

Cleaning and Maintenance Tips: Tung Oil



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1. Water should be applied with a light touch, regardless of your finishing system, so that it can evaporate without soaking into the wood. If excessive moisture is applied to your wood floor and allowed to stand, the wood will absorb the water and swell. If the wood swells beyond the capacity of any expansion, cupping can occur. Additionally, excess water can be detrimental to the adhesion of the finish.
2. Always test a new cleaning system in a small area before using it on an entire floor. Some finish systems can create a clouding effect. This clouding effect may be appreciated by some homeowners, but not all. It would be best to determine this in advance.
3. If tung oil is your floor's final finish coat, there are several cleaning methods that could be tested in your home for acceptability.
 - **Vinegar & Water**—Mix a small amount (1 to 2 oz.) of white vinegar per 2 gallons of water. The naturally acidic nature of vinegar allows it to strip away most dirt and contaminants, while being safe for your floor and the environment.
 - **Murphy's Oil Soap**—Safe and effective for cleaning tung oil. However, the nature of this product is to leave a small build-up that can cloud the appearance of the finish. Test this for acceptability before use. Also, because of this build-up, we recommend only using it for heavy cleaning periodically.
 - **Non-abrasive Household Cleaners**—If they do not contain bleach, these cleaners are often acceptable on tung oil. However, given the large number of available cleaners, we cannot recommend a specific brand. We recommend that they be tested prior to wide scale use.
 - **Waterlox Original Cleaner Concentrate from Waterlox Co.**—This option was developed specifically for tung oil floors. For more information, contact the Waterlox Co. directly at www.waterlox.com/products-item/wood-floor-cleaner-concentrate.aspx.
4. You may find it appropriate to touch-up small areas of your floor. With tung oil as your finish, this is quite easily done. If stain was used on the original floor and the scratch is down to bare wood, you may touch up the affected spots with a small amount of stain or a stain pen, both of which you can obtain from Carlisle. After the stain has had sufficient time to dry, you simply apply tung oil over the necessary areas. Tung oil, when initially applied, is shinier than the tung oil around it. Over time, this new tung oil will dull down and start to blend in to the original flooring surface.
5. Eventually, you will most likely find it necessary to recoat your entire floor. This process is no different than that outlined above for spot repair, other than the amount of flooring you will recoat. It is that simple.