

Cleaning and Cabinetry Care

Thank you for choosing Hawthorne Kitchens. Now that your project is complete, we want to ensure it looks this good for many years to come! Below is our Cabinetry care and maintenance guide to use as a reference as the years go by. Should you need any detailed information, please never hesitate to contact us.

General Guidelines:

- Avoid exposing any of your cabinetry, especially polymer or polyester products, to sources of extreme heat, or steam.
- Precautions must be taken when using certain electric counter top appliances. Kettles, toaster ovens and all other appliances creating heat or steam will, over time, affect nearby surfaces. Be sure to place these appliances appropriately so that the surfaces directly above will be protected (ie. move your appliance 'slightly forward on the counter when in use).
- Self-Cleaning Appliances create a tremendous amount of heat. If using this feature, be sure to open any doors/drawers around the oven (including uppers) to reduce heat build up the on the doors. **This applies to every type of door/finish**. No kitchen material is meant to withstand 900+ degrees of heat. We recommend people clean their ovens manually, rather than use the self-clean feature whenever possible.
- Ideal Humidity levels for cabinetry is 40-50%. Be sure to maintain this throughout the year. If the humidity level changes, the doors will expand (more moisture) or contract (less moisture), or even warp if the differences are frequent or substantial. Most of our service calls are the result of homes with inconsistent moisture control. Product failure due to humidity inconsistency is not a warranty issue.
- Never hang wet towels or clothes over your cabinet doors. Regardless of the type of door, this will eventually lead to discoloration, delamination, or a flaking finish. This is not warranty issue, and is very easily detected upon inspection. Many products are available to dry your towels in your cabinet, behind the doors. Not to worry, these can be installed after your installation - just call us!
- Use the hood fan in the kitchen, or the ventilation fan in the bathroom whenever you are creating moisture. Continue to run the fan for 10-15 minutes after the steam has cleared the room. If you frequently steam up the bathroom to a point where it is visible on the mirror, consider leaving the door slightly ajar, or increasing the size of your fan.

Cleaning Specifics

- Avoid accumulations of dirt, such as grease and dust, to avoid the chances of permanent stains. The more buildup there is on your products, the more likely it will leave a scratch.
- Avoid using, in any case, chemical products such as thinners, bleaches, abrasives, solvents or any product containing acetone.
- Do not, under any circumstances, use abrasives such as scouring pads or steel wool to clean your products. If you have a 'tough spot' that won't come off, we have special commercial-grade cleaners for various finishes.
- A dry cloth is often all that is needed to keep your cabinetry clean under regular maintenance/wear conditions. When needed, a damp cloth can be used, provided the cabinetry is wiped immediately afterwards with a fine, dry cloth. Be sure to avoid excessive moisture on your cabinetry, and never use an aggressive cleaning device (Steel Wool).
- Tough Stains: If needed, a very small amount of dish detergent can be added to some warm water and applied sparingly with a damp cloth. Rub the area very slowly, with minimal pressure. If there is a grain direction to your door, move your hand in the same direction. Dry area with a fine, dry cloth immediately afterwards.
- Cabinet Interiors, usually only need a dry cloth unless there has been a spill. If so, use warm water, a minimal amount of dish detergent and a slightly damp cloth. Dry immediately with a fine, dry cloth. **Leaving a large amount of moisture on the edge banding of a cabinet or in the corners where the boxes are joined will lead to product failure over time.
- Cleaning your cabinet hardware is similar to the doors. Your handles, hinges, and drawers are all metal, but all have a protective finish over them and need nothing more than a dry cloth. If a more thorough cleaning is needed, warm water, a small amount of mild dish soap and a slightly damp cloth is required. Dry immediately afterwards. Keep water to a minimum - both the hinge and the handles are around an exposed, moisture sensitive part of the door.
- On the subject of cleaning floors...The most common problem people have, over time, occurs when too much water is used while cleaning a floor. Eventually, the water breaks down the toe kick finish and absorbs into the panel, causing permanent damage. The best way to avoid this issue is to minimize water on the floor by not using a 'traditional mop'. Even after being wrung out, these mops have far too much water in them. If you are determined to use this type of mop, it is best to clean to within 5-6" of your cabinetry and do the rest by hand.
- Glass doors and glass shelves can be cleaned with window/glass cleaner, provided the cleaner is sprayed onto a cloth and not onto the glass itself. Be careful not to get overspray onto the doors/ interior of the cabinets. Try to minimize how much your cleaning cloth touches the cabinetry as the glass cleaner can affect the cabinet finish. If you see a spot of cabinet that does have glass cleaner residue on it, clean with warm water and mild dish detergent, and dry with a fine, dry cloth.