surfaces because of its very high durability, low light reflectance, resistance to finger marks and easy maintenance. Follow general cleaning instructions in this booklet.

**Medicines:** Clean up with mild household detergent or general cleaner. Some liquids, including some types of children's vitamins, may stain. **Bleach** (see page 3) should remove these stains.

**Metallic Surfaces:** Decorative metals should be treated similarly to fine finished woods. If cleaning is necessary, use a mild detergent, such as Dawn or QJAX Dishwashing Liquid, in warm water. Apply gently with a soft, lint-free cloth, rinse immediately, and wipe dry. Smudges may usually be removed with thin, clean oil and a soft, dry cloth. For daily maintenance, wipe with a soft, clean cloth.

**Modeling Clay** often leaves an oily residue, which can be easily cleaned up with mild detergent and warm water. Use a soft bristly brush and soapy water if modeling clay dries on a textured decorative laminate

**Mr. Clean** is an all-purpose cleaner recommended for use on decorative laminates.

**Mustard** can be easily cleaned up with a mild detergent and warm water. If dried-on mustard stains, **Bleach** (see page 3) will remove these stains.

**Nail Polish, Nail Enamel:** Important: Remove nail polish with a remover that is the same brand as the polish. Today's nail polishes are formulated to last longer than before and failure to follow this tip may result in permanent damage. Follow-up with mild household detergent, rinsing with clean water.

**Newsprint** usually can be easily washed off with mild detergent. If newsprint ink transfers and stains, use **Bleach** (see page 3) and a soft bristle brush to remove.

**Oven Cleaners** contain very harsh chemicals. Do not work with them on your unprotected countertop. If spills occur, wipe away promptly, and then rinse several times with clean water.

**Paint:** Water base paints can usually be removed with mild household detergent and warm water. A dried paint spot should be removed with a soft bristly brush or a non-abrasive plastic scouring pad. **Don't use a knife or metal paint scraper.** Lacquers or oil base paints should be removed with the same solvent recommended by the manufacturer for brush cleaning. **Follow instructions and be very careful: these solvents are highly flammable.**

**Pencil Marks** may be removed with an all-purpose cleaner such as Formula 409.

**Putty Stick** is used to fill nail holes, minor nicks and dents.

**Quick** is the best instruction for attacking stains. Most substances will stain laminated surfaces permanently only after prolonged exposure – a prompt wipe with a soapy sponge is excellent first aid for almost any spill.

**Ring Marks:** The single greatest cause of damage to a decorative laminate surface is failure to rinse after cleaning. If even a very small amount of the cleaning solution remains on the surface, moisture will reactivate it. A tumbler, a cup, a mixing bowl set on the surface, may leave a ring of moisture – either because the dish was wet or because room humidity condensed on the dish. This moisture mixes with the residue of the cleaner. The edge of the dish keeps the wet cleaner on the surface, letting the chemicals act on the surface far longer than they should. The result could be a permanently etched scar. ***Always rinse thoroughly with clean water and a clean dry cloth every time you clean.***

**Rust** stains are very easy to remove with Formula 409 or a similar general household cleaner. Even a stubborn rust stain will disappear with a minute's exposure to **Bleach** (see page 3)

**Rust Removers:** Do not use them on or around laminated surfaces. They are not necessary. Also, they contain harsh chemicals, which will quickly and permanently damage the surface. If a spill occurs, wipe off all residue immediately, then wash thoroughly with soapy water and rinse several times.

**Scouring Powders.** See **Abrasives** page 3)

**Scratches**, deep scratches and scrapes mar the beauty and lower the wear resistance of your laminated surface. Avoid abrasive cleaners and tools and use soft sponges, cloths or paper towels for all cleaning. Some “bargain brand” paper towels are quite stiff and they may leave tiny scratches – don't use them. Fine scratches may be covered with a light spray wax (see **Furniture Polish**, page 4)

**Steel Wool**, even very fine grades, will permanently damage your laminated surface. Don't use it and never store steel wool pads on your countertop: the metal can rust and leave stains. Also, steel wool pads impregnated with cleaners contain harsh chemicals, which will permanently damage the surface.

**Strawberries:** See **Juices**, page 5

**Sunlight:** Prolonged exposure to the direct rays of the sun may cause your laminated surface to fade or yellow. For this reason, decorative laminates and metals are not recommended for use out of doors.

**Supermarket Ink:** See **Inks**, page 5

**Tambour** is a flexible surface to which narrow strips of wood or other material are glued. The top of a rolled-top desk and the cover of an appliance garage are examples. Decorative Tambours may be purchased with slats of fine wood, wood veneer, decorative metals and the

full range of decorative laminates. Care depends upon the type of tambour you have. For tambours surfaced with decorative laminate, follow the standard care instruction in this book. **Never saturate the surface with water because water can make the tambour strips delaminate.** For tambours surfaced with wood, care depends on the wood finish – paint, varnish, oil or lacquer. Use the same care you would for any similar wood finish.

**Tea** washes off easily with mild detergent. For dried tea stains, treat with **Bleach** (see page 3)

**Toilet Bowl Cleaners:** These cleaners contain harsh chemicals, which can quickly cause permanent damage. If spills occur, wipe up immediately, then wash surface with soapy water and rinse several times. **Be careful - these cleaners can quickly burn your skin.**

**Tomato Juice, Tomato-based sauces:** See **Juices**, page 5

**Ultraviolet Light:** See **Sunlight**, page 7

**Varnishes** should be removed promptly with the solvent recommended by the varnish manufacturer. Most varnishes are easy to remove. **However, protect your laminated surface carefully when you use a varnish containing a stain – the stain can leave permanent damage. Be careful when you use solvents – they will quickly attack glue lines at seams and edges.**

**Water** is generally all you need for everyday maintenance of any decorative laminate. A quick wipe with a damp cloth cleans up almost any spill. **Don't flood or immerse a laminated surface, though** – water can attack the glue lines and cause the support material to swell and warp. Wipe up puddles quickly.

**Wax:** Candle wax and paraffin used in jams and jellies usually wash off easily with detergent and warm water. Some very dark candle waxes may stain very worn surfaces. An all-purpose cleaner, such as Formula 409 and a soft bristle brush will usually remove even dark wax stains.

**Windex** is a recommended household cleaner for laminated surfaces and especially for those with a very glossy finish. It may be purchased with added ammonia and used to remove grease spots and fingerprints without leaving streaks.

**Yellowing:** See **Sunlight**, page 7