Product	
Supplier	Flooring2
Product Type	Luxury Vinyl
Number	FT
Name	Fortress

Luxury Vinyl Care and Maintenance Guide

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Important Notice

> **READ BEFORE USE**

This guide provides comprehensive care and maintenance information for luxury vinyl plank (LVP) and luxury vinyl tile (LVT) flooring. Following these guidelines will help preserve your floor's appearance, extend its lifespan, and maintain warranty coverage. Always refer to your specific product's care instructions, as requirements may vary by manufacturer and product line.

Disclaimer: This guide contains general recommendations based on Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) standards. We are not responsible for damage resulting from improper care, use of unapproved products, or failure to follow manufacturer-specific guidelines.

Quick Reference Card

Daily Care

Task	Frequency	Tools/Products
Sweep or dust mop	Daily	Microfiber dust mop or soft-bristle broom
Wipe spills immediately	As needed	Clean cloth
Walk-off mat maintenance	Daily	Shake out or vacuum mats

Weekly Care

Task	Frequency	Tools/Products
Vacuum or sweep all areas	2-3 times weekly	Vacuum with hard-floor setting or soft brush
Damp mop	Weekly	Microfiber mop, pH-neutral cleaner
Inspect for damage	Weekly	Visual inspection

Periodic Care

Task	Frequency	Tools/Products
Deep clean	Monthly or as needed	Manufacturer-approved cleaner
Polish/restore (if applicable)	Annually	Manufacturer-approved polish
Professional cleaning	As needed	Professional resilient floor service

Routine Maintenance

Daily Care

Dust Mopping and Sweeping:

Daily dust removal is the foundation of luxury vinyl care. Grit and debris are the primary causes of wear and scratches on vinyl flooring.

Proper Technique:

- Use a microfiber dust mop or soft-bristle broom
- Work in one direction to collect debris
- Shake out mop head or sweep debris into dustpan
- Clean mop heads regularly (wash weekly)

Why Daily Sweeping Matters:

- Prevents grit from scratching the wear layer
- Removes abrasive particles that cause dulling
- Reduces need for deep cleaning
- Maintains appearance between damp mopping

Frequency Guidelines by Traffic Level:

Traffic Level	Examples	Recommended Frequency
High Traffic	Entryways, kitchens, hallways	Daily sweeping
Medium Traffic	Living rooms, bedrooms	Every 2-3 days
Low Traffic	Guest rooms, closets	Weekly

Weekly Care

Damp Mopping:

Regular damp mopping removes the residue that sweeping can't address.

Proper Damp Mopping Technique:

- Use a microfiber mop (not string or sponge mop)
- Dampen mop with water and pH-neutral cleaner
- Wring mop thoroughly—mop should be damp, NOT wet
- Work in sections, mopping with the plank direction
- Rinse mop frequently to avoid spreading soil
- Allow floor to air dry (usually dries within minutes)

Important: Never use excessive water. Luxury vinyl is water-resistant but not waterproof at seams in floating installations.

Recommended Cleaning Solution:

- Use manufacturer-approved or pH-neutral (pH 6-8) cleaner
- Dilute according to product instructions
- No-rinse formulas are convenient for weekly cleaning
- Avoid all-purpose cleaners, which can leave residue

Vacuuming:

- □ Use hard-floor setting (disable beater bar/brush roll)
- □ Use a soft brush attachment
- □ Vacuum edges and corners weekly
- □ Check for any particles trapped in seams

Monthly Care

Deep Cleaning:

- Use manufacturer-recommended deep cleaner
- Apply with microfiber mop or flat mop system
- Allow cleaner to work per product instructions
- Remove residue with clean water rinse if required
- Buff dry with clean microfiber cloth if needed

Spill and Stain Management

Immediate Response Protocol

> **Golden Rule:** Clean spills immediately. While luxury vinyl is water-resistant, prolonged moisture exposure and certain substances can cause staining or damage.

Step 1: Contain the Spill

- Prevent spreading using clean cloths
- For large spills, work from edges toward center

Step 2: Remove Excess

- **Liquids:** Wipe up with clean, absorbent cloth
- **Semi-solids:** Scrape gently with plastic scraper
- **Solids:** Sweep or pick up debris

Step 3: Clean the Area

- Apply small amount of approved cleaner to cloth
- Wipe the affected area
- For stubborn spots, allow cleaner to dwell briefly
- Wipe clean with damp cloth

Step 4: Dry and Inspect

- Wipe area dry with clean cloth
- Inspect for any remaining residue or staining
- Repeat if necessary

Common Stain Removal Guide

Stain Type	Treatment Method	Products to Use	Notes
Water spots	Wipe with damp cloth	Clean water, buff dry	Usually easy to remove
Food spills	Wipe immediately, clean	pH-neutral cleaner	Don't let food dry on surface
Coffee/Tea	Wipe, apply cleaner	pH-neutral cleaner	Address promptly to avoid tannin staining
Juice/Wine	Blot, clean thoroughly	pH-neutral cleaner	Can stain if left too long
Grease/Oil	Wipe, use appropriate cleaner	Grease-cutting pH-neutral cleaner	May need multiple applications
Ink	Rub gently with solvent	Isopropyl alcohol (test first)	Dab, don't spread
Nail polish	Use nail polish remover	Acetone-free remover (test first)	Test in hidden area
Rubber marks	Rub with approved cleaner	pH-neutral or manufacturer spot cleaner	From shoe soles or rubber mats
Adhesive residue	Use appropriate remover	Manufacturer-approved adhesive remover	Avoid harsh solvents
Scuff marks	Rub with soft cloth	Damp cloth, or tennis ball	Usually come off easily
Pet accidents	Clean immediately, neutralize	Enzyme cleaner for odors	Ensure complete cleanup

Stain Removal Best Practices

DO:

- □ Clean spills immediately
- □ Use pH-neutral, manufacturer-approved products
- □ Test any new cleaner in an inconspicuous area
- □ Wipe in the direction of the plank/tile pattern
- □ Rinse area after using cleaning solution
- □ Dry thoroughly after cleaning

DON'T:

- □ Never leave standing water on floor
- □ Never use abrasive scrubbers or steel wool
- □ Never use "mop and shine" type products (leaves buildup)
- □ Never use ammonia or bleach-based cleaners
- □ Never use wax-based products (unless specifically approved)
- □ Never use steam cleaners

Deep Cleaning

DIY Deep Cleaning

Frequency: Monthly for high-traffic areas, quarterly for general areas

Materials Needed:

- □ Manufacturer-approved deep cleaning solution
- □ Microfiber flat mop or cleaning system
- □ Clean water for rinsing
- □ Soft towels or microfiber cloths for drying
- □ Spray bottle (optional, for spot treatment)

Procedure:

1. **Preparation**
   - Sweep or vacuum thoroughly
   - Remove any mats or area rugs
   - Pre-treat any stubborn spots
2. **Cleaning Process**
   - Dilute cleaner according to instructions
   - Apply with mop in manageable sections
   - Work in the direction of planks/tiles
   - Do not over-wet the floor
3. **Rinsing (if required)**
   - Some cleaners require rinsing, others don't
   - If rinsing, use clean water and mop
   - Change rinse water frequently
4. **Drying**
   - Allow to air dry (most cleaners dry quickly)
   - Buff with clean dry cloth for extra shine
   - Ensure complete drying before foot traffic

Professional Deep Cleaning

Recommended Frequency: As needed, or annually for commercial spaces

When to Call a Professional:

- Heavy buildup that won't respond to DIY cleaning
- Commercial spaces requiring specialized equipment
- Restoration of neglected floors
- Before applying or stripping polish

Professional Methods for LVP/LVT:

Method	Description	Best For
Auto-scrubbing	Machine scrubbing and extraction	Large commercial areas
Deep scrub and recoat	Strip old polish, reapply new	Polished vinyl floors
Spray buff	Polish restoration	Maintaining polish between strips

Important: Ensure professionals use products compatible with luxury vinyl

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Approved and Prohibited Products

Approved Products

Category	Approved Products	Notes
Daily Cleaner	pH-neutral (pH 6-8), manufacturer-approved	No-rinse formulas convenient
Deep Cleaner	Manufacturer-recommended intensive cleaner	Follow dilution instructions
Spot Cleaner	pH-neutral spot treatment	For specific stain types
Polish (if applicable)	Manufacturer-approved vinyl polish	Only on appropriate products

Prohibited Products

> **WARNING:** Using prohibited products may void your warranty and damage your floor.

Product Type	Why It's Prohibited	Potential Damage
Steam cleaners/mops	Extreme heat and moisture	Damage to wear layer, seam separation, warping
Abrasive cleaners	Scratches wear layer	Permanent scratching, dulling
Ammonia-based cleaners	Can damage vinyl surface	Dulling, discoloration
Bleach	Damages vinyl, causes discoloration	Permanent discoloration
Wax or wax-based products	Creates buildup, attracts dirt	Yellowing, sticky residue
Oil-based cleaners	Leaves residue, attracts dirt	Film buildup
"Mop and shine" products	Creates buildup	Cloudy appearance, yellowing
Harsh solvents	Can damage wear layer	Permanent damage, discoloration
Beater bar vacuums	Can scratch surface	Scratches on wear layer

Cleaning Equipment Guidelines

Approved Equipment:

- □ Microfiber dust mops and cloths
- □ Soft-bristle brooms
- □ Vacuums with hard-floor setting (beater bar off)
- □ Flat mop systems with microfiber pads
- □ Spray mops (with appropriate cleaner)

Prohibited Equipment:

- □ **Steam mops** - Heat and moisture cause damage
- □ **Beater bar/rotating brush vacuums** - Scratches surface
- □ **Abrasive scrub pads** - Damages wear layer
- □ **String mops** - Hold too much water
- □ **Electric buffers** (unless specifically approved)

Climate and Environmental Control

Temperature Requirements

Condition	Recommended Range	Acceptable Range	Risk if Exceeded
Room Temperature	65°F - 80°F (18°C - 27°C)	55°F - 95°F (13°C - 35°C)	Expansion, contraction, buckling
Floor Surface Temperature	Below 85°F (29°C)	Maximum 85°F (29°C)	Softening, expansion, damage

Humidity Requirements

Condition	Recommended Range	Acceptable Range	Risk if Exceeded
Relative Humidity	35% - 55% RH	30% - 65% RH	Gapping, buckling, edge curl

Humidity Management Tips:

- Maintain consistent humidity levels year-round
- Use dehumidifiers in damp seasons or basements
- Use humidifiers in dry winters
- Monitor conditions with a hygrometer
- Avoid dramatic temperature/humidity swings

Seasonal Considerations

Winter:

- Use walk-off mats to capture salt, snow, and grit
- Clean tracked-in de-icing chemicals immediately
- Monitor humidity as heating systems dry air
- Remove wet footwear and boots at entry points

Summer:

- Protect from direct, intense sunlight
- Monitor for high humidity
- Use climate control to maintain consistent conditions
- Watch for expansion in floating installations

Transition Seasons:

- Monitor for any floor movement
- Check expansion gaps at walls
- Clean thoroughly before seasonal changes

Sunlight and UV Protection

- **Use window treatments** - Blinds, curtains, UV-film
- **Rotate area rugs** - Prevent uneven fading patterns
- **Move furniture periodically** - Avoid shadow patterns
- **Close blinds during peak sun** - Especially west-facing windows
- **Consider UV-filtering window film** - Reduces fading significantly

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Preventive Care Strategies

Furniture Protection

Felt Pads and Glides:

- Use non-staining felt pads under ALL furniture legs
- Choose pads with smooth backing (not adhesive exposed to floor)
- Replace pads regularly—worn pads can scratch
- Clean pads of debris periodically
- Avoid rubber or black rubber pads (can stain)

Heavy Furniture:

- Use wide furniture cups or coasters to distribute weight
- Never drag furniture—always lift and carry
- Use furniture sliders when moving heavy pieces
- Check for indentations periodically

Rolling Furniture:

- Use chair mats under rolling office chairs
- Ensure chair casters are rated for hard floors (soft casters)
- Avoid hard plastic casters directly on vinyl
- Check casters regularly for debris

Entry Point Protection

Walk-Off Mat Strategy:

- Place exterior mats at entrances (scraper type)
- Use interior mats that absorb moisture (6-10 feet ideal)
- Choose mats with non-staining, non-rubber backing
- Clean mats regularly—dirty mats redistribute soil
- Replace mats when worn

> **IMPORTANT:** Avoid rubber-backed or latex-backed mats—these can cause permanent discoloration. Use vinyl-backed or woven-backed mats.

Entry Protocols:

- Remove outdoor shoes when possible
- Keep mat area clean and functional
- Wipe feet thoroughly when entering

Pet Care

Nail Maintenance:

- Keep pet nails trimmed and smooth
- Use nail caps if scratching is an issue
- Consider nail grinders for smooth edges

Accident Management:

- Clean pet accidents immediately
- Use enzyme-based cleaners for complete odor removal
- Blot up liquid, don't spread
- Ensure area is fully clean and dry

Food and Water:

- Use waterproof mats under bowls
- Clean up food spills promptly
- Wipe area around bowls daily

Damage Prevention

Protect Against:

- **Grit and dirt** - The #1 cause of wear; use mats and sweep daily
- **Dragging furniture** - Always lift
- **High heels** - Concentrated weight can indent
- **Dropping heavy/sharp objects** - Can dent or gouge
- **Chemical spills** - Clean immediately

> **Chemical Contact Warning:** Avoid prolonged contact with petroleum-based products (gasoline, oils, solvents), rubber compounds, and asphalt. These substances can cause permanent staining or discoloration of vinyl flooring. If contact occurs, clean immediately with appropriate cleaner.

In Kitchens:

- Use cutting boards (never cut directly on floor)
- Clean spills immediately
- Consider mats in high-use zones
- Protect floor during appliance moves

Room-Specific Guidelines

Kitchens

- Clean spills immediately (grease, food, liquids)
- Use mats at sink and cooking areas
- Protect floor when moving appliances
- Extra vigilance during cooking and meal prep
- Mop more frequently than other areas

Bathrooms

- Wipe up water after showers and baths
- Use bath mats with non-staining backing
- Ensure good ventilation to reduce humidity
- Check around toilet and tub bases for moisture
- Clean thoroughly around fixtures

Basements

- Monitor humidity levels carefully (below 60% RH)
- Use dehumidifier as needed
- Watch for any signs of moisture intrusion
- Ensure proper installation with vapor barrier
- Check perimeter for any water seepage

High-Traffic Areas

- Sweep or vacuum daily
- Use runners or area rugs (non-staining backing)
- Rotate rugs to even wear patterns
- Professional cleaning more frequently
- Monitor for wear and address early

Areas with Radiant Heat

- Verify product is rated for radiant heat
- Maximum floor surface temperature: 85°F (29°C)
- Gradually increase temperature after installation
- Never exceed temperature limits
- Monitor for any expansion or issues

Garages and Utility Rooms

- Choose commercial-grade products for these areas
- Use appropriate floor mats
- Clean up automotive fluids immediately
- May require more frequent maintenance
- Consider wear and chemical exposure

Troubleshooting Common Issues

Dullness or Hazing

Symptoms:

- Floor has lost its shine
- Cloudy or hazy appearance
- Uneven appearance in traffic areas

Possible Causes:

- Product buildup from wrong cleaners
- Film from mop-and-shine products
- Inadequate rinsing after cleaning
- Normal wear requiring maintenance

Solutions:

- Strip any product buildup with appropriate stripper
- Clean with manufacturer-recommended cleaner
- Apply fresh polish if product type allows
- For severe cases, professional restoration

Prevention:

- Use only approved cleaning products
- Don't use wax or shine products unless approved
- Rinse thoroughly after cleaning
- Follow manufacturer maintenance guidelines

Scratches

Symptoms:

- Fine scratches in wear layer
- Deep gouges from impact
- Scuff marks from shoes or furniture

Possible Causes:

- Grit and dirt ground in by foot traffic
- Dragging furniture without protection
- Dropping sharp or heavy objects
- Worn furniture pads

Solutions:

- Fine scratches: May be masked with polish (if applicable)
- Deep scratches: May require plank/tile replacement
- Scuff marks: Usually removable with cleaning

Prevention:

- Sweep/vacuum daily to remove grit
- Use furniture pads and glides
- Never drag furniture
- Use walk-off mats

Discoloration

Symptoms:

- Yellow or brown discoloration
- Color changes under rugs or mats
- Staining in specific areas

Possible Causes:

- Rubber-backed mats (chemical reaction)
- Sun fading/UV damage
- Chemical spills
- Product buildup

Solutions:

- Rubber stains: May be permanent; try deep cleaning
- Sun fading: Generally permanent
- Chemical stains: Clean thoroughly, may be permanent
- Buildup: Strip and restore

Prevention:

- Use non-staining mat backings only
- Protect from direct UV exposure
- Clean spills immediately
- Use approved products only

Edge Curling or Peaking

Symptoms:

- Edges lifting or curling
- Planks raised at seams
- Buckling in floor

Possible Causes:

- Excessive moisture
- Temperature extremes
- Insufficient expansion gap
- Adhesive failure (glue-down)

Solutions:

- Address moisture source

- Ensure proper expansion gaps
- May need professional re-installation
- Replace damaged planks

Prevention:

- Maintain proper temperature and humidity
- Never over-wet floor
- Ensure proper installation with expansion gaps

When to Seek Professional Help

Contact a flooring professional if:

- Widespread scratching or wear beyond DIY repair
- Persistent discoloration or staining
- Buckling, peaking, or edge curl
- Subfloor moisture issues
- Need for stripping and refinishing
- Warranty claim situations

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Cleaning Mistakes

Mistake	Why It's Harmful	Correct Approach
Using steam cleaners	Damages wear layer, causes warping	Use damp mop only
Using "mop and shine" products	Creates buildup, turns yellow	Use approved cleaners
Over-wetting floor	Seam penetration, edge curl, subfloor damage	Damp mop only
Using abrasive tools	Scratches wear layer	Use soft cloths and pads
Using ammonia/bleach	Damages vinyl surface	Use pH-neutral products
Not rinsing after cleaning	Leaves residue, attracts dirt	Rinse with clean water

Environmental Mistakes

Mistake	Why It's Harmful	Correct Approach
Allowing extreme temperatures	Expansion, contraction, damage	Maintain 65-80°F
Ignoring humidity	Gapping or buckling	Maintain 35-55% RH
Excessive sun exposure	Fading, possible softening	Use window treatments

Protection Mistakes

Mistake	Why It's Harmful	Correct Approach
Using rubber-backed mats	Chemical staining	Use vinyl-backed or woven mats
No furniture pads	Scratches, indentations	Use felt pads on all furniture
Dragging furniture	Deep scratches	Always lift and carry
Hard plastic casters	Scratches, wear patterns	Use soft rubber casters or mats

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Maintenance Schedule Checklist

Daily Checklist

- □ Sweep or dust mop all areas
- □ Clean up any spills immediately
- □ Check and clean entry mats
- □ Visual inspection of high-traffic areas

Weekly Checklist

- □ Vacuum with hard-floor setting
- □ Damp mop with approved cleaner
- □ Clean edges and corners
- □ Check furniture pads and glides
- □ Inspect for any damage or wear

Monthly Checklist

- □ Deep clean high-traffic areas
- □ Move lightweight furniture to clean underneath
- □ Inspect and clean under area rugs
- □ Check for any scratches or damage
- □ Replace worn furniture pads

Quarterly Checklist

- □ Deep clean entire floor
- □ Move all furniture to clean thoroughly
- □ Inspect seams and edges
- □ Check expansion gaps (floating installations)
- □ Assess overall condition

Annual Checklist

- □ Professional cleaning if needed
- □ Apply polish/restorer if applicable and approved
- □ Comprehensive condition assessment
- □ Review and replace worn mats
- □ Evaluate for any warranty issues

Warranty Considerations

Maintaining Warranty Coverage

To preserve your warranty coverage:

- □ Follow manufacturer's care and maintenance guidelines
- □ Use only approved cleaning products
- □ Maintain proper environmental conditions (temp/humidity)
- □ Protect from excessive UV exposure
- □ Use appropriate furniture protection
- □ Address issues promptly
- □ Keep maintenance records

Actions That May Void Warranty

- Using steam cleaners
- Using abrasive cleaners or tools
- Using wax-based products (unless approved)
- Using rubber-backed mats
- Failure to maintain proper climate control
- Improper installation (DIY without following guidelines)
- Failure to address water damage or leaks promptly
- Using unapproved refinishing products

Documentation Recommendations

Keep records of:

- □ Original purchase receipt and warranty documents
- □ Product information (brand, style, lot number)
- □ Installation date and installer information
- □ Professional cleaning receipts
- □ Photos documenting any issues
- □ Correspondence regarding any problems

Additional Resources

Industry Associations

- **Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI)** - rfci.com
  - Technical information for resilient flooring
  - Care and maintenance guidelines
  - FloorScore certification
- **Floor Covering Installation Board (FCIB)**
  - Installation standards
  - Professional directory

Certification Programs

- **FloorScore** - Indoor air quality certification
- **Flooring Industry Training Association** - Professional training

Where to Find Help

- **Product-specific questions:** Contact the manufacturer
- **Cleaning products:** Check manufacturer recommendations
- **Professional services:** Contact RFCI or flooring retailers
- **Warranty questions:** Contact your retailer or manufacturer

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