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Keeping Your Cabinetry Beautiful

Cleaning and Maintenance of Melamine and PVC Products:

Food and dirt stains-

Wipe with a dampened cloth using water and mild soap solution. For stubborn stains, use a cloth dampened with a mild non-abrasive cleaner.

Stubborn stains from food, glues, inks, paints or oils-

Wipe using a cloth dampened with turpentine or paint thinner etc. Wipe gently and sparingly, dry quickly.

Cleaning and Maintenance of Wood Products:

Food and dirt stains-

Wipe with a dampened cloth using water and a mild soap solution, or vinegar and water solution.

Stubborn stains from food, glues, inks, paints or oils-

Wipe using a cloth dampened with turpentine or paint thinner. Wipe gently and sparingly and dry quickly. Strong solvents such as lacquer thinners are not recommended as they will damage the finishes. All solid wood parts are finished with a catalyzed furniture finish. There is no need for oiling or waxing finished parts as waxes or oils would only lie on the surface trapping dirt.

General Maintenance Precautions-

Do not use any abrasive cleaners on any melamine or wood surfaces. After any cleaning procedure other than water and soap, always wipe cabinets dry and follow up with a water and mild soap solution. Always keep excessive moisture away from any seams or joints.

Plastic Laminate Care and Maintenance:

Laminates are resistant to common household products, solvents, mild alkaline and diluted mild acids. Bleaches may affect the surface if left in contact for extended periods of time. Some natural dyes (teas, coffee etc) could stain the surface of the laminate over a long period of time, but can usually be removed by an application of soap and water, baking soda or very diluted bleach followed by rinsing with water.

Superficial Staining-

Some household items may cause superficial staining of decorative laminates; however, the stain can usually be removed by application of a mild cleaning agent. The following may cause temporary staining: Mercurochrome Solution (2%), black wax crayon, black shoe polish, any type of ink, felt pen, solvent base, and Merthiolate solution (0.1%). To remove such stains, use methanol or MEK followed by mild bleach, then rinse and wipe.

Harmful Chemicals-

Strong household cleaners and chemicals may damage decorative laminate, and should not be allowed to remain on surfaces. Examples are: Hypochlorite bleach, hydrogen peroxide solution in any concentration, mineral acids (hydrochloric, sulphuric, nitric and phosphoric), lye solution (1% or more), sodium bi sulphate.

Protecting the Surface-

Before selecting surface material, consider its use as well as its texture, colour and reflective values. A rough-textured surface has different advantages, depending upon use, than a smooth-textured surface. High gloss laminates for example, are not recommended for use in heavy-duty application such as countertops.

Scratch and Impact Protection-

Laminate is resistant to scratches and impacts under normal use conditions. Use cutting boards, chopping blocks or other protective surfaces. Do not chop, slice, pound or hammer on any laminate surface. Knives or other sharp utensils may slice or scratch the surface. Heavy blows from a hammer or meat tenderizer may crack or gauge the surface. Use place mats or trivets on laminate surfaces when necessary. Ceramics and abrasive objects can cause scratching and premature wear – do not slide these items across the surface. Follow recommendations for cleaning – do not use abrasive cleaners, powders, steel wool, sandpaper or scouring pads.

Hot Objects-

Cookware still hot from the stove or oven, as well as electric skillets, waffle irons, curling irons and hot rollers should not be placed directly on laminate surfaces. Prolonged exposure to temperatures of 140°F (60°C) or higher may cause the laminate to separate from the core material. Use a trivet, insulated hot pad or other protective device beneath all hot cookware, heat generating appliances, or other heated objects. Laminate can withstand heat up to 275°F (135°C) for short periods of time. Avoid ironing, or placing a hot iron on laminate surfaces. Do not place lit cigarettes directly on laminate surface.

Ordinary Cleaning-

Laminate is very easy to clean. For general cleaning use a clean, damp, non-abrasive cotton cloth. Do not flood the laminate, especially near seams, since water can penetrate and cause the substrate to swell. Dry the surface with a soft, clean, non-abrasive cotton cloth. For specific types of surfaces use the following care guidelines:

Matte and Sparkle Finish Laminate:

Especially hard-to-clean areas may require special attention. Use a nylon-bristled hand or vegetable brush, along with a mild liquid detergent and water solution or household cleaner. Clean the area using a rotating motion. Rinse and dry the surface as indicated above.

Textured Finish Laminate:

These surfaces may require special attention to clean the depressed areas. Use a nylon-bristled hand or vegetable brush, along with a mild liquid detergent and water solution or household cleaner. Clean the area using a rotating motion, rinse and dry the surface as indicated above.

High-Gloss Finish Laminate:

If residual streaks and smears remain after normal cleaning, use a mild glass cleaner and dry with a clean, non-abrasive cotton cloth.

Chemical Damage:

Never use cleaners containing acid, alkali or sodium hypochlorite. These cleaners will mar, etch, corrode and permanently discolour the laminate surface. Also, make sure bottles, rags and other materials contaminated with these cleaners never contact the laminate surface. For example, cleaners containing acid, alkaline or sodium hypochlorite which can be found in drain, metal, oven, ceramic cooktop, toilet bowl, and tub and tile cleaners, rust and lime scale removers and chlorine bleach.

Special Cleaning Recommendations:

Residual Glue-

Sometimes new decorative laminate has a streaky appearance caused by contact adhesive used during fabrication. Clean with a non-abrasive cotton cloth and an adhesive solvent. Use solvent sparingly as excessive amounts may de-laminate edges. Read and follow all instructions and warnings on the labels of all solvent products.

Paint and Varnish-

Remove most oil-based paints, varnishes and lacquers from decorative laminate surfaces with a suitable solvent. Read and follow all instructions and warnings on the labels of all solvent products, and remember most solvents are extremely flammable. Use solvent sparingly, as excessive amounts may de-laminate edges. Remove most water based paints with an ammoniated household cleaner. For stubborn paint spots, gently use a plastic, non-metallic, non-abrasive pad. Never use steel wool or other abrasive scouring pads.

Stains-

To remove or minimize stains, use a mild household cleaner on the affected area, and allow it to draw out the stain. Blot with a clean, damp, non-abrasive cotton cloth and then rinse with clean water. When a recommended cleaner changes its formulation the change may be harmful to the laminate surface. Solvents such as denatured alcohol can also be used. Follow all directions and warnings on the solvent label because many are extremely flammable. Stubborn stains that may disappear on their own after a short time, or after repeated cleanings included: food stains, glass rings, food dyes, water marks, coffee and tea stains and fingerprints. Stains which are stubborn or even permanent and may not disappear include: wood stains, newsprint, and any type of ink. Some materials and liquids such as dyes and pharmaceutical products will permanently stain laminate. For example: hair colour and rinses, silver nitrate, laundry bluing, tannic acid, Mercurchrome, povidone-iodine, dermatological tar compounds and peroxide. Applying a paste of baking soda and water on the area to pull out the stain may reduce these stains. The paste will be slightly abrasive, so do not rub. Wipe up the paste with a clean, damp, non-abrasive cotton cloth, and then rinse with clean water. Periodic application of a self-cleaning wax can help minimize future staining.