

# FORMICA® LAMINATE BY FORMICA GROUP / AVOIDING LAMINATE DAMAGE TECHNICAL BRIEF



Typical damage that can occur to laminate when exposed to harsh chemicals.

- **AVOIDANCE OF ABRASIVE CLEANERS/MATERIALS**
- **RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE FOR TREATING STAINS**
- **AVOIDANCE OF HARSH CHEMICAL CLEANERS**
- **AVOIDANCE OF HARSH CHEMICAL STAINS**

## AVOIDANCE OF HARSH CHEMICAL CLEANERS

If in doubt about the suitability of a particular cleaner, detergent, or other substance, consult with its manufacturer to make sure it is recommended for use on decorative laminate surfaces.

DO NOT use cleaners nor compounds containing strong acids or strong bases on laminate surfaces. These may mar, etch, corrode and/or permanently discolor or damage laminate surfaces.

### EXAMPLES OF HARSH CLEANERS AND COMPOUNDS TO AVOID ARE:

- toilet bowl cleaners
- drain cleaners
- tub and tile cleaners
- oven cleaners
- rust removers
- metal cleaners
- cleaners containing sodium hypochlorite
- coffee pot cleaners
- ceramic cook top cleaners
- chlorine bleach
- lime/scale removers

Never allow bottles, rags, etc., contaminated with these harsh chemical compounds to contact laminate services. Accidental spills or splatters from these compounds should be wiped off immediately, and the area rinsed thoroughly with water.

## AVOIDANCE OF HARSH CHEMICAL STAINING AGENTS

Many common staining agents have no effect on laminate. Stains from the following materials and liquids, however, are more stubborn or even permanent and may not disappear.

### EXAMPLES OF THESE ARE:

- hair dyes and rinses
- laundry bluing
- pharmaceuticals (tannic acid, mercurochrome, silver nitrate, povidoneiodine, dermatological tar compounds and peroxide)

### OTHER EXAMPLES OF STUBBORN OR PERMANENT STAINS ARE:

- wood stains
- indelible inks
- marking pens
- cash registered ink
- newsprint
- food pricing label ink

## AVOIDANCE OF ABRASIVE CLEANERS/MATERIALS

DO NOT use abrasive cleaners, powders, scouring pads, steel wool, sandpaper, etc. to clean laminate surfaces. These can damage the surface finish and make it susceptible to staining. Ceramic or other abrasive objects, due to their inherent hardness, can cause scratching and premature wearing of laminate surfaces. Use placemats, doilies, or trivets to protect horizontal surfaces from exposure.

## RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR TREATING STAINS

- Damage caused by abrasion or scratches is irreversible, but can sometimes be masked by applying lemon oil or self stripping waxes, such as Pledge® or Plexus™.
- Harsh chemicals can lighten the color of laminate permanently, but the damage can sometimes be masked by applying lemon oil or self stripping waxes, such as Pledge® or Plexus™.
- Harsh staining agents may be permanent, but the visual effect can usually be lessened by applying a mild household cleaner, or by using a small amount of baking soda and water and then wiping up. DO NOT scrub the area with baking soda as it is slightly abrasive.
- Paints, glues, and other adhesive materials can be removed with solvents like denatured alcohol, paint thinner, lacquer thinner, or acetone (fingernail polish remover). CAUTION: Some solvents are extremely flammable; follow all warnings on the solvent container.

*Note: For additional information on the proper techniques for cleaning and maintaining laminate surfaces, consult Formica Corporation's brochure (Form 01-007A), titled "Caring for Formica® Brand Laminate and Color-Core® Brand Surfacing Material."*

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## TECHNICAL BRIEF CONTINUED



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