

VANCOUVER FLOOR INSTALLERS

---

# Flooring Maintenance & Care

Cleaning routines, protective measures, seasonal care tips, and long-term maintenance guidance to preserve flooring in Vancouver's wet coastal climate

15 Expert Answers from Floor IQ

[vancouverfloorinstallers.com/construction-brain](https://vancouverfloorinstallers.com/construction-brain)

# Table of Contents

---

1. How do I maintain hardwood floors in Vancouver's wet coastal climate to prevent warping?
2. What's the best cleaning routine for tile floors in a rainy Vancouver home?
3. How do I protect my hardwood floors from rain and mud tracked in during Vancouver's wet months?
4. Should I use a dehumidifier to protect my wood floors during Vancouver's humid summer months?
5. What cleaning products should I avoid on luxury vinyl plank floors?
6. How do I prevent mould under carpet in a ground-floor Vancouver home?
7. What's the best way to clean and seal grout lines in a Vancouver bathroom to prevent mildew?
8. How often should I recoat my hardwood floors in Vancouver to maintain the finish?
9. Can steam mops damage my laminate or vinyl plank flooring?
10. What indoor humidity level should I maintain year-round to protect hardwood floors in Vancouver?
11. How do I remove stubborn scuff marks from LVP flooring without damaging the surface?
12. What entrance mat system works best to protect floors from Vancouver's constant rain?
13. How do I care for cork flooring long-term in Vancouver's damp climate?
14. What should I do if my hardwood floor gets a small area of water damage from a Vancouver winter leak?
15. How do I prevent scratches on hardwood floors from furniture in my Vancouver living room?

## How do I maintain hardwood floors in Vancouver's wet coastal climate to prevent warping?

**Maintaining hardwood floors in Metro Vancouver's wet coastal climate comes down to controlling indoor humidity, managing moisture at entry points, and keeping the finish in good condition.** Vancouver's marine climate — with over 1,200 millimetres of annual rainfall and outdoor humidity levels routinely between 60 and 80 percent — creates persistent moisture challenges that hardwood floors in drier climates simply do not face. The good news is that Vancouver's mild temperatures mean smaller seasonal humidity swings indoors compared to cities like Calgary or Toronto, which actually works in your favour if you manage moisture proactively.

**Indoor humidity control is the single most important factor.** Hardwood floors perform best when indoor relative humidity stays between 35 and 55 percent year-round. During Vancouver's wet season from October through March, humidity levels inside can creep above 60 percent without active management, especially in older homes with less effective ventilation. Running your home's ventilation system, using bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans consistently, and deploying a dehumidifier in problem areas keeps humidity in the safe range. A simple hygrometer — available for under \$20 at any hardware store — lets you monitor conditions room by room. If you consistently see readings above 55 percent, a dehumidifier or improved ventilation is warranted.

**Entry points are where the damage starts.** During the wet months, rain, mud, and snow tracked in from outside deliver concentrated moisture directly onto the floor surface. Place high-quality absorbent mats at every exterior door — both outside and inside — and make them large enough that people take several steps on the mat before reaching the hardwood. Wipe up puddles and wet footprints immediately rather than letting them sit. Boot trays with raised edges near entryways catch dripping raincoats and umbrellas before the water reaches the floor. These simple habits prevent the vast majority of water damage that Metro Vancouver hardwood floors experience.

**Keep the finish intact.** The polyurethane or hardwax oil finish on your hardwood floor is its primary defence against moisture penetration. Once that finish wears through — particularly in high-traffic areas like hallways, kitchens, and entryways — moisture can reach the raw wood and cause cupping, crowning, or staining. In Vancouver's climate, hardwood floors typically need a **maintenance recoat every 3 to 5 years** in normal-traffic homes and every 2 to 3 years in high-traffic households. A maintenance recoat involves lightly abrading the existing finish and applying a fresh coat of polyurethane — it costs \$1.50 to \$3 per square foot and takes one day, far less disruptive and expensive than a full sand-and-refinish.

**Cleaning practices matter more than most homeowners realize.** Use a damp mop — never a wet mop — and a pH-neutral hardwood floor cleaner. Excess water on hardwood is the enemy, and in Vancouver's already humid environment, wet-mopping adds unnecessary moisture. Microfibre mops with a spray function that dispenses a

controlled mist of cleaner are ideal. Never use steam mops on hardwood — the heat and moisture combination forces water vapour into the wood grain and finish, causing clouding, warping, and delamination over time.

Finally, ensure that your home's **crawl space** (common in pre-1970s Vancouver homes) has a properly sealed vapour barrier. Moisture rising from an unsealed crawl space through the subfloor is a hidden but serious cause of hardwood warping that no amount of surface-level maintenance can overcome. If you are unsure about your crawl space condition, a professional inspection is well worth the cost. Need help finding a flooring professional in Metro Vancouver? Vancouver Floor Installers can match you for free.

---

Q2

## What's the best cleaning routine for tile floors in a rainy Vancouver home?

**The best cleaning routine for tile floors in a rainy Vancouver home focuses on managing tracked-in moisture and grit at the door, regular dry sweeping or vacuuming, and periodic deep cleaning of grout lines.** Tile itself is virtually indestructible against water — it is one of the best flooring choices for Metro Vancouver's marine climate — but the grout between tiles is porous and vulnerable to moisture, staining, and mould growth if not properly maintained.

**Daily maintenance during the wet season** should start at the front door. High-quality absorbent entry mats — both outside and inside every exterior entrance — capture the bulk of rain, mud, and grit before it reaches your tile floors. Vancouver receives over 1,200 millimetres of rainfall annually, with roughly 70 percent falling between October and March, so your entry mats are working overtime for six months of the year. Shake or vacuum entry mats weekly and wash them monthly during the wet season. Inside, sweep or vacuum tile floors daily in high-traffic areas to remove grit and debris. Sand and small stones tracked in on shoes act like sandpaper, gradually scratching the tile surface and wearing down grout lines.

**Weekly mopping** with warm water and a pH-neutral tile cleaner keeps the surface clean without damaging grout or glazed tile finishes. Avoid acidic cleaners like vinegar on natural stone tile — the acid etches marble, travertine, and limestone surfaces. For porcelain and ceramic tile, a mild all-purpose cleaner works well. Use a microfibre mop rather than a string mop — microfibre picks up dirt rather than pushing it into grout lines. Change the mop water frequently; dirty mop water deposits a film on tile that dulls the finish over time.

**Grout maintenance is where Vancouver homeowners need to pay extra attention.** In a home that regularly receives wet shoes, rain-soaked jackets, and humid air, grout lines absorb moisture and become breeding grounds for mould and mildew — particularly in entryways, mudrooms, and bathrooms. **Seal your grout lines with a quality penetrating grout sealer every 12 to 18 months.** Unsealed grout absorbs water, stains, and dirt, and

once discolouration sets in, surface cleaning alone cannot restore it. A penetrating sealer — not a topical coating — fills the pores of the grout and repels moisture while still allowing the grout to breathe. Application takes about an hour for a typical room and costs under \$30 in materials for a DIY job.

**Deep cleaning every 3 to 6 months** should include scrubbing grout lines with an alkaline grout cleaner and a stiff nylon brush. For stubborn mould or mildew stains — common in Vancouver bathrooms and entryways — an oxygen bleach solution (like OxiClean dissolved in warm water) is effective without the harshness of chlorine bleach. Apply the solution, let it sit for 10 to 15 minutes, then scrub and rinse. For badly stained grout that does not respond to cleaning, professional grout cleaning with a steam or pressure system costs **\$2 to \$5 per square foot** in Metro Vancouver and delivers dramatic results.

**A few things to avoid:** never use steel wool or abrasive scrub pads on glazed tile — they scratch the surface permanently. Do not use oil-based cleaners on tile floors — they leave a slippery residue and can discolour grout. And never let standing water sit on tile floors near walls or transitions, where it can seep under baseboards and into the subfloor below. In Vancouver's wet climate, even waterproof tile floors can develop hidden moisture problems if water consistently migrates to the edges. Wipe up spills and puddles promptly, and ensure your grout and caulk joints at wall-to-floor transitions are intact and sealed.

---

Q3

## How do I protect my hardwood floors from rain and mud tracked in during Vancouver's wet months?

**Protecting hardwood floors from rain and mud during Vancouver's wet months requires a layered approach: high-quality entry mats, a dedicated transition zone at every exterior door, prompt moisture cleanup, and a well-maintained floor finish.** Metro Vancouver's wet season runs from October through March, delivering roughly 70 percent of the region's 1,200-plus millimetres of annual rainfall. That is six months of relentless moisture pressure on your floors, and the damage tends to be cumulative — small amounts of water tracked in day after day eventually compromise the finish and penetrate the wood grain.

**Start with your entry system.** Every exterior door should have two mats — a coarse scraper mat outside to knock off mud and debris, and an absorbent indoor mat to capture remaining moisture. The indoor mat should be large enough for at least two full steps, ideally three. Cheap, thin mats that saturate quickly are a false economy; invest in commercial-grade absorbent mats with rubber backing that hold moisture without letting it bleed through to the hardwood beneath. During peak wet season, keep a second set of mats so you can rotate and wash them without leaving the entry unprotected.

**Create a transition zone** between the door and the main living space. If your floor plan allows it, designate the first 3 to 4 feet inside the door as a "wet zone" with a boot tray, coat hooks, and a small bench for removing shoes. Many Vancouver families adopt a shoes-off policy during the wet months, which is the single most effective protection for hardwood floors. A simple boot tray with raised edges catches dripping rain boots and umbrellas before the water migrates across the floor. For homes without a separate mudroom, a waterproof runner mat extending from the entry door into the hallway provides temporary protection during the wettest months — just ensure it has a breathable backing that does not trap moisture against the hardwood.

**Wipe up water immediately.** This sounds obvious, but it is the habit that matters most. Standing water — even for 15 to 20 minutes — can penetrate hardwood finishes, especially in high-traffic areas where the finish has thinned from wear. Keep a small towel or microfibre cloth near the front door during the wet season for quick wipe-ups. Pet owners in Vancouver know this challenge well — wet dog paws track moisture across the house in seconds. A dedicated dog towel by the door makes a real difference.

**Maintain your floor finish.** The polyurethane or hardwax oil finish on your hardwood is the moisture barrier between the elements and the wood. In Metro Vancouver's climate, entryway floors take a beating and the finish wears faster than in the rest of the house. Inspect the finish in high-traffic areas twice a year — if water no longer beads on the surface and instead darkens the wood when it sits for a moment, the finish has worn through and needs attention. A **maintenance recoat in the entry area costs \$1.50 to \$3 per square foot** and takes only a few hours, but it prevents thousands of dollars in water damage and full refinishing costs down the road.

**Control indoor humidity** during the wet season by running your home's ventilation system and using bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans. Indoor humidity above 55 to 60 percent for extended periods can cause hardwood to absorb ambient moisture and swell, leading to cupping. A hygrometer in the main living area helps you monitor conditions and respond before problems develop. If you are noticing persistent humidity issues, a portable dehumidifier in the worst-affected area is a worthwhile investment — models suitable for a single floor run \$200 to \$400.

With consistent habits and a well-maintained finish, hardwood floors in Metro Vancouver can last decades without warping, cupping, or water staining. If your entry area floors are already showing signs of wear or water damage, get matched with a flooring professional through Vancouver Floor Installers for a free estimate on refinishing or repair.

## Should I use a dehumidifier to protect my wood floors during Vancouver's humid summer months?

**In most Metro Vancouver homes, a dehumidifier is not strictly necessary during the summer months for wood floor protection, but there are specific situations where one becomes a smart investment.**

Vancouver's summers are actually the driest part of the year — July and August typically see less than 40 millimetres of rain combined, and outdoor humidity levels drop compared to the wet season. Indoor humidity in well-ventilated homes usually stays within the 40 to 55 percent range during summer, which is the ideal zone for hardwood floor stability.

That said, **certain homes and conditions push summer humidity into the danger zone above 55 to 60 percent**, where wood floors begin absorbing excess moisture and can develop cupping — the edges of each board rising higher than the centre. Ground-floor suites and basement-level living spaces are the most vulnerable because concrete slabs and foundation walls wick moisture from the soil year-round, regardless of the season. Older homes in East Vancouver, Mount Pleasant, and New Westminster with minimal insulation and poor air sealing also tend to run humid in summer because moist outdoor air infiltrates freely. Homes near the water — along the North Shore, in Steveston, or near False Creek — experience higher ambient humidity than inland neighbourhoods like Burnaby or the Tri-Cities.

**If you have solid hardwood floors in any of these situations, a dehumidifier is a worthwhile precaution.** The cost of a quality dehumidifier — \$200 to \$500 for a unit capable of handling 1,000 to 2,000 square feet — is trivial compared to the \$3 to \$8 per square foot cost of refinishing cupped or moisture-damaged hardwood. Set the dehumidifier to maintain 40 to 50 percent relative humidity, and place it in the room or level with the most moisture-sensitive flooring. Modern units with built-in humidistats run automatically, cycling on when humidity rises above your set point and shutting off when the target is reached.

**For engineered hardwood and LVP/SPC vinyl floors**, summer humidity is rarely a concern. Engineered hardwood's plywood core provides significantly better dimensional stability than solid hardwood, and vinyl flooring is completely impervious to humidity. If your home has these materials, a dehumidifier for floor protection alone is unnecessary unless you are seeing condensation on windows or visible moisture on surfaces.

**A hygrometer is the best diagnostic tool** before committing to a dehumidifier purchase. Place an inexpensive digital hygrometer (under \$20) in the room with your wood floors and monitor readings for a week during the most humid period. If readings consistently stay below 55 percent, your ventilation is managing humidity adequately. If readings regularly exceed 55 to 60 percent — especially overnight when air circulation drops — a dehumidifier will pay for itself in floor protection within the first season.

One important detail for Vancouver homeowners with crawl spaces: **moisture from an unsealed crawl space rises through the subfloor and directly affects the wood flooring above**, and this happens year-round regardless of outdoor conditions. If your hygrometer shows elevated humidity on the main floor despite dry summer weather, the source may be beneath the house rather than in the air. A properly sealed 6-mil polyethylene vapour barrier in the crawl space, combined with adequate ventilation or encapsulation, addresses the root cause rather than treating the symptom with a dehumidifier running endlessly.

The bottom line is that most Metro Vancouver homes do not need a dehumidifier specifically for wood floor protection during summer, but ground-floor suites, basements, crawl-space homes, and waterfront properties should monitor humidity and deploy one if readings regularly exceed 55 percent. If you are unsure about your floor's condition or whether humidity is causing subtle damage, a flooring professional can assess moisture levels in both the flooring and subfloor. Vancouver Floor Installers can match you with a local specialist for free.

---

Q5

## What cleaning products should I avoid on luxury vinyl plank floors?

**Avoid abrasive cleaners, wax-based products, solvent-based chemicals, steam mops, and any cleaner containing ammonia or bleach on luxury vinyl plank floors.** LVP and SPC vinyl flooring have a protective wear layer on the surface that provides scratch resistance, stain resistance, and UV protection — but that wear layer can be damaged, dulled, or degraded by the wrong cleaning products, and once damaged, it cannot be repaired or refinished.

**Wax and polish products** are among the most common mistakes. LVP floors have a factory-applied finish that does not need waxing, polishing, or buffing. Applying wax or acrylic floor polish creates a sticky buildup that attracts dirt, dulls the surface over time, and produces a hazy, uneven appearance. Once wax buildup accumulates, removing it requires a chemical stripper — an unnecessary and avoidable hassle. Products marketed as "floor shine" or "floor polish" should be avoided entirely on vinyl plank floors.

**Abrasive cleaners and scrub pads** — including powdered cleansers like Comet or Ajax, steel wool, and rough scrubbing sponges — physically scratch the wear layer. These micro-scratches accumulate over time, dulling the floor's appearance and creating texture that traps dirt. For stubborn spots, use a soft cloth or a non-abrasive scrub pad (the white or blue variety, never green) with a mild cleaner.

**Steam mops are a definite no.** While LVP is waterproof on the surface, steam mops force superheated moisture into the seams and click-lock joints between planks. Over time, this can cause the edges to swell, the click mechanisms to weaken, and moisture to reach the subfloor below — particularly problematic in Metro Vancouver's

already humid environment. Steam also softens and can cloud the vinyl wear layer with repeated use. This is one of the most frequent causes of premature LVP floor deterioration.

**Ammonia-based cleaners** — including many glass cleaners and all-purpose sprays — can dull and discolour the wear layer over time. Similarly, **chlorine bleach** and hydrogen peroxide in concentrated form can cause fading and chemical etching. If you need to disinfect, use a diluted solution (one part white vinegar to ten parts water) or a vinyl-specific disinfecting cleaner. Avoid leaving any cleaning solution standing on the floor — spray and wipe rather than soak and scrub.

**Solvent-based products** like acetone, nail polish remover, paint thinner, and mineral spirits can dissolve or soften the vinyl surface layer. If you get paint, adhesive, or nail polish on your LVP floor, use rubbing alcohol (isopropyl alcohol) applied to a soft cloth — it is effective on most stains without damaging vinyl. Test in an inconspicuous area first.

**Oil-based soaps and detergents** — including Murphy's Oil Soap and similar wood-floor products — leave a residue film on vinyl that builds up over time, attracts grime, and creates a dull, sticky surface. These products are formulated for wood, not vinyl, and using them on LVP is one of the most common cleaning mistakes.

**What you should use:** a damp (not wet) microfibre mop with a pH-neutral vinyl floor cleaner, or simply warm water with a few drops of mild dish soap. Rinse the mop frequently and avoid excess water. For daily maintenance, sweep or vacuum with a soft-bristle attachment to remove grit and debris — grit underfoot is the primary cause of micro-scratches on LVP floors in Metro Vancouver, especially during the wet season when sand and small stones are tracked in from outside.

Proper cleaning keeps LVP floors looking new for 15 to 20 years or more, which is one of the reasons vinyl plank has become the most popular flooring choice in Metro Vancouver for its combination of waterproof performance and low maintenance.

---

Q6

## How do I prevent mould under carpet in a ground-floor Vancouver home?

**Preventing mould under carpet in a ground-floor Vancouver home requires addressing moisture at the source — the concrete slab or crawl space below — rather than treating the carpet as the problem.** Mould under carpet is one of the most common and frustrating flooring issues in Metro Vancouver, particularly in ground-floor suites, older homes, and any space where the floor sits directly on or near grade. The combination of Vancouver's heavy rainfall, high water table, and persistently humid marine climate creates ideal conditions for

mould growth in the hidden space between carpet backing and subfloor.

**Understand where the moisture comes from.** In ground-floor spaces built on concrete slabs, moisture wicks upward through the concrete via capillary action — a process called **moisture vapour transmission**. Even slabs that appear and feel dry can transmit significant moisture. This is a year-round phenomenon in Metro Vancouver because the soil beneath and around foundations stays saturated for most of the year. Homes with crawl spaces face similar issues: moisture from the earth evaporates into the crawl space, rises through the plywood subfloor, and becomes trapped under the carpet. Without intervention, this moisture creates a warm, dark, humid microenvironment between the carpet pad and subfloor — perfect for mould colonization.

**Test before you carpet.** Before installing or replacing carpet on any ground-floor or below-grade concrete slab in Metro Vancouver, conduct a **moisture test**. The simplest DIY test is taping a 2-foot-by-2-foot sheet of clear plastic to the slab, sealing all edges with tape, and leaving it for 48 to 72 hours. If condensation forms on the underside of the plastic, the slab is transmitting moisture and requires a vapour barrier or moisture mitigation system before any carpet is installed. For a definitive reading, a professional calcium chloride test or relative humidity probe test provides precise numbers — readings above 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet (calcium chloride) or 75 percent relative humidity (in-situ probe) require moisture mitigation.

**Install a proper moisture barrier.** On concrete slabs, a **6-mil polyethylene vapour barrier** beneath the carpet pad is the minimum protection. For slabs with higher moisture readings, an epoxy moisture mitigation coating applied directly to the concrete provides a more robust seal. In crawl spaces, ensure the ground is covered with a sealed 6-mil poly vapour barrier with seams overlapped by at least 12 inches and taped. Crawl space encapsulation — sealing the vapour barrier to the foundation walls and adding a dehumidifier — is the gold-standard solution for persistent moisture problems and costs **\$3,000 to \$8,000** in Metro Vancouver depending on the crawl space size.

**Choose the right carpet pad.** Standard jute-backed or rebond foam carpet pads trap moisture and are the primary substrate where mould colonies establish. For ground-floor installations in Vancouver, use a **synthetic, closed-cell foam pad or a rubber waffle pad** — these materials resist moisture absorption and allow limited airflow beneath the carpet. Antimicrobial-treated pads add an additional layer of mould resistance. Never use thick, plush pads in moisture-prone installations — thinner, denser pads dry faster if moisture does penetrate.

**Maintain indoor humidity below 55 percent.** Run exhaust fans in bathrooms and kitchens, ensure your HVAC system circulates air through the ground-floor space, and use a dehumidifier if hygrometer readings consistently exceed 55 percent. During Vancouver's wet season from October through March, ground-floor spaces without active humidity management routinely exceed safe levels.

**Consider alternatives to carpet.** If you have persistent moisture issues on a ground-floor slab in Metro Vancouver, the honest recommendation is to consider **waterproof SPC vinyl plank flooring** instead of carpet.

SPC vinyl is 100 percent waterproof, installs as a floating floor over a vapour barrier, and eliminates the mould risk entirely. It costs **\$5 to \$12 per square foot installed** and provides decades of trouble-free performance in conditions that would destroy carpet within a few years. If you prefer the warmth and softness of carpet in bedrooms, area rugs over vinyl plank offer the best of both worlds — they can be lifted, cleaned, and dried, unlike wall-to-wall carpet that traps moisture invisibly.

If you suspect existing mould under carpet, do not simply pull up the carpet and relay it — have the subfloor professionally assessed and remediated before any new flooring goes down. Vancouver Floor Installers can connect you with flooring professionals experienced in ground-floor moisture management across Metro Vancouver.

---

## What's the best way to clean and seal grout lines in a Vancouver bathroom to prevent mildew?

**The best approach to mildew-free grout in a Vancouver bathroom is a combination of regular cleaning with the right products, proper sealing every 12 to 18 months, and maintaining adequate ventilation to control the persistent humidity that drives mould growth in Metro Vancouver's marine climate.** Grout is inherently porous — standard cement-based grout absorbs water like a sponge — and in a bathroom that sees daily shower steam plus Vancouver's ambient humidity of 60 to 80 percent outdoors, unsealed grout lines become mildew colonies within months.

**Start with a thorough deep clean.** If your grout lines already show dark staining, grey discolouration, or pink or black mildew spots, clean them before sealing — a sealer applied over dirty grout locks in the discolouration permanently. For light to moderate staining, mix an **oxygen bleach powder** (such as OxiClean) with warm water to form a paste, apply it to the grout lines, and let it sit for 15 to 20 minutes. Then scrub with a stiff nylon brush — an old toothbrush works for tight corners — and rinse thoroughly with clean water. Oxygen bleach is effective against mildew without the harshness of chlorine bleach and is safe for coloured grout.

For stubborn mildew that does not respond to oxygen bleach, a **diluted chlorine bleach solution** (one part bleach to ten parts water) applied with a spray bottle and left for 10 minutes before scrubbing will kill established mould. Wear gloves, ensure ventilation, and rinse thoroughly. For severely stained grout that no cleaning product can restore, professional grout cleaning with a steam extraction system costs **\$2 to \$5 per square foot** in Metro Vancouver and delivers results that surface cleaning cannot match. In extreme cases, grout can be removed and replaced entirely — a labour-intensive but sometimes necessary step that costs **\$5 to \$10 per square foot**.

**Once the grout is clean and completely dry, apply a penetrating grout sealer.** This is the critical step that most Vancouver homeowners skip or do not repeat often enough. A **penetrating sealer** — not a topical surface sealer — soaks into the porous grout and fills the microscopic channels that absorb water and harbour mould spores. Apply the sealer with a small applicator bottle or a foam brush, working one grout line at a time. Wipe excess sealer off the tile surface immediately — it can leave a haze on glazed tile if allowed to dry. Allow the sealer to cure for 24 to 48 hours before exposing the grout to water. Quality penetrating grout sealers cost \$15 to \$30 per bottle, and one bottle typically covers 100 to 200 square feet of grout lines.

**In Vancouver's humid climate, reseal bathroom grout every 12 to 18 months.** The high moisture exposure in a daily-use shower degrades sealers faster than in drier regions. You can test whether your sealer is still effective by dripping a few drops of water onto a grout line — if the water beads on the surface, the sealer is intact. If the water absorbs into the grout and darkens it within a few seconds, it is time to reseal.

**Consider epoxy grout for new installations or regrout projects.** Unlike cement-based grout, **epoxy grout is non-porous and does not require sealing** — it is inherently waterproof and highly resistant to mould, mildew, and staining. Epoxy grout costs more in materials and is more difficult to work with during installation, but in a Vancouver bathroom it eliminates the ongoing maintenance cycle of cleaning and resealing entirely. If you are having a bathroom floor tiled or retiled, specifying epoxy grout is worth the upfront premium for the long-term maintenance savings.

**Ventilation is the other half of the equation.** Run your bathroom exhaust fan during every shower and for at least 20 to 30 minutes afterward to remove moisture-laden air. In Metro Vancouver, where outdoor humidity is already high, the exhaust fan is the primary tool for drying the bathroom after use. Fans should vent to the exterior — never into the attic — and be sized appropriately for the bathroom (minimum 1 CFM per square foot of floor area). A humidity-sensing fan that runs automatically when moisture rises is an excellent upgrade that costs \$150 to \$300 installed.

With consistent cleaning, proper sealing, and adequate ventilation, bathroom grout in Metro Vancouver can stay mildew-free for years. If your grout is beyond cleaning or you are considering a bathroom tile upgrade, Vancouver Floor Installers can connect you with experienced tile professionals in the Vancouver Construction Network.

---

Q8

## **How often should I recoat my hardwood floors in Vancouver to maintain the finish?**

**In Metro Vancouver's marine climate, hardwood floors in normal-traffic homes should receive a maintenance recoat every 3 to 5 years, while high-traffic households — families with children, pets, or frequent entertaining — should recoat every 2 to 3 years.** Entryways, hallways, and kitchen floors wear fastest and may need attention sooner than bedrooms and less-used rooms. A timely recoat is the single most cost-effective maintenance step you can take to extend the life of your hardwood floors and avoid the much greater expense of a full sand-and-refinish.

**A maintenance recoat — also called a screen-and-recoat or buff-and-coat — is a straightforward process.** The existing finish is lightly abraded with a buffer fitted with a fine-grit screen or sanding pad, creating a micro-scratch pattern that allows the new coat of polyurethane to bond mechanically to the old finish. The floor is then thoroughly cleaned to remove all dust, and a fresh coat of polyurethane is applied. The process typically takes one day for a standard-sized room, and the floor can be walked on with socks within 24 hours (water-based polyurethane) or 48 hours (oil-based). Full cure takes 7 to 14 days, during which furniture pads should be used and

area rugs should be left off.

**The cost of a maintenance recoat in Metro Vancouver ranges from \$1.50 to \$3 per square foot**, depending on the floor's condition and the product used. For a 500-square-foot main floor, that is \$750 to \$1,500 — a fraction of the \$1,500 to \$4,000 cost of a full sand-and-refinish for the same area. The recoat adds a fresh protective layer without removing any wood, preserving the floor's thickness and extending the number of future refinishing the floor can support.

**Timing matters — and Vancouver's climate makes early recoating especially important.** Because Metro Vancouver's humidity routinely exceeds 60 percent outdoors during the wet season, any area where the finish has worn through allows ambient moisture to penetrate the wood grain. Once moisture gets into unprotected hardwood, cupping, staining, and grey discoloration develop — damage that a simple recoat cannot fix and that requires a full sand-and-refinish to correct. Recoating before the finish wears through completely is the key. Think of it like repainting a house before bare wood is exposed — preventive maintenance costs a fraction of corrective repair.

**How to tell if your floors need a recoat:** perform a simple water-drop test in the highest-traffic area. Place a tablespoon of water on the floor and watch it for 2 to 3 minutes. If the water beads up and sits on the surface, the finish is intact. If the water begins to soak in and darkens the wood, the finish has worn through and a recoat is needed. Other signs include visible scratching that exposes bare wood, dull or grey areas in traffic paths, and a general loss of the floor's original sheen — particularly noticeable in hallways and in front of kitchen sinks.

**There is one critical requirement for a successful recoat:** the existing finish must be in recoatable condition. If the previous finish has peeled, flaked, or been contaminated with wax, silicone-based cleaners, or floor polish, the new coat will not bond properly and will peel off within weeks. If your floors have been maintained with Swiffer WetJet pads, Pledge floor cleaner, or other products containing silicone or wax, a recoat may fail — in these cases, a full sand-and-refinish is necessary to remove the contaminated finish layer entirely. This is why using only manufacturer-recommended cleaners on hardwood floors matters from day one.

**Water-based polyurethane versus oil-based** is a matter of preference. Water-based polyurethane dries faster (2 to 4 hours between coats versus 8 to 24 hours for oil-based), has lower odour, and dries crystal clear — preserving the wood's natural colour. Oil-based polyurethane adds a warm amber tone that deepens over time and is marginally more durable, but takes longer to cure and has stronger fumes during application. Hardwax oil finishes like Rubio Monocoat are increasingly popular in Metro Vancouver for their natural, matte appearance and ease of spot repair, but they require more frequent maintenance coats — typically every 1 to 2 years in high-traffic areas.

A professional floor refinisher can complete a maintenance recoat quickly with minimal disruption. Need help finding one? Vancouver Floor Installers can match you with experienced hardwood flooring professionals across Metro Vancouver for a free estimate.

## Can steam mops damage my laminate or vinyl plank flooring?

**Yes, steam mops can damage laminate flooring and are generally not recommended for it, while vinyl plank (LVP/SPC) tolerates them better but still carries some risk.** Understanding the difference between these two materials is critical before you grab that steam cleaner.

Laminate flooring has an HDF (high-density fibreboard) core that is highly susceptible to moisture damage. Steam mops force hot moisture into the seams between planks, and even tiny amounts of water that penetrate the click-lock joints can cause the HDF core to swell, warp, and bubble. This damage is irreversible — once laminate swells, the only fix is replacing the affected boards. In Metro Vancouver's already humid marine climate, where indoor humidity regularly sits between 40-60%, adding steam to laminate floors compounds the moisture exposure your flooring is already managing. Nearly every major laminate manufacturer — including Mohawk, Torlys, and Formica — explicitly states in their warranty documentation that steam mop use voids the product warranty.

**Vinyl plank flooring (LVP and SPC) is fully waterproof**, so steam mops pose less structural risk. The rigid SPC or WPC core will not swell from moisture the way laminate does. However, excessive heat from steam can soften the vinyl wear layer over time, potentially causing warping, discolouration, or loosening of the click-lock joints. If you choose to steam mop vinyl plank, use the lowest steam setting, keep the mop moving constantly, and never let it sit in one spot. Many vinyl plank manufacturers also discourage steam mop use in their care guidelines, which could affect your warranty coverage.

### What to Use Instead

For both laminate and vinyl plank, the safest and most effective cleaning method is a **damp microfibre mop** — not wet, just lightly damp. Spray a small amount of manufacturer-approved floor cleaner or a solution of warm water with a splash of white vinegar onto the microfibre pad or directly onto the floor, then mop in the direction of the planks. This removes dirt and grime without forcing moisture into seams. For stubborn spots, a soft cloth with a bit of rubbing alcohol works well on vinyl, while a laminate-specific cleaner handles scuffs on laminate.

In Vancouver's wet climate, your floors are already dealing with moisture tracked in from rain — especially during the October-to-March wet season. A good **entrance mat system** at every exterior door captures the bulk of that moisture before it reaches your flooring. Pair that with regular dry sweeping or vacuuming (use a hard-floor setting with no beater bar) and occasional damp mopping, and your laminate or vinyl plank floors will look great for years without the risks that steam introduces.

If your floors need a deeper clean than damp mopping can achieve, a professional floor cleaning service in Metro Vancouver typically charges **\$0.50-\$1.50 per square foot** and uses commercial-grade equipment designed for the

specific flooring type. That is a far better investment than replacing steam-damaged laminate boards at \$4-\$10 per square foot installed.

---

## What indoor humidity level should I maintain year-round to protect hardwood floors in Vancouver?

**You should maintain indoor relative humidity between 35% and 55% year-round to protect hardwood floors in Metro Vancouver.** This range keeps wood dimensionally stable, preventing the cupping, crowning, gapping, and buckling that occur when humidity swings too far in either direction.

Hardwood is a natural material that constantly absorbs and releases moisture from the surrounding air. When humidity rises above 55-60%, wood fibres absorb excess moisture and expand — this causes **cupping**, where individual boards rise at the edges and dip in the centre. When humidity drops below 30-35%, wood releases moisture and contracts, creating visible **gaps between boards** and potentially causing splits or cracks. Metro Vancouver's marine climate presents a unique challenge because outdoor humidity commonly runs 60-80% for much of the year, with the wettest months (October through March) pushing even higher. Without active humidity management, that outdoor moisture migrates indoors and can push your interior levels well above the safe range for hardwood.

The good news is that **Vancouver's mild winters work in your favour** compared to cities like Calgary or Toronto, where aggressive winter heating drives indoor humidity down to 15-25% and causes severe seasonal gapping. In Vancouver, you rarely need a humidifier in winter — the ambient moisture in the air generally keeps indoor levels adequate. Your primary concern is managing excess humidity, particularly during the wet season and in neighbourhoods closer to the water or on the North Shore where rainfall can exceed 2,000mm annually.

To keep humidity in the ideal 35-55% range, start with a **quality hygrometer** (digital humidity monitor) — place one on each level of your home, especially near hardwood floors. During the wet season, run your bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans during and after moisture-producing activities, and consider a **portable dehumidifier** in areas where readings consistently exceed 55%. A whole-home dehumidifier integrated into your HVAC system is the most effective long-term solution, typically costing **\$1,500-\$3,000 installed** in Metro Vancouver. Ensure your home has adequate ventilation — older Vancouver homes with crawl spaces are particularly prone to moisture rising through the subfloor, so a properly sealed **6-mil polyethylene vapour barrier** in the crawl space is essential.

For **engineered hardwood**, the tolerance is somewhat wider — most products perform well between 30% and 65% relative humidity thanks to their cross-ply construction. This is one reason engineered hardwood is the preferred wood flooring choice for Metro Vancouver's climate. Solid hardwood demands tighter control and benefits significantly from consistent HVAC operation year-round, even when you are away from home. Turning off heating or air circulation for extended periods allows humidity to spike, and the resulting wood movement can cause permanent damage.

If you are noticing seasonal cupping or gapping in your existing hardwood floors, a professional assessment can determine whether the issue is humidity-related or indicates a subfloor moisture problem — a common concern in Vancouver's wet climate. Vancouver Floor Installers can match you with a local flooring professional who understands the specific humidity challenges of our region.

---

Q11

## How do I remove stubborn scuff marks from LVP flooring without damaging the surface?

**Most scuff marks on luxury vinyl plank flooring can be removed with a clean tennis ball, a melamine foam eraser (such as a Magic Eraser), or a small amount of rubbing alcohol on a soft cloth.** These methods are safe for the vinyl wear layer and will not damage the finish when used correctly.

Start with the gentlest approach first. A **clean tennis ball** rubbed firmly over the scuff mark often lifts it completely — the felt texture creates just enough friction to remove the rubber or shoe residue without scratching the vinyl surface. For marks that resist the tennis ball, a **melamine foam eraser** dampened with plain water is the next step. Press firmly and rub in small circular motions directly over the scuff. Melamine foam is a mild abrasive, so use light to moderate pressure and avoid scrubbing the same spot aggressively for extended periods, as excessive use on one area could dull the finish over time.

For particularly stubborn scuff marks — the kind left by dark-soled shoes, rubber furniture feet, or heavy items dragged across the floor — apply a small amount of **isopropyl rubbing alcohol (70%)** to a soft microfibre cloth and rub the mark gently. The alcohol dissolves the rubber or adhesive residue without harming the vinyl wear layer. Wipe the area with a damp cloth afterward to remove any alcohol residue. **WD-40** applied sparingly to a cloth also works on tough rubber scuffs, but you must clean the area thoroughly with a mild floor cleaner afterward, as any oily residue left behind will attract dirt and create a slippery spot.

**What to avoid is equally important.** Never use abrasive scrub pads, steel wool, or scouring powder on LVP — these will scratch and permanently damage the wear layer. Avoid acetone, nail polish remover, or harsh chemical solvents, as they can dissolve or discolour the vinyl surface. Do not use "mop and shine" or wax-based products on vinyl plank flooring — these leave a buildup that dulls the floor's appearance over time and actually makes it more prone to scuff marks.

To **prevent scuff marks** in the first place, use felt furniture pads under all chair and table legs — replace them every 6-12 months as they wear down and collect grit. In Metro Vancouver, where rain tracks significant grit and debris indoors during the wet season, a good entrance mat system and regular sweeping or vacuuming (hard-floor

setting, no beater bar) dramatically reduce the abrasive particles that cause scuffs and micro-scratches. For rolling office chairs, use a hard-floor chair mat or upgrade to soft rubber casters designed for hard flooring.

If your LVP has widespread scuffing, hazing, or dullness that spot-cleaning cannot address, it may be time for a professional deep clean. Metro Vancouver floor cleaning services typically charge **\$0.50-\$1.50 per square foot** for a professional LVP cleaning that restores the original lustre without damaging the wear layer.

---

Q12

## What entrance mat system works best to protect floors from Vancouver's constant rain?

**A two-zone entrance mat system — a heavy-duty scraper mat outside the door plus a moisture-absorbing mat inside — is the most effective way to protect your floors from Metro Vancouver's relentless rainfall.**

Given that Vancouver receives over 1,200mm of rain annually, with roughly 70% falling between October and March, your entrance mats are genuinely the first line of defence for every type of flooring in your home.

The **outdoor scraper mat** handles the heavy lifting. Choose a mat made from rubber, coir (coconut fibre), or a rubber-and-coir combination that aggressively removes mud, grit, gravel, and the bulk of surface water from shoes and boots. Look for a mat at least 24 by 36 inches — large enough to require two full steps so both feet make contact. Coir mats are excellent scrapers but break down faster in constant rain; a rubber mat with raised scraper blades or a hybrid rubber-coir design holds up better in Vancouver's wet season. Expect to pay **\$30-\$80** for a quality outdoor mat that will last 2-3 years of Vancouver weather.

The **indoor absorbing mat** catches the remaining moisture that gets past the outdoor scraper. A high-quality microfibre or cotton-blend mat placed just inside the door absorbs water from wet shoes and prevents it from reaching your flooring. This is the mat that truly protects hardwood, laminate, and engineered floors from the slow, cumulative moisture damage that is so common in Vancouver homes. Choose a mat with a rubber or non-slip backing to prevent it from sliding on hard floors, and make sure it is large enough for at least one full step. Budget **\$25-\$60** for a good-quality indoor absorbent mat. The key to effectiveness is **washing your indoor mat regularly** — every 1-2 weeks during the wet season — because a saturated mat stops absorbing and starts redistributing moisture.

## Beyond the Front Door

Vancouver homes typically need mat systems at **every exterior entry point** — front door, back door, garage entry, and any door leading to a deck or patio. The side and back doors are often neglected, but they get just as much

wet-foot traffic, especially if you have a dog or access your yard from those entries. A boot tray near the busiest entrance gives family members a place to park wet shoes and boots without water pooling on the floor — particularly valuable for muddy boots during Vancouver's rainy months.

For homes with **hardwood or engineered hardwood floors**, the entrance area takes the most punishment. Consider adding a narrow **runner rug** extending 4-6 feet from the front door into the hallway — this extends the drying zone and catches moisture that tracks past the entry mats. Use a rug pad designed for hard floors (not rubber-backed, which can trap moisture against hardwood and cause discolouration).

For **condos and strata buildings**, where you may have a shared hallway, a compact but effective single mat with both scraping and absorbing properties works well. Look for commercial-grade entrance mats with a textured surface and absorbent pile — these are the same style used in office buildings and handle heavy foot traffic and moisture better than residential mats.

A proper entrance mat system costs **\$60-\$150 per entry point** and can save thousands in flooring damage over the life of your floors. In Vancouver's climate, it is not optional — it is essential maintenance. If your floors are already showing signs of moisture damage near entryways, a local flooring professional can assess whether refinishing, board replacement, or additional moisture protection is needed.

---

## How do I care for cork flooring long-term in Vancouver's damp climate?

**Cork flooring requires consistent sealing, prompt spill cleanup, and active humidity management to perform well long-term in Metro Vancouver's damp marine climate.** Cork is a beautiful, warm, and naturally sound-absorbing material, but it is more moisture-sensitive than vinyl or tile, and Vancouver's persistent humidity demands a proactive maintenance approach.

The **sealant is your cork floor's primary defence** against moisture. Most cork floors come pre-finished with a polyurethane or wax coating, but this finish wears down over time — especially in high-traffic areas like kitchens, hallways, and entryways. Plan to **recoat your cork floors every 3-5 years** with a compatible polyurethane finish to maintain the moisture barrier. In Metro Vancouver's climate, where indoor humidity commonly runs 40-60% and spikes higher during the wet season, a compromised sealant allows moisture vapour to penetrate the cork, causing it to swell, soften, and eventually degrade. A single coat of water-based polyurethane costs approximately **\$1-\$2 per square foot** if you hire a professional, or **\$30-\$60 for materials** if you do it yourself for a typical room. Water-based polyurethane is preferred for cork because it dries faster (2-4 hours between coats) and does not yellow over time the way oil-based finishes can.

For **daily and weekly maintenance**, sweep or vacuum your cork floors regularly using a soft-bristle broom or a vacuum set to hard-floor mode with no beater bar. Grit and sand tracked in from Vancouver's rainy streets act like sandpaper underfoot, gradually wearing through the sealant and into the cork surface. A good entrance mat system at every exterior door is particularly important for cork floors — even more so than for hardwood or vinyl, because cork is softer and shows abrasive wear faster.

When mopping, use a **damp (not wet) microfibre mop** with a pH-neutral floor cleaner specifically designed for sealed cork or hardwood. Never use excessive water, steam mops, or harsh chemical cleaners on cork. Standing water is cork's enemy — it can seep through seams and cause irreversible swelling and discolouration. In Vancouver's climate, where tracking in rain and mud is a daily reality from October to March, keep a dry mop or towels near entryways to catch puddles before they sit.

**Humidity control is essential for cork floors in Vancouver.** Maintain indoor relative humidity between **40% and 60%** — a range that cork handles comfortably. During the wet season, use bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans consistently, and consider a dehumidifier if your hygrometer readings regularly exceed 60%. Older Vancouver homes with crawl spaces need particular attention — moisture rising through the subfloor from an improperly sealed crawl space can damage cork from below, a problem you might not notice until the floor starts buckling or developing soft spots. Ensure your crawl space has a properly installed **6-mil polyethylene vapour barrier**.

Protect cork from **furniture damage** by using wide felt pads under all furniture legs — cork dents more easily than hardwood, and narrow chair legs or furniture feet can leave permanent impressions. Use furniture cups or wide felt glides, and replace them regularly. Avoid rolling heavy furniture or appliances directly across cork without protective plywood or hardboard sheets.

**Sunlight fading** is another long-term consideration. Cork lightens or changes colour when exposed to direct sunlight over months and years. Use window coverings or UV-filtering window film in rooms with south or west-facing windows to slow this process, particularly in Vancouver's sunnier summer months.

If your cork flooring develops worn areas, minor surface damage, or a dull appearance after several years, a **professional screen-and-recoat** (light abrasion and fresh polyurethane) typically costs **\$2-\$4 per square foot** and restores the finish without a full sanding. For more extensive wear, cork can be lightly sanded and refinished if the cork layer is thick enough — check your product specifications. Need help finding a flooring professional experienced with cork maintenance in Metro Vancouver? Vancouver Floor Installers can match you with a specialist at no cost.

---

Q14

## What should I do if my hardwood floor gets a small area of water damage from a Vancouver winter leak?

**Act immediately — remove the water source, dry the area as quickly as possible, and assess the extent of the damage before deciding on repair.** The faster you respond to water on hardwood, the better your chances of saving the floor. In Metro Vancouver, winter roof leaks, window condensation runoff, and plumbing issues during the rainy season are unfortunately common, and hardwood floors are particularly vulnerable.

**In the first 24-48 hours**, your priority is removing all standing water and drying the affected area thoroughly. Mop or towel up visible water immediately, then set up fans aimed directly at the wet area and a dehumidifier in the room. Open windows if weather permits, but during Vancouver's wet season, the outdoor air may be just as humid — in that case, rely on the dehumidifier and indoor air circulation. If water has seeped between boards, the drying process takes longer — keep fans and the dehumidifier running for **3-7 days minimum** and monitor with a moisture meter if you have one. The goal is to bring the wood moisture content back to **6-9%**, which is the normal range for hardwood in Metro Vancouver's climate.

Once the area is fully dry, assess the damage. **Minor water exposure** (caught within a few hours, limited to surface water on a few boards) often resolves with no lasting damage — the boards may cup slightly as they absorb moisture and then flatten as they dry. Give the floor **2-4 weeks** after drying before making any repair

decisions, as many cases of minor cupping self-correct once the moisture equalizes. If light cupping persists after a month of normal humidity conditions, a professional can screen and sand the affected area and refinish to restore a flat surface.

**Moderate damage** — water that sat for 12-48 hours or soaked through seams into the subfloor — typically causes more pronounced cupping, staining, or discolouration. Dark water stains in hardwood indicate the moisture penetrated the finish and reacted with the wood tannins. These stains can sometimes be sanded out during refinishing, but deep staining may require **board replacement**. A flooring professional can remove and replace individual damaged boards if the same species and dimensions are available — this typically costs **\$15-\$40 per square foot** including material matching, removal, installation, and blending the finish with the surrounding floor.

**Severe damage** — water that sat for days, flooded from below, or saturated the subfloor — often requires more extensive repair. Signs of severe damage include boards that have buckled (lifted and tented at seams), boards that feel soft or spongy underfoot, visible mould or mildew growth, or a persistent musty odour. In these cases, the affected boards and potentially the subfloor beneath them must be removed, the subfloor dried and treated for mould, and new flooring installed. For a small area (under 50 square feet), expect repair costs of **\$1,000-\$3,000** in Metro Vancouver, depending on the extent of subfloor work needed.

**Check your insurance.** Water damage from sudden, accidental leaks (burst pipe, ice dam, appliance failure) is typically covered by homeowner's insurance in BC. Gradual leaks that went unnoticed may not be covered. Document the damage with photos immediately and contact your insurer before beginning major repairs.

To **prevent future winter leak damage**, inspect your roof, windows, and plumbing before the wet season each year. Pay particular attention to window condensation — a significant source of floor damage in Vancouver condos and apartments where warm indoor air meets cold glass surfaces. Wipe condensation from windowsills daily during cold snaps and ensure your windows have proper drainage channels. If you need a flooring professional to assess water-damaged hardwood in your home, Vancouver Floor Installers can connect you with experienced local contractors who handle restoration and repair work across Metro Vancouver.

---

Q15

## How do I prevent scratches on hardwood floors from furniture in my Vancouver living room?

**Felt furniture pads under every furniture leg are the single most effective way to prevent scratches on hardwood floors, and they should be replaced every 6-12 months as they wear down and collect grit.** This is

a simple, inexpensive step that prevents the majority of furniture-related hardwood damage in Vancouver homes.

Choose **heavy-duty adhesive felt pads** rated for hard floors — the thicker, denser pads (3-5mm thick) last significantly longer than thin felt circles. For dining chairs that slide frequently, self-adhesive felt pads wear out fastest and need replacement every 3-6 months. A better option for chairs is **nail-on felt glides** or **silicone-cupped chair leg covers** that grip the leg securely and slide smoothly without exposing bare wood or metal to the floor. A pack of quality felt pads for an entire living room and dining room costs **\$15-\$30** — a trivial investment compared to **\$3-\$8 per square foot** for refinishing scratched hardwood.

The critical detail that most homeowners overlook is that **felt pads must be kept clean**. In Metro Vancouver, where heavy rainfall drives significant grit, sand, and debris indoors — especially between October and March — tiny abrasive particles embed in the felt pad surface. At that point, the pad stops protecting your floor and starts acting like fine sandpaper, grinding scratches into the finish every time you shift in your chair. Check your felt pads monthly, peel them off and replace them when they look dirty or compressed, and sweep or vacuum under furniture regularly to remove the grit that accumulates there.

For **heavy furniture** — sofas, entertainment units, bookshelves — use large-diameter felt pads or furniture cups that distribute the weight over a wider area. Hardwood dents under concentrated weight, particularly softer species like pine, birch, and walnut. Wide furniture cups (2-3 inches in diameter) prevent both scratches and indentation marks. If you are rearranging heavy furniture, never drag it across hardwood — use **furniture sliders** (smooth plastic discs placed under each leg) or lift and carry. For large items like sofas and dressers, two people lifting is far cheaper than refinishing drag marks across the room.

**Area rugs in high-traffic zones** provide an additional layer of protection. Place rugs under dining tables, in front of sofas where feet rest, and in hallways where foot traffic is heaviest. Use a rug pad designed for hardwood floors — avoid rubber-backed rugs placed directly on hardwood, as the rubber can chemically react with the floor finish over time, leaving discolouration marks. A breathable felt or felt-and-rubber rug pad allows air circulation and prevents moisture trapping.

**Pet nails** are another major source of hardwood scratches in Vancouver living rooms. Keep dogs' nails trimmed short and consider nail caps for dogs that spend a lot of time on hardwood. Larger dogs with long nails can leave visible scratch patterns across hardwood floors surprisingly quickly.

For floors that already have light surface scratches, a **hardwood touch-up kit** with colour-matched markers or wax fill sticks can camouflage minor damage for **\$10-\$20**. Deeper scratches that penetrate through the finish into the raw wood typically require spot sanding and refinishing by a professional. If scratches are widespread, a full **screen-and-recoat** — where the floor is lightly abraded and a fresh coat of polyurethane is applied — costs **\$2-\$4 per square foot** and restores the protective finish without a full sand-down. This is a worthwhile maintenance step

every 5-7 years to keep your hardwood looking its best and protected against the daily wear that Vancouver living brings.

---

**Disclaimer:** This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Vancouver Floor Installers. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any flooring project. Information is current as of March 15, 2026 and may change. Visit [vancouverfloorinstallers.com](https://vancouverfloorinstallers.com) for the latest answers.