

# Use & Care of Laminated Counter Tops & Casework

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

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**

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.

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**

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.

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

## 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. 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. Shutler Cabinets Inc. 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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