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Laminate Care



Formica® brand laminate is designed for beauty and durability. Like any surfacing materials, however, it can be damaged by abuse and carelessness. When you use it where recommended and care for it properly, it will give you years of satisfaction.

PROTECTING THE SURFACE

Before selecting the surface material, consider the type of use it will receive, as well as its texture, color, and reflective values. A rough-textured surface has different advantages, depending upon use, than a smooth-textured surface. High gloss finish laminates, for example, are not recommended for use in heavy-duty applications such as countertops.

Scratch and Impact Protection

Formica brand 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 gouge the surface.

Use place mats, doilies, and trivets on laminate surfaces when necessary.

- Ceramics and abrasive objects can cause scratching and premature wear - do not slide these items across surface.

Follow recommendations for cleaning - do not use abrasive cleaners, powders, steel wool, sandpaper, or Scotch-Brite® scouring pads (see Cleaning section).

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.

- Formica brand 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 lighted cigarettes directly on laminate surfaces.

ORDINARY CLEANING

Formica® brand laminate is very easy to clean.

- In most cases, you only need to use a clean, damp, nonabrasive cotton cloth and a mild liquid detergent or household cleaner.
- Rinse with clean water, using a clean, nonabrasive 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, nonabrasive 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 soiled area, using a rotating motion. Rinse and dry the surface as indicated above.

Sculptured and Dimensional 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 soiled 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 then 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 discolor the laminate surface. Also, make sure that bottles, rags, and other materials contaminated with these cleaners never contact the laminate surface.

Examples of cleaners containing acid, alkaline, or sodium hypochlorite include, but are not limited to:

drain cleaners	rust removers	coffeepot cleaners
metal cleaners	tub and tile cleaners	chlorine bleach
oven cleaners	toilet bowl cleaners	lime scale removers
ceramic cooktop cleaners	some countertop cleaners	

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 such as Formica® brand Nonflammable Contact Adhesive Solvent. Use solvent sparingly, as excessive amounts may delaminate edges. Read and follow all warnings and instructions 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 warnings and instructions on the labels of all solvent products, and remember that most solvents are extremely flammable. Use solvent sparingly, as excessive amounts may delaminate 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 full strength Fantastik® All Purpose Cleaner, Formula 409,® Pine-Sol® or other 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. Formica Corporation cannot be held responsible for these changes. Solvents such as denatured alcohol can also be used. Follow all directions and warnings on the solvent label because many are extremely flammable.

Stubborn or "fugitive" stains that may disappear on their own, after a short time or after repeated cleanings, include:

food stains	glass rings	food dyes
water marks	coffee and tea stains	fingerprints

Stains which are stubborn or even permanent, and may not disappear, include:

wood stains	cash register inks	indelible inks
newsprint	marking pen inks	food pricing ink
label inks		

Some materials and liquids, such as dyes and pharmaceutical products, will permanently stain laminate. Examples include:

hair dyes and rinses	silver nitrate	laundry bluing
tannic acid	Mercurochrome®	povidone-iodine
dermatological tar compounds	peroxide	

These stains may be reduced by applying a paste of baking soda and water on the area to pull out the stain. 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.

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