Caring for your floors and countertops

Four generations of the Paulson family have proudly served Portland and communities throughout the Pacific Northwest with quality floor coverings since 1921.

One of the keys to our success for more than 100 years has been the knowledge and dedication of our team. Since you don't buy floor coverings or countertops very often, we want to make sure that you get the best for your money. That's why we have fully trained experts on our sales staff who are happy to explain the benefits of different products to you. We at Paulson's continually do our homework and keep up to date on new improvements and techniques in floor covering. Our expertise helps you make informed decisions and select the right products for your home.

We carry only the finest quality floor coverings and we boast that a Paulson's customer will never be disappointed with our products, service or knowledge.

Paulson's is locally owned and proud to be an independent dealer. You can be sure that we will continue to provide you, our customer, the service, excellence and quality that has been a Paulson Company tradition since 1921.

Paulson's Locations

Portland	Tigard	Beaverton	Bend
3040 NE Sandy Blvd. Portland, OR 97232 Portland: (503) 235-6711 Vancouver: (360) 696-2770	10855 SW Cascade Ave. Tigard, OR 97223 (503) 620-7080	13545 NW Science Park Dr. Portland, OR 97229 (503) 350-2367	521 SE 9th St. Bend, OR 97702 (541) 241-3218

Job record

Customer	Phone
Address	Email

Note: These are general care and maintenance guidelines. Always follow the specific manufacturer's instructions, which supersede these recommendations.

Laminate & luxury vinyl flooring (LVP/LVT)

Daily care

Sweep, dust-mop, or vacuum without a beater bar. A rotating beater bar can scratch the wear layer on laminate and luxury vinyl, and it can catch the edge of a plank. Grit is what dulls these floors, so entries and kitchens need more than a weekly pass.

Damp mopping

Use a microfiber mop wrung until it is damp, not dripping, and a pH-neutral cleaner made for laminate or vinyl. Do not flood the floor. A waterproof LVP core still has joints, and standing water can get under the planks and swell the subfloor. Skip steam mops unless your specific manufacturer says they are allowed — Shaw, Mohawk, Armstrong, and most others exclude steam damage from the warranty. Do not wax, polish, or use abrasive pads, vinegar soaks, or oil soap.

Spills and spots

Wipe spills as they happen, including pet accidents. Most marks come off with a damp cloth. For ink, marker, or paint, a cloth barely dampened with acetone (nail-polish remover) can work on vinyl and laminate wear layers — test first, and do not pour it on. Let gum and tar harden, then lift with a plastic scraper. Never use steel wool.

Protection

Place felt pads under furniture and replace them when they become worn or flattened. Wide glides, not narrow metal caps. Walk-off mats without a rubber or latex back, which can stain vinyl. Close blinds or shades on south and west facing windows during periods of direct sunlight; some LVP colors can fade. Chair mats help under rolling chairs.

Avoid letting sharp or pointed objects come into contact with the floor surface. Do not walk on the floor with high-heeled shoes, sports cleats, or other footwear that may damage the finish or cause indentations.

Pets’ nails will scratch and mark the floor surface. Keep pets’ nails trimmed to minimize damage.

Do not drag, push, or roll appliances, furniture, or any heavy object across the floor. Use heavy-duty moving mats, dollies, or other moving aids to protect the surface.

Hardwood floors

Pre-finished hardwood leaves the factory with a cured wear layer, often several coats. It is ready to live on, but it is still wood. Solid and engineered floors both move with the air in the house. Most manufacturers, including Shaw and Mohawk, expect indoor relative humidity around 35 to 55 percent year-round. Below that, boards gap. Above it, they can cup or crown.

Cleaning

Dust-mop or vacuum without a beater bar. Wipe spills before they set. Damp-mop only with a cleaner made for polyurethane-finished hardwood, on a mop that is barely damp. Do not use detergents, vinegar, ammonia, oil soap, or steam. Steam and standing water are a common warranty exclusion. Residue from the wrong cleaner looks like a dull haze; rinse with the manufacturer’s cleaner, then buff with a clean pad if the label allows. Recoating is the next step if the finish has worn through — not a household wax.

What marks the floor

Grit and shoes	Sand and small stones in soles act like sandpaper. Mats at every outside door are the best protection.
Furniture	Felt pads under legs. Lift, don’t drag. Narrow feet and unprotected chair wheels dent and scratch.
Water and pets	A plant pot, a wet boot, or a pet bowl left in one place will discolor or raise the grain.
Mats	Use a mat with no rubber or latex backing. Those backings can stain the finish.

Seasonal movement

Heat and dry winter air pull moisture out of the wood and can open seams. A humidifier in the heating season is the usual fix. Summer humidity swells the floor and can leave a washboard look if the house stays damp. Movement is strongest in the first two or three years as the floor settles to the house. Gaps that remain after the humidity is stable can be filled at a recommended recoat. Color variation and small checks are part of a natural product, not a defect in the finish.

Ceramic and porcelain tile — everyday care

Porcelain is fired denser than most ceramic, so it absorbs less water, but both are among the easiest floors to keep clean. Dirt usually sits on the surface rather than in the body of the tile. Grout typically requires more regular attention than the tile itself.

Note: Standing water and leftover cleaner can break down cement grout and leave a film. Remove both.

Protection

Use walk-off mats at exterior doors so sand and grit stay outside. Fit felt pads on furniture, and replace them when they pack down. Do not drag appliances. Narrow metal furniture legs can concentrate pressure and increase the risk of chipping or damaging tile.

Regular cleaning — glazed tile

Walls / countertops	Wipe with a soft, damp microfiber cloth. For stuck-on soil, use a pH-neutral cleaner or a window cleaner. Skip abrasive pads on a gloss glaze.
Floors	Sweep or vacuum without a beater bar, then mop with a pH-neutral tile cleaner in warm water. Rinse if the label says to. Oil soaps leave a hazy film that holds more dirt.

Regular cleaning — unglazed and matte

Walls / countertops	Wipe with a damp cloth. Use a diluted pH-neutral detergent for stubborn dirt, then rinse so cleaner does not sit in the texture.
Floors	Vacuum without a beater bar. Mop with a mild soapless or pH-neutral cleaner and rinse. Textured and matte porcelain shows residue faster than a gloss tile.

Wet areas

Glazed	Use an all-purpose or bathroom cleaner on a soft cloth. Wet the surface, let it stand about 5 minutes, then rinse. If mildew is a risk, a diluted bleach solution is acceptable on ceramic — never mixed with ammonia.
Unglazed	Scrub with a pH-neutral cleaner or a mild, soap-free cleaning solution. Bleach only if fungal growth is present, then rinse well. Keep shower joints caulked so water cannot reach the wood behind the tile.

Ceramic and porcelain tile — stains and grout

Silicone caulk

Where tile meets a tub, shower, or counter, silicone or urethane caulk can shrink, pull away, or harden. Check those joints a couple of times a year and recaulk when you see a gap. A failed joint lets water into the wall or the wood subfloor, which is a much larger repair than a tube of caulk.

Stains

Item	Recommended cleaning method
Grease, oil, fats	Baking soda and water, then a pH-neutral cleaner. Rinse.
Coffee, tea, juice, lipstick	Soapless detergent or an all-purpose household cleaner. A chlorine bleach solution can follow on ceramic if color remains.
Soap film and water spots	A tile cleaner, or a mix of cleaner and white vinegar on glazed ceramic. Skip vinegar on marble, limestone, or cement grout you want to keep sealed.

Rinse after every treatment. Do not leave bleach to dry in the grout joints.

Scratching, grout, and crazing

A matte glaze resists scratches better than a high-gloss finish. Sand under shoes is still the main cause of wear. Normal settling can crack grout at corners and edges; Paulson’s can supply a siliconized acrylic caulk for those first cracks. Whitening of cement grout is efflorescence — salts coming to the surface. Clean with a grout cleaner and rinse for several days. Fine lines in a glaze, called crazing, come from heat and age and are a natural reaction of the tile, not a cleaning failure.

Carpet — care and characteristics

Basic care

Most of what looks like wear is soil ground in by foot traffic. Use walk-off rugs where people come from hard floors onto carpet, and vacuum those rugs too. Vacuum high-traffic rooms several times a week and the rest of the house weekly, with an upright that has no beater bar and no teeth or combs. Slow passes pick up more than fast ones.

Professional cleaning: Have the carpet hot-water extracted by an IICRC-certified cleaner about every 12 to 18 months, sooner if you have pets or allergies. A pile lifter before the cleaning helps. Keep the receipt. Topical sprays and rented machines do not replace a proper extraction, and leftover detergent is what causes rapid resoiling.

Shading and pile reversal

Shading at a seam is often a small dye difference from one edge of the roll to the other, not a bad seam. It usually settles visually once furniture and window coverings are in place. A band where the pile leans the other way can come from manufacturing or from traffic. That is pile reversal. Steaming can improve it, but it cannot always be corrected, and it is not a seam defect.

Crush, texture, and seams

Pile crush in front of chairs and in halls is the yarn lying over, usually from soil and oils on shoes, not from the fiber wearing away. Vacuuming is what keeps it from looking worse. Some styles also lose twist in individual tufts; cleaning will not put the twist back. Seams show more on smooth, low, or shiny styles because the edge of the pile catches the light. Texture change from use is normal. More aggressive vacuuming will not correct these conditions and may cause additional damage.

Quartz countertops

Quartz countertops are engineered stone made mostly of crushed quartz bound with resin, so they are non-porous and more stain-resistant than natural stone.

Everyday care

For everyday care, wipe the surface with a soft cloth and warm water, or a mild dish soap solution, then dry it so water spots and residue do not sit. Blot spills as soon as you notice them, especially oil, wine, coffee, juice, and dye-heavy foods.

Heat, knives, and drinks

Use cutting boards and trivets. Knives can dull the finish, and hot pans or slow cookers can scorch or discolor the resin if left in direct contact. Coasters help with acidic drinks and anything that might leave a ring.

What to avoid

Avoid abrasive pads, scouring powders, and cleaners with bleach, high alkalinity, or strong solvents, which can dull the finish over time. A pH-neutral stone or quartz cleaner is fine for a deeper wipe-down. Do not seal quartz; it does not need it.

Stubborn spots

For stubborn spots, a non-abrasive cream cleanser or a paste of baking soda and water usually works if you rinse and dry afterward. Keep the surface free of standing water and harsh chemicals, and the finish should stay consistent with only routine wiping.

Sunlight, seams, and warranty

Quartz holds up well to normal kitchen use, but it is not indestructible. Prolonged exposure to direct sunlight can slowly fade some colors, so outdoor or sunroom installations need a product rated for UV, and indoor pieces near large windows benefit from blinds or a finish that the fabricator says is stable in light.

Seams should stay tight and color-matched. If a seam opens or a chip appears at an edge or sink cutout, have the original fabricator repair it with color-matched resin rather than filling it yourself.

Most manufacturers void the warranty if the surface is exposed to excessive heat, harsh chemicals, or improper installation, so keep the care instructions that came with your slab and note the brand, since cleaning limits can differ slightly by maker. A slow cooker, air fryer, or toaster left in one spot can mark the resin even when the appliance does not feel very hot. Repeated vinegar or citrus cleaner can dull the finish the same way bleach does.

Natural stone

Granite, marble, quartzite, limestone, travertine, and slate are porous to different degrees. Staining occurs when a substance penetrates the stone. Etching occurs when an acidic substance reacts with the stone's surface, leaving a dull or discolored mark. Etching is common on marble, limestone, and travertine, and it is not fixed by cleaning. Quartzite is natural stone and does need sealer; it is not the same product as quartz.

Cleaning

Wipe daily with a soft cloth and a pH-neutral cleaner made for natural stone, or a little mild dish soap and water, then dry. Do not use vinegar, lemon, bleach, ammonia, grout cleaner, or tub-and-tile cleaner. Those etch calcium stones and can dull a sealer. Skip abrasive powders and the rough side of a sponge. Blot oil, wine, and coffee immediately so they do not become a stain.

Sealing

Use an impregnating sealer, not a topical wax. Polished granite may go a year or more between coats. Honed, tumbled, and leathered surfaces, and marble in a kitchen or shower, need it sooner. Test by dropping water on the stone: if it darkens within a few minutes, reseal. Soapstone is the exception — it is usually oiled, not sealed.

What to expect

Color, veining, and fissures vary from the sample, and that variation is the stone, not a flaw. Trivets for hot pans. A cutting board, because a knife will dull the polish. Coasters under citrus and wine. If a seam opens or an edge chips, have the fabricator repair it rather than filling it with household caulk.

REVIEWED AND RECEIVED · TWO CUSTOMER SIGNATURES

Customer		**Customer**	
Signature	_____	Signature	_____
Print name	_____	Print name	_____
Date	_____	Date	_____