



**FORMICA®**  
CARE AND MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS



GRESHAM

### Protecting the Surface

Before selecting the surface material, consider the type of use it will receive, as well as its texture, color, and reflective values. A rough-textured surface has different advantages, depending upon use, than a smooth-textured surface. High gloss finish laminates and DecoMetal laminates and solid metal items, for example, are not recommended for use in heavy-duty applications such as countertops. Dark colours tend to enhance scratches, marring and fingerprints. Scratch and Impact Protection. Formica Brand Laminates and ColorCore surfacing material are resistant to scratches and impacts under normal use conditions. Use cutting boards, chopping blocks, or other protective surfaces.

- Do not chop, slice, pound, or hammer on any laminate surface.
- Knives or other sharp utensils may slice or scratch the surface.
- Heavy blows from a hammer or meat tenderizer may crack or gouge the surface. Use place mats, doilies, and trivets on laminate surfaces when necessary.
- Ceramics and abrasive objects can cause scratching and premature wear – do not slide these items across surface.

Follow recommendations for cleaning – do not use abrasive cleaners, steel wool, sandpaper, or Scotch-Brite® scouring pads, Hot Objects. Cookware still hot from the stove, oven or microwave, as well as electric skillets, waffle irons, curling irons and hot rollers, should not be placed directly on laminate surfaces. Prolonged exposure to temperatures of 140°F (60°C) or higher may cause the laminate to separate from the core material. Use a trivet, insulated hot pad or other protective device beneath all hot cookware, heat generating appliances, or other heated objects.

- Formica Brand Laminate and ColorCore surfacing material can withstand heat up to 275°F (135°C) for short periods of time.
- Never expose DecoMetal laminates and solid metal items to heat exceeding 140°F (60°C). Avoid ironing or placing a hot iron on laminate surfaces. Do not place lighted cigarettes directly on laminate surfaces.

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### Ordinary Cleaning

Formica® Brand Laminate, ColorCore® surfacing material, and DecoMetal® laminates and solid metal items are very easy to clean.

- In most cases, you only need to use a clean, damp, non-abrasive cotton cloth and a mild liquid detergent or household cleaner.
- Rinse with clean water, using a clean, non-abrasive cotton cloth.
- Do not flood the laminate, especially near seams, since water can penetrate and cause the substrate to swell.
- Dry the surface with a soft, clean, non-abrasive cotton cloth.

FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF SURFACES, USE THE FOLLOWING CARE GUIDELINES.

### Matte and Sparkle Finish Laminates.

Especially hard-to-clean areas may require special attention. Use a nylonbristled hand or vegetable brush, along with a mild liquid detergent-and-water solution or household cleaner. Clean the soiled area, using a rotating motion. Rinse and dry the surface as indicated above.

### Sculptures and Dimensional Finish Laminates.

These surfaces may require special attention to clean the depressed areas. Use a nylon-bristled hand or vegetable brush, along with a mild liquid detergent-and-water solution or household cleaner. Clean the soiled area, using a rotating motion. Rinse and dry the surface as indicated above.

### High Gloss Finish Laminates.

If residual streaks and smears remain after normal cleaning, use a mild glass cleaner and then dry with a clean, non-abrasive cotton cloth. Avoid exterior glass cleaner.

### DecoMetal® laminates and solid metals.

Clean these items with a soft, clean, damp, non-abrasive cotton cloth and a mild liquid detergent. Do not use solvents or waxes on DecoMetal laminates and solid metal surfaces. Mild glass cleaners may be used to remove streaks.

### Chemical Damage

Never use cleaners containing acid, alkali, or sodium hypochlorite. These cleaners will mar, etch, corrode, and permanently discolor the laminate surface. Also, make sure that bottles, rags, and other materials contaminated with these cleaners never contact the laminate surface. Examples of cleaners containing acid, alkali, or sodium hypochlorite include, but are not limited to: drain cleaners rust removers coffeepot cleaners metal cleaners tub and tile cleaners chlorine bleach oven cleaners toilet bowl cleaners lime scale removers ceramic cooktop some "countertop (high alkali) cleaners cleaners" disinfectants

### SPECIAL CLEANING RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Residual Glue.

Sometimes new decorative laminate has a streaky appearance caused by contact adhesive used during fabrication. Clean with a non-abrasive cotton cloth and an adhesive solvent such as Formica® Brand Non-flammable Contact Adhesive Solvent. Use solvent sparingly, as excessive amounts may delaminate edges. Read and follow all warnings and instructions on the labels of all solvent products. Use only hexane or heptane on DecoMetal laminates and solid metal items.

#### Paint and Varnish.

Remove most oil-base paints, varnishes and lacquers from decorative laminate surfaces with a suitable solvent. Read and follow all warnings and instructions on the labels of all solvent products, and remember that most solvents are extremely flammable. Use solvent sparingly, as excessive amounts may delaminate edges. Remove most water-based paints with an ammoniated household cleaner. For stubborn paint spots, gently use a plastic, non-metallic, non-abrasive pad. Never use steel wool or other abrasive scouring pads.

#### Stains.

To remove or minimize stains, use full strength Fantastik® All Purpose Cleaner, Formula 409®, Pine-Sol® or other mild household cleaner on the affected area, and allow it to draw out the stain. Blot with a clean, damp, nonabrasive cotton cloth, and then rinse with clean water. When a recommended cleaner changes its formulation, the change may be harmful to the laminate surface.

Formica Corporation cannot be held responsible for these changes. Solvents such as denatured alcohol can also be used. Follow all directions and warnings on the solvent label because many are extremely flammable. Stubborn or "fugitive" stains that may disappear on their own, after a short time or after repeated cleanings, include: food stains glass rings food dyes water marks coffee and tea stains fingerprints Stains which are stubborn or even permanent, and may not disappear, include: wood stains cash register inks indelible inks newsprint marking pen inks food pricing ink label inks lemon juice. Some materials and liquids, such as dyes and pharmaceutical products, will permanently stain laminate. Examples include: hair dyes and rinses silver nitrate laundry bluing tannic acid Mercurochrome® povidone-iodine dermatological peroxide Red-2B dye tar compounds.

These stains may be reduced by applying a paste of baking soda and water on the area to pull out the stain. The paste will be slightly abrasive, so do not rub. wipe up the paste with a clean, damp, non-abrasive cotton cloth, and then rinse clean with water. Periodic application of a self-cleaning wax can help minimize future staining.