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## TILE FLOOR MAINTENANCE

### The means:

A cleaning chore - any cleaning chore - is seldom a matter of a cleaning product only. Other factors are involved, such as a cleaning rag, a sheet of paper towel, a scrubbing pad, a squeegee, and so on. Without this additional means, the cleaner alone won't do much good! If one uses some sub-par means, the cleaning product will not work at its best. This fact is never been truer than in the case of a glossy floor. A good-quality mop and the proper mopping bucket are key to obtaining the best results at mopping your highly polished stone or porcelain floor. My very favorites are good sized, closed-loop cotton string mops. It's always best to buy at least a couple of mop-heads, so that, when one is dirty, all you have to do is throw it into the washing machine and use another one in the meantime. The mop bucket is very important too. Small buckets only hold little water (which, of course, will get dirty real quick), plus they don't have any provisional means to wring the mop properly. Professional-type mop buckets with a wringer, that hold a good 4 GL of cleaning solution are highly recommended.

### The Care:

**NEWLY INSTALLED FLOORS.** The best thing to have done to a brand-new polished stone floor is a detailing job by a properly trained janitor, or a professional stone refinisher. Detailing means deep-cleaning the floor virtually square inch by square inch, removing all possible grout residue or film and adhesive, taking care of possible small damages left behind by workers, and open the pores of the stone by using some special cleaning agent, so that the stone can "breathe" and dry properly.

**DON'T** damp-mop your floor immediately after installation and grouting. While you wouldn't cause any real damage, the fine powder most likely left on the floor will be trapped in the water and may leave ugly and hard-to-remove streaks all over its surface. For the first week or so, just vacuum and dust mop your floor as often as you can. You will know it's ready to be washed when your hands remains clean (no whitish powder) after rubbing it on the floor.

### **NEWLY RESTORED (REFINISHED) FLOOR.**

**DO** damp-mop your floor regularly. Don't use just water: it won't cut through soil and will leave streaks. We recommend using a solution of water

and "Mb-1", Marble, Granite and More Floor Cleaner, in the proportion indicated in the bottle's back-label.

**DON'T** use more than that. While no damage would occur, a visible film would be left on the floor surface that will require rinsing, thus wasting time and, what's more, a very important feature of the product.

**DON'T** rinse. The formulation of Mb-1 includes specially selected inorganic salts that are meant to be left on the surface of the stone and act as moisturizers, as well as optical brighteners. When used in the right proportion and with the right means, Mb-1 will leave your floor totally streak-free and it will actually enhance the shine of your floor!

**DON'T** damp-mop your floor using a solution of water and stone soap. Like any other soap, stone soap WILL leave a hard-to-remove deposit on the surface of the stone. Stone soaps have very limited applications and, most importantly, quite different than cleaning a highly polished stone floor, no matter what the label on the bottle says. Even so-called "rinse-free" stone soaps are a marketing scam. In fact, by reading the back label on their bottle, one will learn that every so often (when you can't stand to look at your streaky and smeary floor any longer, that is!) you should be using a heavy duty stripper/degreaser (made by the same company, of course!) to remove all the "precious" scum that has been accumulating on your otherwise beautiful floor by not rinsing it after damp-mopping it. Always use a pH neutral floor detergent, opposed to a soap.

**DON'T** damp-mop your floor using a solution of water with a commercially available cleaner, unless its label specifically indicates that its use is safe on natural marble (cultured marble is not marble: it's manmade plastic material).

**DON'T** damp-mop your floor using a solution of water and vinegar. That would be literally devastating to the finish of marble, travertine, limestone, etc.! Vinegar is not a real cleaning agent to begin with, and it's highly acidic (Acetic Acid).

If your floor is in a foyer, or any other room with direct access to the outside, DO use proper floor mats. The leather or rubber of your shoes won't damage your floor: dirt WILL. Don't look for "pretty" mats, look for good ones! "ASTROTURF" mats by the Monsanto Co., (heavy-duty outside the door and finer inside) are among the best. DO clean your floor mats often. When they get saturated with dirt and sand they won't work anymore. The Preservation. Many customers ask me what should they do to PRESERVE the factory finish (or the finish of a newly restored floor). No matter how elaborate the answer could be, at the end it only spells: W-O-R-K. No work = no shine. There is no exception to such basic equation! If one's willing to work in order to protect the "showroom finish" of his or her car by regularly waxing it, the same principle should apply to a polished stone floor (actually, even more so. After all, you don't walk on your car!). "Mb-7" Marble, Granite and More Polish Preserver is an excellent performer. Don't expect miracles,

though! For starters, the product should be applied as soon after installation, or restoration as possible. It is meant to preserve the polish of the stone surface, not to make it! If you think to apply it when the floor is beginning to show damages (wear and tear patterns), Mb-7 will do a terrific job at preserving the damages! What's more, by the same principle that a good-quality car wax will not preserve the original "showroom finish" of your car for ever, so will Mb-7 with your polished stone floor. Absolute protection is impossible, but if used regularly as directed, Mb-7 will make your floor age gracefully and it will never represent a real eyesore. Mb-7 must be applied with either a professional, or a small residential floor buffer.