



## Maintenance of Safety Flooring

Safety floors should be cleaned and maintained in order to last as long as possible and retain their slip resistance. They can be costly to repair as individual areas cannot be replaced, so on-going damage prevention methods are recommended. General rules for maintaining safety flooring are:

- Always acclimatise your floor before installation
- Ensure the environment stays between the maximum room temperature of 60 degrees celsius and minimum of -20 degrees celsius.
- Don't use underfloor heating that exceeds 27 degrees Celsius. Anything below this is fine. Use an adhesive that can handle temperatures higher than this.
- Ensure the slip rating suits your environment before purchasing and installing.
- Always use the manufacturers recommended cleaning products for best results – they are recommended for a reason. Do not use other products without first consulting the manufacturer.
- Always test solutions or cleaning products on a hidden piece of flooring to ensure the reaction is as expected.
- Remove dirt or spillages as soon as possible, especially spillages.
- Lay protection on the floor before any other work is carried out by other trades, as debris may damage the floor.
- Use doormats in an area just before the flooring will be reached to avoid dirt buildup as much as possible. Clean these mats as often as possible too.
- When cleaning in a commercial area with people around, always use a wet floor sign.
- Do not use polish or a buffing machine on a safety floor, as this will reduce the slip resistance.
- Do not drag or push furniture across the floor as this may cause damage. Move furniture on wheels where possible. Use furniture cups once they are in the room.

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### **Daily Cleaning**

Sweep and dust daily with a dry dust mop and dustpan and brush. Target any specific soiling or marks using the method in the normal cleaning section below. You should also vacuum entrance mats that help prevent dirt being dragged onto the safety flooring. If they appear, rubber heel marks should be scrubbed by hand or using a machine pad.

### **Normal Cleaning**

Aim to clean the floor once a week, or more in heavy traffic or visible areas where appearance is important. As commercial environments are usually heavily used and attract in dirt from shoes, it is likely that more often than once a week will be necessary. Hygienic places such as hospitals or kitchens should be cleaned more often too, following the guidelines set by relevant bodies.

It is necessary to use specialist equipment over ordinary mops, as these will just drag dirt around due to the texture of safety flooring. To start cleaning the floor, sweep or vacuum to remove loose dirt. Then apply a concentrated water based cleaner or disinfectant designed for safety floors, diluted with water at a 1:40 ratio or as per manufacturer directions. Make sure if the floor is treated with anything that the cleaner you use is suitable for this. Do not flood a safety floor unless specified by manufacturer that this can be done. After the cleaner has sat for five minutes, scrub using a rotary brush, automatic scrubber (3 in 1 machine), or a standard low speed swing machine (180rpm). Check with manufacturers for the type and abrasiveness of pad to use, and recommended machine speeds. Alternatively, you can manually scrub the floor with a deck brush attached to a mop handle. To remove wash water, use a wet vacuum cleaner or a rough floor mop and squeegee. When dragging the squeegee towards you, tap once at the end of each stroke. This will remove the dirty water collected from the floor so it isn't spread around. When all the water is in one place it can be mopped up. Finally ensure you rinse the floor with clean water to remove any cleaning product residue.

Stripping of the floor removes ingrained dirt and can take place approximately once a year, but check with the manufacturer first to see how often your particular floor should be stripped, or if that brand and range can be stripped at all. It is also important to choose compatible stripping products to carry this out.

### **Spillages**

Water, grease and food should be cleaned immediately – just because there is a slip resistance doesn't mean slipping is impossible altogether. Use an absorbent cloth to wipe these and wash the area so residue is not left behind. You can use a specialist spillage remover or diluted maintainer for this.

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For typically wet areas such as pools and showers that are not particularly classed as spillages, use a deck scrubber. Occasionally, limescale may build up, meaning a specialist cleaner will be required that can target this.

### **Repairs:**

It is important to identify areas that need repairing, and to regularly check for damage relating to the below to ensure maximum lifespan:

- Damage to welds, seals and drains – re-weld or seal these as necessary.
- Water migration in wet areas – use polyurethane adhesive to slow this down.
- Cuts and deep scratches in the floor – Weld these as soon as possible to prevent moisture causing damage.

Once the safety floor has lost its slip resistance, it will need to be replaced. It is important to maintain as instructed to reach the expected lifespan and keep people using the floor safe. Take note of the guarantee as a guideline of when you should replace a safety floor.



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