

Stop slips in kitchens

Floor cleaning

Cleaning floors in kitchens is a routine procedure but, if not done correctly, can lead to surfaces that are slippery and dangerous to walk on. This information sheet provides tips on floor cleaning techniques that can reduce the risk of slips, useful if you are a chef, manager or business owner managing a floor cleaning system.

Facts

- A clean and dry, smooth floor is rarely slippery.
- A well-wrung mop will not leave a floor dry. Clean, well-maintained squeegees and dry mops will speed up drying time on many floors.
- Dirty or greasy dry mops and squeegees spread contamination over clean floors.
- Mopping alone will not be effective on rough or profile floors, a manual or mechanical brush can improve cleaning.
- Warning cones will not stop people entering a wet area.

Small spills: Spot cleaning

Even a small spill can be a slip risk.

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Avoid wet mopping, as it increases the size of the spill and the slip risk area.
- Use absorbent material to soak up the spill (eg paper towel, cloth).
- For greasy spills, use a cleaning solution.
- Dry the floor well.
- Remove warning signs as soon as the spill is gone.

Wet cleaning

- Sweep the floor and ensure equipment is clean.
- Prevent people from walking on wet smooth floors until they are totally dry.
- Close area, use barriers, clean in sections, as last resort use cones.
- Warn wet cleaning in progress, remove signs as soon as floor is dry.
- Use the right balance of cleaning solution to water.
- Keep an eye on the bucket solution and change when dirty.
- After use, rinse cleaning equipment thoroughly.
- Do not dispose of dirty fluid in food and hand sinks.

For quick/middle of the day cleans

- Wring out as much liquid as possible before use.
- Mop a small section of floor at a time, rinse and repeat.
- Dry off floor with dry mop/squeegee.

For end of the day/end of shift cleans

- Wet the mop well and mop the area.
- Leave solution on the floor for a few minutes to loosen dirt and grease.
- Gently scrub the wet floor (and grout if tiled) with a brush.
- Use a squeegee to push the dirty water residue to drain, or soak up using a mop.
- Give cleaned area a final mop over.
- Dry off floor with dry mop/squeegee.

Machine cleaning: Suitable for larger kitchen floor areas and for periodic floor maintenance

Points to consider

- For best results, follow the manufacturers' instructions on how to use the equipment.
- Ensure staff are fully trained in how to use, set up and maintain the equipment.
- Power cables can create trip risks; cleaning may leave floors wet.

Steam cleaning

- Steam penetrates deep into flooring; heat and pressure mobilise grease.
- Some machines recover the dirty water, others have flat head mops which soak it up.
- Leaves floors almost dry.

Mechanical brush (scrubber) methods

- Can clean into the grain of a slip-resistant floor.
- Important that settings and cleaning concentrations are correct and accessories maintained.
- Different brush systems are available, suitable for small, awkward and large floors.
- Some machines leave the floor dry.

Further information

Stopping slips and cleaning:

- visit www.hse.gov.uk/slips/campaigns.htm
- read the HSE information sheets *Slips and trips: The importance of floor cleaning* Information Sheet (Slips and trips 2) MISC691 HSE 2005 Web version only at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web/slips02.pdf and *Preventing slips and trips in kitchens and food service* Catering Information Sheet CAIS6(rev1) HSE Books 2005

Hygiene issues in kitchens:

- visit www.food.gov.uk/safereating/.