

## How to...

### Clean a natural oiled floor by hand

You will need the products shown below. If your floor was originally oiled with white pigmented product then refer to the 'How to... Clean a white oiled floor' and make sure you choose the white versions of the Cleaners Box, soap and / or maintenance oil.

Product name	<10m2	<25m2	<50m2	>50m2
Flat-Mop	1	1	1	1
Additional Mop Head	-	-	1	1 extra per 25m2
Cleaners' Box, natural	1	1	1	-
Natural Soap, natural	-	-	-	2.5 ltr +
Maintenance Oil, natural	-	-	-	1 ltr
Absorbent cloth	-	-	-	1

\* nb! A Cleaners' Box includes 1 ltr each of Natural Soap, Intensive Wood Cleaner and Maintenance Oil as well as an absorbent cloth. Keep the Intensive Wood Cleaner on one side for use when you intensively clean the floor prior to maintenance oiling.

Remember that oiled floors like soapy water. The oil's protective strength is within the wood so there is no finish layer that the water can undermine. Soap will also continuously add nourishment to the floor and prolong its life. There is a particularly fresh smell to a room after soap cleaning.

You can take from this that oiled floors are perfectly suitable in kitchens and bathrooms where they will be exposed to plenty of moisture. You'll also appreciate their non-slip character in these areas.

So when you have dirt on the floor that is not going to simply vacuum or wipe off then feel free to get out your mop and wipe over with a solution of soapy water. The trick is to rinse the mop out in a 2<sup>nd</sup> bucket of clean, warm water. Otherwise your stock of soapy water gets dirty and all you do is recycle the dirt from one area of the floor to another.

Another plus from soap cleaning is that as the cleaning water dries in the floor it leaves a light film of on the floor. As time goes by and more dirt comes onto the floor this will adhere to the soap film not the wood fibres making it easier to clean next time.

To help you further I need to dwell on the difference between soap and detergent. Put it this way, if you cleaned your hands with Fairy liquid all the time your skin would soon dry out. The same goes with the wood surface. So for every day cleaning make sure you use Natural Soap, not our Intensive Wood Cleaner or someone else's detergent like Flash. Don't also be tricked by products with names soapy wood cleaner, which actually are detergents. Our own Intensive Wood Cleaner is a detergent for removing all traces of soap before the re-oiling of the floor with Maintenance Oil. This is discussed further in 'How to... Maintain an oiled floor'.

Should your floor originally have been finished with white oil then make sure you are using Natural Soap, White Version! As the name says, this has white pigments in it, which are important initially to remove any pinkish tone the wood may have post-oiling and then will counteract the natural aging of the wood and keep the floor fresh looking.

Oiled floors are matt to satin and need re-oiling every year or two. See separate instructions 'How to reoil an aged oiled floor'.

## The cleaning process

Dilute 1 capful of soap per 2 litres of warm water. Soak the Flat-Mop head in the soap solution, wring it out, re-attach it then mop the floor. When the mop head becomes dirty rinse away the worst of the dirt, re-soak then carry on.

Very dirty mop heads can be washed in a washing machine on a 90 C programme. Do not pour water onto any wood floor, especially near electrical sockets.

Use a dab of Maintenance Oil to repair any scratches. Be sure to buff away any excess oil then damp clean the floor.

## Some tips:

- 1) A Flat-Mop is excellent as you can use it dry (as well as damp) to quickly remove dust and dry dirt from the floor on those days of the week when damp cleaning is not justified. You can purchase additional Mop Heads so that they can all be pre-soaked with soap solution, used in sequence then machine washed afterwards. Last, but not least it plays an important role when scrubbing your floor with Intensive Wood Cleaner before applying Maintenance Oil.

- 2) Many people prefer to buy several small canisters of soap than one large one. It's easier to get the soap dosage right from a smaller canister and the product stays fresher for longer.
- 3) If you do put too much soap into your cleaning water then this may result in an noticeable film on the surface of the wood. This is particularly the case with white soap. Don't worry and next time use just warm water to clean the floor.
- 4) You may have heard of the Scandinavian technique of Soaping floors. This means the sanded wood will have only a soap protection after pre-treatment with Softwood Lye. This is something different from simple cleaning so if you are interested please refer to 'How to... Soap a Sanded Floor'. Some of our North Sea neighbours can be a bit fanatical about their floors and will alternate the soap they use between white and natural to get just the look they want from their floors. The point is there are no particular rules about what you should do, just as long as you enjoy your wood!
- 5) The smoother your wood surface the easier it will be to clean. So if your wood has been coarsely sanded and only lightly oiled don't be surprised if dirt ingrains itself in the surface fibres. The trick is to really smooth the wood surface during oiling or maintenance with Patina Disks, which is a technique I refer to in 'How to... oil a wooden floor'.

Please see Facts and Figures for technical data on Soap and Flat-Mops.

Extra materials are available from Dane Care on 01952 727899 or [www.danecare.co.uk](http://www.danecare.co.uk)

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