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Maintaining Your New Kitchen







INTRODUCTION

Maintaining your new kitchen not only will increase the useful life of cabinets, appliances, faucets, backsplashes and hardware; regular maintenance also will enhance your enjoyment of the space.

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CONTACT US

Thomas Michael Design Center
3127 Cranberry Highway
East Wareham,MA 02538

Phone : 508-295-1311
Email : info@tmkitchens.com
Web : www.tmkitchens.com



Cabinet Cleaning and Maintenance

Cabinets attract grease, spills and fingerprints and require regular care to maintain their look and feel.

Stained wood cabinets should be cleaned semi-annually or quarterly if you are an avid cook, because wood grain tends to absorb grease and dirt. On a ratio of 7 to 1, mix distilled vinegar (7) with rubbing alcohol (1) and add a few drops of dish soap. Using a microfiber cloth, wipe down cabinets with your alcohol, vinegar, soap mixture and then rinse with warm water. Seal the finish with a furniture oil to keep your sealed wood cabinets looking like the day they were installed.

Laminate cabinets should be wiped down with a damp microfiber cloth weekly. If you find that the cabinets still require TLC, then use the same alcohol, dish soap and vinegar mixture and approach recommended for stained wood cabinets.

Black and white cabinets serve as repositories for fingerprints, dust, dirt and grime. They should be wiped down weekly with a damp microfiber cloth. If you order white cabinets, request the showroom provide a small container of matching white paint that you can use to repair chips and scrapes that often occur with regular usage.

To remove grease and build up around the cabinets that surround a stove, cooktop or range, use straight vodka or a mix of equal portions of water with vodka and spray on the surface. According to *Better Homes and Gardens*, vodka is an excellent degreaser. Vodka not only can be used to remove stubborn build-up in cabinet nooks and crannies, it's also an excellent cleaning agent for the top of range hoods, backsplashes and countertops.

If routine cleaning does not remove stains or built-up grime, create a paste by mixing baking soda with water. Place the paste on a sponge and scrub the stain until it disappears. Rinse with water and dry with a soft cloth.

The following products and ingredients can damage cabinets so avoid using them or any product that contains them:

- Petroleum-based products
- Solvents
- Bleach
- Strong detergents and soaps
- Nail polish remover
- Paint thinners
- Plastic brushes
- Steel wool
- Scoring pad
- Ammonia

Repairing Nicks and Scratches

Most cabinet manufacturers offer a touch up kit to maintain the beauty of cabinets. If you have recently updated your kitchen and did not receive a touch up kit, ask the showroom to obtain one on your behalf.

Avoid Water and Moisture Threats

Resist the temptation to place wet dish towels or damp cloths over cabinet doors because the water and residue on the towels can damage a cabinet's finish and result in peeling or color changes.

Always use your exhaust fan while cooking to minimize the amount of grease and grime flying onto cabinetry. Be sure to clean spills immediately; letting food, water, liquids or grease accumulate on your cabinets could damage the finish.

Avoid Light Damage

Direct exposure to sunlight can have a damaging effect on your cabinets especially those made from natural wood. Painted wood cabinets and laminated or thermofoil surfaces also are susceptible to fading from prolonged exposure to direct sunlight. Use window coverings to help reduce or eliminate damage caused by exposure to direct sunlight.

Avoid Heat Damage

An oven's self-cleaning feature produces intense heat creating a small chance that if the heat escapes it could damage cabinets. If that does occur, remove cabinet doors and drawers closest to the oven before the next cleaning to avoid further damage.



Stainless Steel – Appliances, Sinks and Surface Cleaning and Maintenance

Due to its durability and aesthetic, stainless steel has become a kitchen staple for appliances, countertops, sinks and range hoods. But, as much as we'd like it to be true, it turns out stainless steel is a misnomer.

Stainless steel is highly susceptible to water stains and fingerprints. Additionally, dirt, grease, grime and dust can cause your stainless-steel surfaces to rust if they are not cleaned regularly. It's not difficult to keep your stainless-steel sinks and surfaces is top-notch condition with daily maintenance and proper cleaning agents.

- After every use, rinse thoroughly, and then wipe sinks and surfaces dry with a clean soft cloth. Wiping is the key. This will inhibit water spotting and mineral deposits in severe hard water conditions.
- Stainless steel does not rust. Rust stains on stainless steel result from iron particles from outside sources such as water, cookware, steel wool pads etc. that eventually develop into rust spots.
- Do NOT use abrasive cleaners, scouring pads or steel wool. These will dull the finish.
- Do NOT let household cleaning agents sit in the sink for a long period of time. This may stain the finish. To protect the bottom from scratches, purchase a customized sink grid.
- Most minor scratches can be softened with a Scotch Brite soft scour pad, accompanied with a deep cleaning agent such as Bon Ami or Zud. Wet the pad, apply cleansing agent and rub with the grain or finish of the sink. (NOTE: Do NOT just rub in one area.)
- Recognize that stainless steel, similar to wood, has a directional grain. Best results occur when you clean along the grain, because it allows the cleaning products to remove dirt, dust and grime that build up in the grain's tiny crevices.
- Use a microfiber cloth to clean your stainless surfaces. Apply dish soap to the cloth to clean, and then polish by applying a small amount of mineral or baby oil to a second cloth and polish the surface along the grain. The same process should be followed if you clean your stainless with white vinegar for cleaning and use olive oil for polishing.
- Apply club soda directly to the stainless surface, wipe in the direction of the grain and then remove residue with a microfiber cloth.
- WD-40 cleans and polishes simultaneously and provides an added bonus of deterring fingerprints.
- Glass cleaner is another effective way to remove fingerprints. Simply spray a microfiber cloth and apply in a circular motion to remove fingerprints and then wipe dry. Note: spraying glass cleaner directly on the surface can create drip marks and the possibility of splattering.



Instead spray it onto your cleaning cloth.

- The same technique should be used for lemon-oil furniture polish. Don't spray your surfaces directly. Instead, apply the polish to a microfiber cloth and rub into the surface and then wipe clean with a second cloth.
- There are commercial cleaners made specifically for stainless steel that can be used to remove stains and scratches and for polishing. However, these cleaners often carry a larger price tag than the other solutions.
- You can also maintain your stainless surfaces simply by wiping them down with warm water and removing residue with a lint-free cloth.
- You will be best served if you remove the knobs from a range or cooktop when you clean it in order to reach grime and grease that is underneath the knobs.
- The handles on cabinets and appliances that are used every day should be cleaned at least once per week. The same applies to stainless steel range hoods. Another material that is effective for cleaning stainless steel range hoods is rubbing alcohol. Spray rubbing alcohol onto a microfiber cloth and apply it over the top of the hood and then wipe clean with another cloth.

Polished Stainless Steel Sinks and Countertops

Polished Stainless-Steel Sinks and Countertops

- To clean, use a mild liquid detergent and soft cotton cloth or sponge.
- Do NOT use any abrasive scouring pads (this includes Scotch Brite or steel wool).
- Do not use chlorine bleach, harsh chemicals or abrasive cleaners.



Kitchen Sink Cleaning and Maintenance

Ceramic and Vitreous China

Ceramic and Vitreous China fixtures have a durable glossy or matte color glaze.

- To clean, use a mild liquid nonabrasive detergent such as dish washing liquid.
- NEVER use abrasive or harsh chemical cleaners or abrasive pads because they will remove the gloss or matte finish.
- Avoid using a mild abrasive cleaner like Soft Scrub on a regular basis.

Ceramic Weather Glazes

These special ceramic glazes are created from organic materials; no two are exactly alike. Weathered finishes are designed to change over time and vary in appearance creating a "living finish." Crazing and darkening is normal, creating part of the product's intrinsic natural beauty.

- To clean, use a mild liquid nonabrasive detergent such as dish washing liquid and dry fixture with a clean soft cloth.
- Never use abrasive pads, chlorine or any type of harsh chemicals.

Fireclay Sinks

Fireclay is very durable because of its high firing temperature.

- To clean, use a nonabrasive cleaner and sponge.
- Stubborn stains can be removed with a mild abrasive cleaner such as Soft Scrub on a wet sponge.
- NEVER use abrasive pads, chlorine or any type of harsh chemicals.

Granite Polymers and Silicate Quartz Polymers

These polymers form a hard, nonporous material resistant to chipping, scratching and staining. Granite polymers and silicate quartz polymers can withstand heat up to 446°F. Placing a pot from the stove directly in sinks made from these materials will not harm the surface.

- Rinse and wipe the sink dry with a clean soft cloth after each use to eliminate water spots, stubborn stains, soap film build-up.
- A solution of 50 percent bleach and water can be used to treat tough or stubborn stains. Let the solution sit in the bottom of the sink for one hour, then scrub and rinse well.
- Do not use abrasive cleaning agents, steel wool or scouring pads.
- NEVER use straight bleach, ammonia or caustic soda solutions.
- NEVER use drain cleaning chemicals when the sink is filled with water.
- To protect the bottom of the sink, purchase a customized sink grid.

Porcelain Enamel

Porcelain enamel is a hard, glass-like paint applied in heavy layers and “baked on” under high temperatures. It is used on cast iron, steel and plastic tubs, kitchen sinks, bar sinks and bathroom vanity bowls.

- To clean, use a soft cloth or sponge with a mild nonabrasive cleaner.
- Purchase a grid for the bottom of the kitchen sink to help minimize scratching.
- Do not allow coffee or tea to stand in the bottom of the sink because that could cause stains.
- NEVER use abrasive cleaners or scouring pads. This will dull the gloss and eventually wear to the base material.
- Never use chlorine bleach or any other type of harsh chemical.

Terrazzo Sinks

Terrazzo is a highly versatile building material used in flooring, walls, countertops and other indoor and outdoor applications. Terrazzo can be either poured in place or set with precast. It consists of marble, quartz, granite or glass chips combined with either an epoxy or cementitious binder.

- Clean stains immediately because they are more difficult to remove the longer they set.
- To remove grease, use a solvent such as carbon tetrachloride.
- Treat stains with bleaches such as household ammonia, hydrogen peroxide or lemon juices which discolor stains.
- Terrazzo does not need protection from wear, it needs protection from absorption and this is achieved through the use of a penetrating sealer.

Cast Iron Sinks

- Periodically clean cast iron with a soft abrasive cleaner such as Soft Scrub.
- For stubborn stains, use a soft nylon scrubber.
- Do NOT use steel wool, metal brushes, scrapers or abrasive sponge pads.



Sink and Countertop Cleaning and Maintenance

Copper Sinks and Countertops

- If the copper sink or countertop is protected by a factory applied, baked-on coating then it will only need to be washed with soapy lukewarm water. Do NOT use a polish on it.
- If there is no protective coating, it can be polished or left to patina and create an "old world" look.

Acrylic and Fibreglass/Gelcoat Sinks and Countertops

Acrylic is a thermoplastic product used on the surface of acrylic countertops. It usually comes in sheets that are molded and then backed by fiberglass.

- To clean, use a mild, diluted dish washing liquid (one-part soap to three parts water).
- NEVER use abrasive cleaners or scouring pads.
- NEVER use chlorine, cleaning products in aerosol cans or harsh chemicals.

Solid Surface Material Sinks and Countertops

- Use an ammonia-based cleaner for most stains. Remove water marks with a damp cloth and then towel dry.
- Use an abrasive cleaner and a Scotch Brite pad to remove more difficult stains.
- Periodically clean the sink by filling it one quarter full of a 50/50 solution of water and bleach. Let it soak for 15 minutes and then rinse thoroughly.
- For minor cuts and scratches, sand with 180-220 grit fine sandpaper until the cut is gone. Restore the finish with an abrasive cleaner and Scotch Brite pad.

Marble, Granite and Onyx Sinks and Countertops

- Use a liquid detergent for regular cleaning to remove mineral deposits and soap scum.
- Restore dull surfaces by using a liquid cleaning compound (like for Cars), followed by a light application of liquid wax or paste.
- Do NOT use abrasive cleaners, steel wool, scouring pads, scrapers or sandpaper on any part of the surface.
- To remove build-up of difficult stains from the surface, use turpentine, denatured alcohol or paint thinner.
- Because granite and marble are porous, they need to be regularly resealed.
- Certain cleaning agents used for faucets may be harmful to natural stone, granite and marble sinks and countertops
- Use marble care cleaners and sealers to maintain and protect marble sinks and countertops.

Quartz/Engineered Stone Countertops

Quartz countertops comprise ground quartz stone, pigments and resin. These popular, granite-like countertops are naturally glossy and do not require polishing. They are harder to damage than other countertops, such as laminate and Corian. To care for Quartz countertops:

- Use nonabrasive cleaners and avoid hard pressure and quick changes in temperature.
- Clean the counter with soap and warm water daily, if possible. Wipe them down more frequently, as needed
- Honed surfaces tend to make common signs of use, such as fingerprints, more visible. Use a blunt, plastic scraper such as a putty knife to remove hardened spills or buildup such as gum, grease, nail polish or paint.
- Spray the counter with a degreasing and disinfectant cleanser that doesn't contain bleach to remove grease. Alternately, use disinfectant bleach-free wipes. Rinse immediately afterwards with a sponge or wet cloth.
- Purchase cleaning products formulated for Quartz countertops.
- Avoid harsh cleaners. Don't clean your countertops with highly acidic or alkaline cleaners. If one of these comes in contact with your counter, clean the counter immediately with a mild detergent. Then rinse with water.
- Use denatured/isopropyl rubbing alcohol. Wet a rag with rubbing alcohol. Rub the stain with the wet cloth. Follow up by cleaning the counter well with warm water.
- Wipe up spills as soon as possible. Quartz resists some stains for a short period of time. However, you should clean spills as soon as possible to avoid stains setting. Clean up spills immediately with water and mild detergent.
- Use trivets or mats below hot pans, dishes, crock pots and electric skillets. Place coasters under drinks in cold glasses, particularly if the beverages contain citrus juice or alcohol.
- Avoid using knives directly on the quartz surface. Use a cutting board placed on top of the counter when you want to slice or dice. Quartz countertops are highly scratch- resistant, but they are not scratch-proof and can be damaged be damaged by sharp objects.

Laminate Countertops

- Wipe down with liquid detergent or a commercial cleaner.
- Use a soft toothbrush to clean along seams or metal edging.
- Bleach and tub and tile cleaners should be avoided because they can scratch or discolor the surface.



Concrete Sinks and Countertops

Concrete is a porous material and almost always is sealed when used as a countertop.

- Clean with standard dish detergent and water.
- Do not clean with bleach or abrasive cleaners.
- Always use a cutting board for chopping, slicing and dicing.
- Always use a trivet to place hot pots, pans and serving dishes instead of setting hot objects directly on the surface.
- Reseal every three to five years or more frequently depending on usage.

Bamboo and other Eco Friendly Materials

- Bamboo is a green material that is durable, stain and scratch-resistant.
- Clean with a soapy sponge.
- Depending on usage, rebuff and reseal every three months to three years.

Glass

- Clean with a Scotch Brite sponge and soapy water or a common all-purpose cleaner.

Wood Countertops

The best way to protect your wood countertops from stains, burns, and scratches is to:

- Always put hot pots on trivet,
- Cut only on cutting boards,
- Wipe up spills immediately, and
- Clean with a mild soap and water.

If scratches, cuts and/or burns occur, give the wood a quick sanding with the grain, first with 120-grit, then 180-grit paper. When the surface is smooth, pour on warm, USP-grade (food-grade) mineral oil and rub it in with a rag. Let it soak in for 20 to 30 minutes, then wipe away the excess with a clean paper towel. Don't use cooking oils, which will turn rancid. For extra protection, apply one part beeswax or paraffin wax melted in 4 parts mineral oil and rub it into the bare wood while the mix is still warm.

For stains on wood countertops, rub stain with lemon juice. Note, treating wood countertops monthly with an application of mineral or tung oil will also improve its resistance to stains.

Door and Cabinet Hardware and Faucet Cleaning and Maintenance

The degree and amount of maintenance required can depend on the type of finish selected for metallic components. Finish is the surface that we see and touch. It affects the aesthetics, durability and utility of all decorative hardware and plumbing items.

Each category of finish involves different processes resulting in varying visual effects and durability. Certain finishes may be more suited to different uses depending on their location (light, water, chemicals and atmosphere can affect finishes) and use (some finishes are more resistant to mechanical damage or abrasion).

The following guidance will help you keep your fixtures looking like new:



Coated Finishes

- Clean with mild nonabrasive liquid detergent and water.
- Avoid contact with uncured paint, thinners, acids, solvents and chemicals.
- Maintain by applying a nonabrasive polymer-based wax to protect the coating. Apply monthly to exterior hardware. Apply two times a month in coastal areas.
- If scratched or finish deteriorates, have the hardware professionally refinished.

PVD Finishes

- Clean with mild, nonabrasive liquid detergent and water.
- Avoid contact with uncured paint, thinners, acids, solvents, glue, stain and chemicals.

Coated Oil Rubbed Bronze

- Clean with mild nonabrasive liquid detergent and water
- Avoid contact with uncured paint, thinners, acids, solvents, glue, stain and chemicals.
- Maintain by applying a nonabrasive polymer-based wax to protect the coating.

Uncoated Oil Rubbed Bronze

- After installation, treat the hardware with a generous coating of furniture wax.

Bronze and Silicon Bronze

- Clean with a mild liquid detergent and water.
- Never use ammonia-based cleaning products, harsh chemicals, bleach or abrasive cleaners
- To restore patina, gently rub with a Scotch Brite or similar pad and then apply a generous coating of high-quality furniture wax.

Chrome Finishes

- Clean with a mild liquid detergent.
- Never use abrasive or chemical-based cleaners.

Vintage or Weathered Finishes

- Keep dry. Use a soft cloth to wipe off moisture.
- Apply a light coating of high quality furniture wax.

Gold Finishes

- Gold is soft and can scratch easily. To help prevent scratching, regularly clean with warm water and dry fixtures with a chamois.

Regularly cleaning and following recommended maintenance protocols will enable you to enjoy your kitchen for many years and preserve your investment. If you have questions or would like more information for maintaining your kitchen or bath, please give us a call at 508-295-1311 or visit our showroom at 3127 Cranberry Highway, East Wareham, MA.

