

TECH TIPS

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Water and Wood Don't Mix:

ARE STEAM CLEANERS SAFE FOR CLEANING WOOD FLOORS?

The answer is NO!!! You should NEVER use any type of steam cleaning device to clean your wood floor. The bottom line is that water and wood don't mix...

What we need to understand is that wood is a "Hygroscopic" material, which simply means that it can absorb or desorb/release moisture. You might ask, what does this have to do with whether we can or cannot use a steam cleaner to clear our hardwood floors. Glad you asked...When we use a steam cleaning device on the surface of a wood floor we are introducing/forcing moisture into the woods fiber through the side and end-joints of the individual boards, which can/will cause the exposed fibers to expand in relationship to the amount of moisture being absorbed. This expansion can cause adverse affects to the floor in the form of cupping (with solid wood floors), crowning (with engineered wood floors), end-joint peaking (lifting of the boards ends), fogging of the urethane finish, end-joint checking (appearing as small cracks at the ends of the boards), splits, blisters under the urethane etc. The bottom line is that the damage that can occur from using steam to clean the floor in most cases is irreversible!!! My advice is to only use cleaning products specifically formulated to be used on wood floors...Remember, water and wood don't mix!!!

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