

CALGARY FLOOR INSTALLERS

Flooring Maintenance

Care, cleaning, repair, and seasonal maintenance
for all flooring types in Calgary's dry climate

20 Expert Answers from Floor IQ

calgaryfloorinstallers.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

1. How do I maintain hardwood floors in Calgary's dry winter climate?
2. What humidity level should I keep my Calgary home at to protect hardwood floors?
3. How do I clean road salt stains off my tile entryway in a Calgary home?
4. Can Calgary chinook winds cause hardwood floor problems even with a humidifier?
5. How often should I deep clean LVP flooring in a Calgary home with pets?
6. What is the best way to protect floors from gravel and salt at Calgary doorways?
7. Should I use a robot vacuum daily on hardwood in Calgary to prevent grit scratches?
8. How do I prevent gaps in my hardwood floor from appearing every Calgary winter?
9. What cleaning products should I avoid on LVP flooring in Calgary?
10. How do I maintain tile grout in a Calgary home with hard water?
11. Is it normal for hardwood floors to creak more during cold Calgary winters?
12. How do I deal with static buildup on carpet during dry Calgary winters?
13. Should I use felt pads or rubber on furniture feet for floors in Calgary?
14. How often should I reseal natural stone floors in a Calgary home?
15. What kind of doormat setup works best for Calgary homes in winter?
16. How do I fix minor scratches on hardwood floors in my Calgary home?
17. Can I use a steam mop on laminate floors in Calgary?
18. How does Calgary's hard water affect my tile and stone floor surfaces?
19. What maintenance does heated flooring require in a Calgary home?
20. How do I protect carpet from fading near south-facing windows in my Calgary home?

How do I maintain hardwood floors in Calgary's dry winter climate?

Maintaining hardwood floors through Calgary's brutally dry winters requires a proactive approach centred on humidity control, gentle cleaning, and protective habits. Calgary's indoor relative humidity routinely drops to 15–20% between November and March — well below the 35–45% range that hardwood needs to stay stable. Without intervention, you will see seasonal gapping, surface checking, and finish dullness that accelerates year over year.

The single most important maintenance step is running a **whole-home humidifier** connected to your furnace, set to maintain 35–45% relative humidity throughout the heating season. A standalone portable humidifier in one room is not enough — hardwood responds to the humidity of the entire home, not just the room it is in. Expect to spend **\$500–\$1,200 installed** for a quality bypass or steam humidifier, and budget for annual pad or filter replacement. Monitor humidity with a digital hygrometer placed at floor level in the driest room of the house, typically a south-facing living area. If your humidity consistently drops below 30% despite the humidifier, your furnace may be oversized or your home's air sealing needs attention.

For daily and weekly cleaning, **use a microfibre dust mop or a soft-bristle vacuum** set to the hard floor setting with the beater bar turned off. Calgary homeowners track an enormous amount of fine gravel, road salt, and sand into the house from October through April, and these abrasive particles are the primary cause of surface scratches on hardwood. A quick daily sweep in high-traffic areas — especially the entryway, kitchen, and hallways — prevents grit from grinding into the finish. For deeper cleaning every week or two, use a **hardwood-specific cleaner** like Bona or the manufacturer's recommended product, sprayed lightly onto a microfibre mop. Never use excessive water — a damp mop, not a wet mop. Standing water seeps into seams and causes edge swelling and finish clouding.

Chinook events deserve special attention. When a chinook rolls in and temperatures swing 20–30 degrees in a single afternoon, the sudden humidity change stresses wood fibres. You may hear more creaking and see slight movement at joints during these events. There is nothing you can do to prevent chinook-driven micro-movement entirely, but maintaining consistent indoor humidity dampens the swings significantly. Avoid cranking the thermostat up and down during chinooks — keep your indoor environment as stable as possible.

Seasonal maintenance should include **inspecting your finish coat every spring** after the heating season ends. If the finish looks worn, dull, or scratchy in high-traffic paths, a professional screen-and-recoat — essentially a light abrasion of the existing finish followed by a fresh coat of polyurethane — costs **\$2–\$3 per square foot** and extends the life of your floor by years without a full sand-and-refinish. Most Calgary hardwood floors benefit from a screen-and-recoat every 5–7 years, or more frequently in homes with dogs or heavy foot traffic.

If you are seeing persistent gapping, finish failure, or cupping despite running a humidifier, it may be time for a professional assessment. Browse flooring contractors in the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring to find a local installer who can evaluate your floor's condition and recommend the right maintenance plan.

Q2

What humidity level should I keep my Calgary home at to protect hardwood floors?

The ideal indoor relative humidity for protecting hardwood floors in a Calgary home is 35–45% year-round.

This range keeps wood fibres stable, prevents seasonal gapping in winter, and avoids cupping and swelling in summer. Staying within this window is more challenging in Calgary than almost any other major Canadian city because of the extreme dryness of Alberta winters and the rapid humidity swings caused by chinook winds.

During a typical Calgary winter, indoor humidity without a humidifier drops to **15–20%** — sometimes lower in newer, tightly sealed homes where the furnace runs frequently. At these levels, solid hardwood planks shrink noticeably, opening gaps of 1–2mm or more between boards. Engineered hardwood fares better but still shows movement at these extremes. Over repeated heating seasons, the expansion-contraction cycling stresses finish coats, loosens joints, and can cause irreversible checking (fine surface cracks) in the wood. This is why a **whole-home bypass or steam humidifier** is considered essential equipment for any Calgary home with hardwood floors, not a luxury.

A bypass humidifier connected to your furnace ductwork typically costs **\$500–\$800 installed** and uses an evaporator pad that needs annual replacement. A steam humidifier costs **\$800–\$1,200 installed** but delivers more precise humidity control and works even when the furnace is not running — a meaningful advantage during mild chinook days when the furnace cycles less frequently but outdoor air is still very dry. Either option should be paired with a **digital hygrometer** (a \$20–\$40 device) placed at floor level in the driest room to monitor conditions. Many modern smart thermostats also have built-in humidity sensors and can control the humidifier automatically.

Be careful not to over-humidify. Going above 45–50% in winter can cause condensation on windows, which leads to mould growth on window frames and sills — a common problem in Calgary homes that run their humidifiers too aggressively. If you see moisture forming on the inside of your windows, dial the humidifier back. The sweet spot is typically **35–40% in the coldest months** (December through February when outdoor temperatures regularly hit -25 to -35 degrees) and **40–45% in the shoulder seasons** (October–November and March–April).

In summer, Calgary homes generally sit naturally around 30–40% relative humidity, which is acceptable for hardwood. Unlike humid Ontario or BC summers, Calgary rarely requires dehumidification. However, after heavy rain or if you water your lawn extensively, basement humidity can spike — keep an eye on below-grade levels if you have engineered hardwood or laminate in a finished basement.

A practical monitoring routine is to check your hygrometer weekly during the heating season and adjust your humidifier accordingly. If you are consistently unable to maintain 35% despite running the humidifier at maximum, your home may have air leakage issues that a weatherization audit could address. If humidity control feels overwhelming, consider switching to LVP or SPC flooring in high-traffic areas — these products are dimensionally stable regardless of humidity and eliminate the ongoing maintenance cost of humidification. For advice on the best flooring materials for your specific situation, Calgary Floor Installers can match you with a local flooring professional for a free estimate.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Amar Homes Inc
- Universal Slate International Inc.
- One OAK Flooring
- WestAim Construction Ltd.
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q3

How do I clean road salt stains off my tile entryway in a Calgary home?

A solution of equal parts white vinegar and warm water is the most effective and safest way to remove road salt stains from a tile entryway in a Calgary home. Road salt — primarily calcium chloride and sodium chloride — leaves a white, chalky residue that bonds to tile and grout surfaces, and Calgary homeowners deal with this from October through April as the city applies thousands of tonnes of de-icing material to roads and sidewalks every winter.

To clean salt stains, start by **sweeping or vacuuming the tile thoroughly** to remove loose grit, sand, and salt crystals. This step is critical — if you skip it and go straight to mopping, you are essentially grinding abrasive particles across the tile surface, which dulls the finish over time. Once loose debris is removed, mix a solution of **one part white vinegar to one part warm water** in a bucket. Mop the tile with this solution, letting it sit on stubborn salt deposits for 3–5 minutes before scrubbing with a soft-bristle brush or nylon scrub pad. The mild acidity of the vinegar dissolves the mineral deposits without damaging porcelain or ceramic tile. Rinse with clean warm water and dry with a clean towel or microfibre cloth to prevent new water spots.

For natural stone tile — marble, travertine, limestone, or slate — do NOT use vinegar. The acid will etch and dull the stone surface. Instead, use a **pH-neutral stone cleaner** specifically formulated for natural stone, or simply warm water with a few drops of dish soap. For heavy salt buildup on natural stone, a commercial stone-safe efflorescence remover from a tile supply store is the safest option. After cleaning, reseal the stone if the sealer has worn — salt deposits indicate that moisture is sitting on the surface rather than beading, which often means the sealer needs refreshing.

Grout lines take the worst beating from road salt. Calgary's hard water combines with salt residue to leave mineral deposits in grout that regular mopping does not fully remove. A dedicated grout cleaner applied with a stiff grout brush every few weeks during winter keeps grout looking clean. If your entryway grout is unsealed, consider having it sealed — sealed grout resists salt staining, is easier to clean, and lasts longer. Professional grout sealing typically costs **\$2–\$4 per square foot** and should be redone every 1–2 years in a high-traffic Calgary entryway.

Prevention is the best strategy. A good two-mat system at every exterior door — a coarse scraper mat outside and an absorbent indoor mat just inside — captures the majority of salt and grit before it reaches your tile. Replace or wash indoor mats frequently during winter, as saturated mats stop absorbing and start depositing salt back onto the floor. If your tile entryway is taking a beating every winter, browse flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring for professional cleaning, grout sealing, or tile repair options.

Can Calgary chinook winds cause hardwood floor problems even with a humidifier?

Yes, chinook winds can still cause hardwood floor movement even in homes with a properly running humidifier, though a humidifier significantly reduces the severity. Chinooks are Calgary's most distinctive weather phenomenon and one of the biggest challenges for hardwood flooring in the region. When a chinook rolls in, outdoor temperatures can swing 20–30 degrees Celsius within hours — from -25 to +10 in a single afternoon — and this rapid change creates sudden shifts in indoor humidity that even a well-maintained humidifier cannot fully counteract in real time.

Here is what happens during a chinook event. As warm, dry Pacific air floods into Calgary, the outdoor air — while warmer — is often still quite dry. Your furnace cycles down because the home heats easily, which means the bypass humidifier (which only adds moisture when the furnace fan runs) slows or stops adding humidity. Meanwhile, occupants may open windows to enjoy the mild weather, letting dry chinook air rush in. Indoor humidity can drop or fluctuate by 5–10% within a few hours. Hardwood responds to these rapid changes with micro-movement — you may hear increased creaking, see slight gapping at joints, or notice that boards feel slightly different underfoot. Over years of repeated chinook cycling, this stress accumulates: finish coats develop micro-cracks, glue joints in engineered hardwood weaken, and surface checking becomes visible on softer species like pine and fir.

A steam humidifier performs better during chinooks than a bypass model because it generates humidity independently of the furnace cycle. Since the furnace runs less during a chinook warm-up, a bypass humidifier may not keep pace. A steam unit costs **\$800–\$1,200 installed** compared to \$500–\$800 for a bypass, but the superior humidity control during Calgary's frequent chinook events makes it worthwhile for homes with significant hardwood investment.

Practical steps to minimize chinook damage include keeping windows and doors closed during chinook events even though the warm weather is tempting, maintaining your humidifier at 35–40% and monitoring with a floor-level hygrometer, and avoiding rapid thermostat changes — keep your home at a consistent temperature rather than turning the heat way down during the warm spell and cranking it back up when the chinook breaks. Consistency is the key to protecting hardwood.

Engineered hardwood is inherently more chinook-resistant than solid hardwood because its cross-laminated plywood core resists expansion and contraction in multiple directions. If you are choosing new hardwood for a Calgary home and chinook damage concerns you, engineered hardwood at **\$7–\$14 per square foot installed** is the smarter long-term choice over solid hardwood. LVP and SPC flooring are completely unaffected by chinook

humidity swings, making them the most worry-free option.

If your hardwood is already showing signs of chinook-related stress — persistent seasonal gaps that do not close fully, visible checking, or finish deterioration — a professional assessment can determine whether a screen-and-recoat or a more involved refinishing is needed. Get matched with a flooring professional for a free estimate through Calgary Floor Installers.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Besademolition
- Mike's Restoration Service
- Mr & Mrs Paintastic Inc
- One OAK Flooring
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q5

How often should I deep clean LVP flooring in a Calgary home with pets?

In a Calgary home with pets, you should deep clean LVP flooring every 2–4 weeks, with daily sweeping or vacuuming and weekly damp mopping in between. Pets bring unique challenges — fur, dander, tracked-in grit, occasional accidents, and claw wear — but the good news is that LVP is one of the most pet-friendly flooring options available and handles these challenges far better than hardwood or laminate.

Daily maintenance in a pet household means a quick pass with a microfibre dust mop or a vacuum on the hard floor setting (beater bar off). This is especially important in Calgary because pets track in fine gravel, road salt, and sand from walks — abrasive particles that can dull the LVP wear layer over time if left to grind underfoot. During winter months when Calgary roads are heavily salted, consider wiping your dog's paws with a damp cloth at the door, which protects both the flooring and your pet's paw pads from salt irritation.

Weekly damp mopping with a microfibre mop and a pH-neutral LVP cleaner keeps the surface clean and removes the film of pet oils and dander that accumulates. Spray the cleaner onto the mop rather than pouring it on the floor — while LVP is waterproof on the surface, excessive water can seep into click-lock seams over time. Avoid using a

soaking wet mop. A dedicated LVP cleaner or a simple mix of warm water with a few drops of dish soap works well.

Deep cleaning every 2–4 weeks involves a more thorough process. Move lightweight furniture, sweep or vacuum the entire floor including under furniture and along baseboards where pet hair accumulates, and mop with a quality LVP cleaner. For stubborn spots — dried muddy paw prints, food spills near pet bowls, or accident residue — a soft nylon scrub pad with cleaner works without scratching the wear layer. Pay special attention to the area around water and food bowls, where splashing creates a film that attracts dirt.

Pet accident cleanup should happen immediately. LVP is waterproof on the surface, so urine will not penetrate the plank itself, but it can seep into seams between planks if left sitting. Blot up the liquid, clean the area with an enzymatic pet cleaner to eliminate odour, and dry thoroughly. If you have a pet that is prone to accidents, consider LVP with a tight-lock system and an integrated moisture barrier underlayment to prevent liquid from reaching the subfloor.

Preventing scratches from pet claws is largely about nail maintenance — keep your dog's nails trimmed and filed regularly. Even the best LVP wear layers (20 mil and above) will eventually show micro-scratches from long, sharp nails, especially large breeds. Adding a runner or area rug in your pet's favourite sprint path reduces wear in the highest-impact zones.

LVP is an excellent choice for Calgary pet owners because it handles the combination of pet wear, Calgary's extreme climate, and high-traffic cleaning demands without the humidity sensitivity of hardwood. If your current flooring is struggling with pet life, browse flooring installers in the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring to explore LVP options.

Q6

What is the best way to protect floors from gravel and salt at Calgary doorways?

A two-mat system at every exterior door — a coarse scraper mat outside and a large absorbent mat inside — is the single most effective way to protect your floors from the gravel, road salt, and sand that Calgary homeowners battle from October through April. This simple setup prevents the vast majority of abrasive debris from reaching your flooring, regardless of whether you have hardwood, LVP, tile, or laminate.

The outdoor scraper mat should be a heavy-duty coir (coconut fibre) or rubber-bristle mat that aggressively removes gravel and packed snow from boot soles. Look for a mat at least 24 by 36 inches — larger is better, as people naturally take one or two steps on a mat before moving on. Shake or sweep this mat weekly during winter to prevent it from becoming packed with debris and losing effectiveness. Budget **\$30–\$60** for a quality outdoor scraper

mat that will last several seasons.

The indoor absorbent mat catches the finer salt residue and moisture that the outdoor mat misses. A large, washable cotton or microfibre runner — ideally 3 to 4 feet long — absorbs snowmelt and traps fine salt crystals before they reach your main flooring. This mat needs to be washed or replaced frequently during heavy winter months, as a saturated mat stops absorbing and starts depositing salt back onto the floor. Machine-washable runners at **\$40–\$80** from any home goods store are a worthwhile investment when you consider the cost of repairing salt-damaged hardwood or dulled LVP.

A boot tray placed on or next to the indoor mat provides a dedicated spot for wet, salty boots and shoes. Calgary homeowners who establish a firm no-shoes policy beyond the entry mat see dramatically less floor wear and salt damage throughout the home. A good boot tray with raised edges that contains snowmelt costs **\$15–\$30** and is one of the cheapest floor-protection investments you can make.

For the entryway floor itself, material choice matters. Porcelain or ceramic tile is the gold standard for Calgary entryways because it is impervious to salt, moisture, and gravel abrasion. If your entryway currently has hardwood or laminate taking a beating every winter, consider having a tile entryway installed — even a small 4 by 6 foot tiled area at the front door, with a proper transition strip to the adjoining flooring, provides a sacrificial landing zone that protects the rest of the house. A small tile entryway installation typically runs **\$800–\$1,500** including materials and labour in the Calgary market.

Additional protective measures include keeping a small broom or handheld vacuum near the door for quick daily sweeps, applying a grout sealer to entryway tile grout annually to prevent salt staining, and using felt pads on any furniture near the entryway that gets moved frequently. During the heaviest salt months (December through March), a quick sweep of the entryway twice daily makes a noticeable difference in how much abrasive material migrates deeper into the home.

If your floors are already showing damage from years of salt and gravel exposure, Calgary Floor Installers can match you with a local flooring professional to assess repair options — from hardwood refinishing to entryway tile installation. Find contractors through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Keystone Exteriors
- Besademolition
- Ardco Construction

- True North Overhead Doors
- Canadian Closet

[View all contractors ?](#)

Should I use a robot vacuum daily on hardwood in Calgary to prevent grit scratches?

Yes, running a robot vacuum daily on hardwood floors is one of the smartest maintenance habits a Calgary homeowner can adopt, and it makes a real difference in preventing grit scratches over time. Calgary's combination of gravel roads, heavy road salt application, dry dusty conditions, and fine sand means that abrasive particles accumulate on floors faster than in most Canadian cities. These tiny particles act like sandpaper underfoot, gradually dulling and scratching the finish coat — especially in high-traffic areas like hallways, kitchens, and entryways.

A daily robot vacuum run removes this grit before it has a chance to grind into the finish. **Choose a model designed for hard floors** — look for strong suction, rubber or soft-bristle rollers rather than stiff beater bars, and a low profile that can reach under furniture where dust bunnies and grit accumulate. Models with a mopping function that applies a light damp pass after vacuuming are a bonus for hardwood, as they pick up the fine dust that vacuuming alone misses. Budget **\$300–\$600** for a quality robot vacuum suitable for hardwood; premium models with mapping and room-specific scheduling run **\$600–\$1,000** but offer better coverage and avoid repeatedly bumping into furniture.

A few important considerations for Calgary hardwood specifically. First, make sure the robot vacuum's wheels are clean and free of debris — a pebble stuck in a wheel can scratch the floor as the robot moves. Second, set the robot to run when the home is occupied or at least heated, not when you are away with the thermostat turned down. In Calgary's extreme winter cold, running any cleaning device on hardwood that has contracted due to low humidity and temperature increases the risk of debris catching in gaps between shrunken boards. Third, a robot vacuum supplements but does not replace periodic manual cleaning — areas under heavy furniture, tight corners, and along baseboards still need attention with a manual vacuum or microfibre mop every week or two.

For Calgary homes with pets, a daily robot vacuum is especially valuable. Pet hair, dander, and the grit that dogs track in from walks combine to create a constant abrasive film on hardwood surfaces. Running the robot daily — or even twice daily during muddy chinook thaws — keeps this under control far more effectively than a twice-weekly manual sweep.

Pair the daily robot vacuum with proper entry mats at all exterior doors (scraper mat outside, absorbent mat inside) and you will dramatically reduce the grit load on your hardwood. Homeowners who adopt both habits consistently report that their hardwood finish lasts significantly longer between screen-and-recoat maintenance cycles — which typically cost **\$2–\$3 per square foot** and are needed every 5–7 years in a well-maintained Calgary home. If your hardwood is already showing wear from years of grit damage, get matched with a flooring

professional through Calgary Floor Installers for a refinishing estimate.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Canadian Closet
- Eshine Cleaning Services
- Wise Abatement
- Keystone Exteriors
- Dealtwith.

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q8

How do I prevent gaps in my hardwood floor from appearing every Calgary winter?

The only reliable way to prevent winter gapping in hardwood floors in Calgary is to maintain indoor relative humidity at 35–45% throughout the heating season using a whole-home humidifier. Seasonal gapping is the single most common hardwood floor complaint in Calgary, and it is caused directly by the extreme dryness of Alberta winters. When indoor humidity drops to the 15–20% range — which happens routinely in Calgary homes without humidification — solid hardwood planks lose moisture and shrink, opening visible gaps between boards that can reach 1–2mm or more.

Understanding why Calgary is worse than most cities for gapping helps frame the solution. Calgary winters are long (November through March), bitterly cold (-25 to -35 degrees regularly), and extremely dry. Furnaces run almost continuously during cold snaps, further drying the indoor air. Chinook events add rapid humidity fluctuations on top of the baseline dryness. This combination creates a more severe expansion-contraction cycle than cities like Toronto, Vancouver, or even Edmonton, which has slightly more winter humidity. Solid hardwood in Calgary homes without humidification experiences more seasonal movement than the same wood in almost any other major Canadian market.

A whole-home humidifier is the primary solution. A bypass humidifier connected to your furnace ductwork costs **\$500–\$800 installed** and is adequate for many homes. A steam humidifier at **\$800–\$1,200 installed** provides

more precise control and works independently of the furnace cycle, which is advantageous during chinook warm-ups when the furnace cycles less but the air is still very dry. Set the humidifier to maintain **35–40% relative humidity** during the coldest months and **40–45%** during the shoulder seasons. Monitor with a digital hygrometer at floor level — wall-mounted thermostats with humidity sensors read room-level humidity, which can differ from floor-level conditions.

If you already have a humidifier and still see gapping, check that it is properly maintained. Bypass humidifier pads should be replaced annually — a clogged pad delivers a fraction of its rated output. Check the water supply line for mineral buildup, ensure the damper is open during the heating season, and verify that the humidistat is calibrated correctly. In very tight newer homes, you may also need to adjust your HRV (heat recovery ventilator) to reduce the rate at which dry outdoor air replaces humidified indoor air.

Some gapping is normal and unavoidable even in well-humidified homes. Wood is a natural material that moves with seasonal changes. Gaps that open slightly in winter and close in spring are considered normal behaviour, not a defect. The concern is when gaps exceed 1–2mm, stay open year-round, or are accompanied by cupping, crowning, or finish cracking — these indicate either chronic low humidity, improper installation, or wood that was not properly acclimated before installation.

If you are choosing new flooring and want to avoid the gapping issue entirely, engineered hardwood at **\$7–\$14 per square foot installed** offers the beauty of real wood with far greater dimensional stability. Its cross-laminated core resists the expansion and contraction that causes gapping in solid hardwood. LVP and SPC flooring are completely immune to humidity-driven movement. For homeowners who already have solid hardwood with persistent gapping, a professional assessment can determine whether the gaps are within acceptable range or whether the floor needs attention. Browse flooring contractors in the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring for expert guidance.

Q9

What cleaning products should I avoid on LVP flooring in Calgary?

Avoid abrasive cleaners, wax-based products, ammonia, bleach, and steam mops on LVP flooring — these damage the wear layer, dull the finish, and can void your warranty. LVP is one of the most low-maintenance flooring options available, but using the wrong cleaning products will shorten its lifespan and degrade its appearance, especially in Calgary where homeowners are often tempted to use harsh cleaners to tackle road salt residue and winter grime.

Products to avoid and why:

Abrasive cleaners and scrubbing powders like Comet, Ajax, or Soft Scrub contain grit that physically scratches the LVP wear layer. Once the wear layer is scratched, dirt settles into the scratches and the floor looks perpetually dull no matter how much you clean it. This is especially problematic in Calgary because fine gravel and salt particles tracked indoors already create abrasive conditions — adding abrasive cleaners compounds the damage.

Wax, polish, and shine-enhancing products leave a film on LVP that builds up over time, turning yellow and attracting dirt. LVP is manufactured with a factory-applied finish that does not need waxing or polishing. Products marketed as "floor shine" or "floor polish" create a sticky residue that is very difficult to remove and makes the floor look worse, not better. If your LVP looks dull, the solution is proper cleaning — not adding a coating.

Ammonia and ammonia-based cleaners (many all-purpose cleaners contain ammonia) can break down the adhesives in the LVP wear layer over time and cause clouding and discolouration. Check the ingredient list on your all-purpose cleaner — if ammonia is listed, keep it away from your LVP.

Bleach and chlorine-based cleaners can discolour LVP, especially lighter colours and realistic wood-look patterns. If you need to disinfect — for example, after a pet accident — use a diluted hydrogen peroxide solution or a cleaner specifically labelled as safe for LVP.

Steam mops are one of the most common mistakes Calgary homeowners make with LVP. The concentrated heat and moisture from a steam mop can warp planks, weaken click-lock connections, and cause the wear layer to delaminate over time. While LVP is waterproof on the surface, steam forces moisture into seams at high temperature, which is fundamentally different from a light damp mop.

"Mop and Shine" combination products and oil soap (like Murphy's) leave residue that builds up and is nearly impossible to fully remove without stripping the floor. Once oil soap residue accumulates, the floor becomes a magnet for dust and pet hair.

What TO use instead: A pH-neutral LVP-specific cleaner (brands like Bona Hard Surface Floor Cleaner, Rejuvenate LVP cleaner, or the manufacturer's recommended product) applied with a microfibre mop is all you need. For everyday cleaning, warm water with a tiny amount of dish soap on a damp — not wet — microfibre mop works perfectly. For road salt residue in the entryway, a 50/50 vinegar-water solution is safe for LVP and dissolves mineral deposits effectively.

If your LVP has already been damaged by improper cleaning products, a flooring professional can assess whether the wear layer can be restored or whether planks need replacement. Find local flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- PLATINUM Pool & Spa Services Ltd
- Ardco Construction
- Amar Homes Inc
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd
- Royland Stucco

[View all contractors ?](#)

How do I maintain tile grout in a Calgary home with hard water?

Calgary's hard water is one of the biggest ongoing challenges for tile grout maintenance, leaving mineral deposits, white haze, and discolouration that regular mopping does not fully address. Calgary's municipal water supply is sourced from the Bow and Elbow rivers and is moderately to very hard, meaning it contains high levels of dissolved calcium and magnesium that precipitate out as white, chalky deposits on tile and grout surfaces — especially in bathrooms, kitchens, and entryways where water contact is frequent.

Regular cleaning with the right products is the foundation of grout maintenance in Calgary. For routine weekly cleaning, use a pH-neutral tile and grout cleaner with a soft-bristle grout brush. Avoid acidic cleaners on a weekly basis — while vinegar and acid-based cleaners are effective at dissolving mineral deposits, frequent use can erode cement-based grout over time. Save acidic cleaning for monthly deep cleans or targeted spot treatment of heavy mineral buildup. For the weekly routine, a dedicated grout cleaner like a commercial pH-neutral formula applied with a brush along grout lines, followed by a thorough rinse with clean water, keeps mineral buildup from accumulating to the point where it becomes a major project.

Monthly deep cleaning should target hard water deposits directly. A solution of equal parts white vinegar and warm water applied to grout lines and allowed to sit for 10–15 minutes dissolves most calcium buildup. Scrub with a stiff nylon grout brush (never wire — it damages grout), rinse thoroughly, and dry. For stubborn deposits, a commercial lime and calcium remover (CLR or similar) works well but should be rinsed completely and used sparingly. On natural stone tile, never use vinegar or acidic products — use a stone-safe mineral deposit remover instead.

Sealing your grout is the most effective preventive measure against hard water damage. Unsealed grout is porous and absorbs mineral-laden water, which deposits calcium and magnesium deep within the grout structure where surface cleaning cannot reach. A quality penetrating grout sealer fills the pores and forces water to bead on the surface rather than absorbing in. Professional grout sealing costs **\$2–\$4 per square foot** and should be refreshed every **1–2 years** in bathrooms and kitchens, and every **2–3 years** in lower-moisture areas. DIY sealing with a roller-applicator bottle from a tile supply store costs much less but requires careful application and a clean, fully dry grout surface.

For shower floors and walls, which get the heaviest hard water exposure, consider squeegeeing tile after every shower. This 30-second habit removes 90% of the water that would otherwise evaporate and leave mineral deposits. A simple squeegee hung in the shower is the cheapest and most effective grout maintenance tool for Calgary's hard water.

If your grout is already heavily stained or deteriorating, professional grout cleaning and re-sealing can restore it without the expense of re-grouting. Badly damaged or crumbling grout may need to be professionally removed and replaced, which typically costs **\$5–\$10 per square foot** depending on the extent of the work. Browse flooring contractors in the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring for professional grout maintenance and tile care.

Q11

Is it normal for hardwood floors to creak more during cold Calgary winters?

Yes, it is completely normal for hardwood floors to creak and squeak more during Calgary's cold, dry winters — and it is one of the most common concerns homeowners raise with flooring professionals in this region. The creaking intensifies because Calgary's extreme winter dryness causes wood to shrink, creating movement at nail points, between boards, and at the subfloor interface that did not exist when the wood was at its summer equilibrium.

Here is what is happening underneath your feet. When indoor humidity drops to the **15–25% range** during a typical Calgary winter, hardwood planks lose moisture and contract across their width. As the planks shrink, they loosen slightly on the nails or staples holding them to the subfloor. When you walk across the floor, the plank flexes and moves against the fastener, producing a squeak or creak. Simultaneously, gaps open between adjacent boards, allowing them to rub against each other when loaded. In nail-down solid hardwood over a plywood subfloor — the most common installation method in Calgary homes built before 2010 — the plywood subfloor itself also dries out and can develop movement at the joist connection points, adding another layer of noise.

Chinook events make the creaking even more pronounced. When a chinook swings temperatures from -25 to +10 in a few hours, the rapid humidity and temperature change causes uneven expansion — the surface of the plank responds faster than the core, and different boards in different sun exposure zones expand at different rates. This creates temporary stress that increases squeaking for a day or two until the floor reaches a new equilibrium.

What you can do to reduce winter creaking:

The most effective solution is maintaining **35–45% indoor humidity** with a whole-home humidifier. When the wood stays closer to its summer moisture content, it shrinks less, stays tighter on the fasteners, and creaks less. A properly sized humidifier costs **\$500–\$1,200 installed** and makes a noticeable difference in floor noise within a few weeks of consistent operation.

For specific squeaky spots, you can apply **a small amount of powdered graphite or talcum powder** between the boards at the squeak point. The powder acts as a dry lubricant, reducing friction where boards rub. Work the powder into the joint with a soft cloth and wipe the surface clean. This is a temporary fix that may need to be repeated each winter.

From below (if you have access to the underside of the floor through an unfinished basement or crawl space), you can add shims between the subfloor and joists at squeak points, or screw the subfloor more tightly to the joists. Specialty squeak-repair kits that allow you to drive a screw from above through the hardwood into the subfloor, then snap off the screw head, are available at Calgary hardware stores for **\$20–\$30**.

When creaking indicates a real problem: If the creaking is new, severe, localized to one area, or accompanied by visible movement (boards lifting or feeling springy), it may indicate a subfloor issue such as a deteriorating joist, delaminating plywood, or moisture damage. This is especially worth investigating in older Calgary homes where basement moisture may have affected the subfloor from below. In that case, a professional inspection is warranted. Calgary Floor Installers can match you with a flooring professional who can diagnose whether your creaking is normal seasonal behaviour or something that needs repair.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- G.D.K Drywall LTD.
- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- PLATINUM Pool & Spa Services Ltd
- Turnbull masonry
- Calgary Custom Concepts

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q12

How do I deal with static buildup on carpet during dry Calgary winters?

Static buildup on carpet is one of the most common household annoyances during Calgary's extremely dry winters, and the primary solution is the same one that protects your hardwood floors — increasing indoor humidity to 35–45% with a whole-home humidifier. Calgary's indoor humidity regularly drops to 15–20% during the heating season, which is well below the threshold where static electricity becomes a constant problem. At these

humidity levels, carpet fibres lose the thin layer of surface moisture that normally allows static charges to dissipate, and every step builds a charge that discharges as a shock when you touch a metal doorknob, light switch, or another person.

Increasing humidity is the most effective fix. A whole-home bypass humidifier costs **\$500–\$800 installed** and a steam humidifier runs **\$800–\$1,200 installed**. At 35% relative humidity, static buildup drops dramatically. At 40–45%, it largely disappears. If a whole-home system is not in the budget, portable humidifiers in the rooms with the most carpet can help, though they require constant refilling and only affect the immediate area.

Anti-static carpet treatments provide immediate relief while you work on the humidity issue. Commercial anti-static sprays designed for carpet — available at Calgary hardware and home improvement stores for **\$10–\$20** — coat carpet fibres with a thin anti-static layer that helps dissipate charges. Spray lightly and evenly over the carpet surface, let it dry, and the effect typically lasts 2–4 weeks before reapplication is needed. For a DIY alternative, mix one part liquid fabric softener with three parts water in a spray bottle and mist the carpet lightly. The fabric softener leaves a very thin residue that reduces static in the same way dryer sheets work on clothing.

Carpet fibre type matters. Nylon carpet — the most common fibre in Calgary homes — is the worst offender for static buildup. Polyester and olefin (polypropylene) carpets generate less static naturally. If you are choosing new carpet and static is a concern, look for carpet with **built-in anti-static treatment** or choose a polyester fibre. Many modern nylon carpets include anti-static additives during manufacturing, but these treatments diminish over years of cleaning and wear.

Carpet padding also plays a role. Older carpet pads, especially those made of rebond foam, can contribute to static buildup. When the time comes to replace your carpet, investing in a quality pad with anti-static properties — budget **\$1–\$2 per square foot** for quality underpad — addresses the issue from the ground up.

Quick personal fixes for immediate relief include wearing leather-soled shoes or slippers instead of rubber-soled footwear (rubber insulates you and allows charge to build), touching a wooden surface before metal to discharge gently, and using dryer sheets rubbed across carpet in high-traffic areas as a temporary static reducer.

If static is making your carpet unbearable every winter and humidity solutions are not enough, it may be worth considering alternative flooring for the most affected rooms. LVP, tile, and hardwood generate far less static. Find local flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com to explore your options.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- G.D.K Drywall LTD.
- Royland Stucco
- Quality count construction Ltd.
- Greenstone landscaping solutions
- Venkor Group Inc

[View all contractors ?](#)

Should I use felt pads or rubber on furniture feet for floors in Calgary?

Felt pads are the best choice for protecting hardwood, laminate, LVP, and engineered hardwood floors in Calgary homes — rubber pads can leave stains and marks on these surfaces and should only be used on tile and concrete. This is one of those simple decisions that has a real impact on your floor's longevity, especially in Calgary where the dry climate makes finish coats more vulnerable to scratching.

Felt pads work by creating a soft, non-abrasive buffer between furniture legs and the floor surface. They allow furniture to slide slightly when bumped rather than digging in, and they prevent the direct metal-to-floor or wood-to-floor contact that causes dents and scratches. For Calgary homes specifically, felt pads are ideal because they do not trap the fine grit and gravel that gets tracked indoors — particles slide off the smooth felt surface rather than embedding in it the way they would in a rubber pad.

Choose the right type of felt pad for your situation. Self-adhesive felt pads (the most common, available at any Calgary hardware store for **\$5–\$15 per pack**) stick directly to the bottom of chair legs, table legs, sofa feet, and any other furniture that contacts the floor. For dining chairs and other frequently moved furniture, use the thickest felt available — 5mm or thicker — and replace them every 3–6 months as they compress, wear, and accumulate grit. Nail-on felt pads are more durable for heavy furniture that rarely moves, like buffets and bookshelves. Felt furniture sliders (large round or square pads) are excellent for heavy pieces you need to move occasionally for cleaning.

Why rubber pads are problematic on wood and vinyl floors. Rubber contains compounds that react chemically with polyurethane finishes on hardwood and with the plasticizers in LVP, causing yellow or dark stains that are extremely difficult or impossible to remove. This reaction — sometimes called "rubber burn" — is accelerated by Calgary's dry conditions because the finish is under more stress and more susceptible to chemical interaction. Rubber also grips the floor surface tightly, which means any grit trapped underneath grinds into the finish rather than sliding. The one exception is tile and concrete floors, where rubber pads provide excellent grip without risk of chemical staining.

For especially heavy furniture like pianos, large china cabinets, and entertainment centres, consider **furniture cups or caster cups** — wide, shallow cups that distribute the weight over a larger area and prevent point-load denting. A grand piano on a hardwood floor without proper cups will leave permanent dents in any species softer than white oak. Furniture cups with felt bottoms run **\$15–\$40 per set** and are well worth the investment.

A maintenance routine for furniture pads should include flipping chairs over every few months to check that pads are still attached, not worn through, and free of embedded grit. In Calgary, the fine sand and gravel tracked indoors during winter can embed in worn felt pads and turn them into sandpaper — regular inspection and replacement is key. If you are moving furniture for a flooring project, Calgary Floor Installers can match you with a

professional who handles furniture moving as part of the installation process.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Calgary Garage Builders Ltd
- Greenstone landscaping solutions
- Home Style Supplies
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Dealtwith.

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q14

How often should I reseal natural stone floors in a Calgary home?

Natural stone floors in a Calgary home should be resealed every 1–3 years depending on the stone type, location, and traffic level — and Calgary's dry climate actually causes sealers to degrade faster than in more humid regions. Sealing is not optional for natural stone — it is essential maintenance that protects your investment from staining, moisture damage, and the premature deterioration that Calgary's unique conditions accelerate.

Resealing frequency by stone type and location:

Marble and limestone are the most porous common stones and need resealing every **12–18 months** in high-traffic or high-moisture areas like bathroom floors, kitchen floors, and entryways. In lower-traffic areas like a formal living room, every 2 years is usually sufficient. These softer stones absorb liquids quickly when the sealer wears, and once a stain penetrates marble or limestone, it is extremely difficult to remove.

Granite is denser and less porous, requiring resealing every **2–3 years** in most applications. Some very dense granites — like absolute black — may need even less frequent sealing, while lighter, more porous granites need attention closer to every 18 months.

Slate and travertine fall in between, typically needing resealing every **1–2 years**. Travertine's natural pitting and open pores make it particularly vulnerable when the sealer wears. Slate holds up well but its cleft surface texture can make sealer application uneven — professional application is recommended for best results.

Why Calgary is harder on stone sealers than most cities. Calgary's extreme dryness — indoor humidity of 15–25% for five months of the year — draws moisture out of the sealer, causing it to dry out, crack, and lose effectiveness faster than in humid climates. The dramatic humidity swings during chinook events add thermal and moisture stress that accelerates this degradation. Additionally, Calgary's hard water leaves mineral deposits that sit on the stone surface and accelerate sealer wear in bathrooms and kitchens. Road salt tracked into entryways is chemically aggressive and eats through sealers in high-traffic entry zones. All of these factors mean Calgary homeowners should err on the shorter end of resealing intervals.

How to test whether your stone needs resealing: Place a few drops of water on the stone surface in a high-traffic area. If the water beads up and sits on the surface, the sealer is still effective. If the water absorbs into the stone within 5–10 minutes, darkening the surface, the sealer has worn and the stone needs resealing. Perform this test every 6 months as a preventive check.

Professional resealing costs \$3–\$6 per square foot in the Calgary market, which includes cleaning, stripping any old sealer residue, applying the new sealer, and buffing. For a 200 square foot bathroom, that is **\$600–\$1,200** every couple of years — a worthwhile investment considering that natural stone flooring costs **\$15–\$40 per square foot installed** and replacement is far more expensive than maintenance.

Use a quality penetrating (impregnating) sealer rather than a topical sealer for floor applications. Penetrating sealers absorb into the stone's pores and protect from within, while allowing the stone to breathe. Topical sealers sit on the surface and can become slippery when wet — a safety concern for bathroom floors. Your stone supplier or a flooring professional can recommend the right sealer for your specific stone type. Find experienced stone flooring contractors through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Q15

What kind of doormat setup works best for Calgary homes in winter?

The most effective doormat setup for a Calgary home in winter is a three-layer system: a boot scraper or heavy-duty scraper mat outside, a large absorbent runner inside the door, and a boot tray next to it for wet footwear. Calgary's winter conditions — packed snow, ice, road salt, gravel, and fine sand — put extraordinary stress on interior floors from October through April, and a proper entry system is your first and most cost-effective line of defence.

Layer 1: Outdoor scraper mat or boot scraper. This is the first point of contact and needs to be aggressive enough to knock off packed snow, ice chunks, and coarse gravel from boot soles. A heavy rubber mat with raised

bristles or a metal boot scraper mounted beside the door works best. Coir (coconut fibre) mats are effective scrapers but deteriorate faster in Calgary's freeze-thaw cycles — they absorb moisture, freeze solid, and become brittle. Rubber-based scraper mats tolerate Calgary's temperature extremes better. Size matters — a minimum of **24 by 36 inches** ensures people actually step on it rather than over it. Budget **\$30–\$60** for a quality rubber scraper mat.

Layer 2: Indoor absorbent runner. Once boots have been scraped outside, the indoor mat captures the finer salt residue, moisture, and remaining grit. This should be a **3 to 5 foot long** machine-washable runner made of cotton, microfibre, or a commercial-grade absorbent material. Length is important — people take 2–3 steps after entering, and a short mat lets salt and moisture bypass onto your main flooring. During peak winter months, this mat needs washing or replacing every **1–2 weeks** because a saturated mat stops absorbing and starts depositing salt and moisture back onto the floor. Budget **\$40–\$100** for a quality washable runner, and consider owning two so you always have a clean one while the other is in the wash.

Layer 3: Boot tray. A sturdy boot tray with raised edges placed next to or on the indoor mat gives a dedicated landing spot for wet, salty boots and shoes. As snow melts off the boots, the tray contains the salty water rather than letting it spread across your floor. A basic plastic boot tray costs **\$15–\$30** and saves enormous wear on your flooring. For families with multiple pairs of boots, a larger tray or a boot rack with a drip pan underneath is a worthwhile upgrade.

Additional tips for Calgary's worst weather. During heavy snowfall and chinook melt events, keep a small broom or handheld vacuum near the entry for quick sweeps — twice-daily sweeping during these periods makes a meaningful difference. If your home has a garage entry, apply the same mat system there — garage floors accumulate road salt and sand that gets tracked into the house just as readily as from the front door. Homes with mudrooms have a built-in advantage, but even a mudroom needs proper mats and a boot tray to contain the mess.

For the floor directly under the mat system, tile or porcelain is the ideal surface because it is impervious to salt, moisture, and abrasion. If your entryway is hardwood, LVP, or laminate and taking a beating every winter, consider a small tile installation in the landing zone — even a 4 by 6 foot tiled area with proper transitions protects the rest of your home. A small entryway tile installation runs **\$800–\$1,500** in the Calgary market. Need help with an entryway flooring upgrade? Calgary Floor Installers can match you with a local contractor for a free estimate.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Home Style Supplies
- Amar Homes Inc

- Upper Cut Landscaping LTD
- Alpine Exteriors siding and roofing
- True North Overhead Doors

[View all contractors ?](#)

How do I fix minor scratches on hardwood floors in my Calgary home?

Minor surface scratches on hardwood floors can usually be repaired at home using a few simple techniques, but the approach depends on whether the scratch is in the finish coat only or has penetrated into the wood itself. Calgary's dry climate and the abrasive grit tracked indoors during winter make surface scratches one of the most common hardwood maintenance issues in the region — fortunately, most scratches are cosmetic and fixable without professional help.

For light surface scratches that are in the finish coat only (you can feel them with your fingernail but they do not show raw wood), the simplest fix is a **hardwood floor restorer or scratch concealer** from a hardware store. Products like Bona Hardwood Floor Polish, Rejuvenate Professional Wood Floor Restorer, or Old English Scratch Cover fill the scratch with a finish-compatible coating that makes it virtually invisible. Clean the area first, apply the product with a soft cloth following the direction of the wood grain, and buff gently. These products cost **\$10–\$20** and handle the vast majority of light surface scratches. For polyurethane-finished floors, you can also try rubbing a small amount of **mineral spirits** into the scratch with a soft cloth — this temporarily swells the finish and can close fine scratches.

For deeper scratches that show raw wood beneath the finish, you need to fill the scratch before refinishing it. Use a **wood filler or wax fill stick** matched to your floor's colour — most hardwood flooring suppliers and hardware stores in Calgary carry these in a range of wood tones for **\$8–\$15**. Press the filler into the scratch with a putty knife, let it dry completely, then lightly sand the area with **220-grit sandpaper** going with the grain. Wipe away all dust with a tack cloth, then apply a thin coat of matching polyurethane with a small brush. Let it dry 24 hours before walking on the area. For oil-finished floors, apply the manufacturer's maintenance oil instead of polyurethane.

For clusters of scratches in high-traffic areas — common in Calgary hallways and kitchens where tracked-in grit accumulates — individual scratch repair becomes impractical. In this case, a professional **screen-and-recoat** is the most cost-effective solution. The floor is lightly abraded with a buffer screen (not sanded down to raw wood), cleaned, and coated with a fresh layer of polyurethane. This costs **\$2–\$3 per square foot** in the Calgary market — so a 200 square foot hallway runs **\$400–\$600** — and makes the floor look nearly new. Most Calgary hardwood floors benefit from a screen-and-recoat every 5–7 years, or more often in homes with pets and heavy traffic.

Prevention matters as much as repair. Felt pads on all furniture legs, entry mats at every door, daily sweeping or robot vacuuming to remove abrasive grit, and maintaining indoor humidity at 35–45% to keep the finish flexible all reduce scratch accumulation dramatically. Calgary's fine gravel and road salt are the primary scratch culprits — controlling what comes in the door is the best long-term strategy.

If your scratches are too extensive for DIY repair, or if you are unsure about your floor's finish type, get matched with a flooring professional through Calgary Floor Installers for an assessment and refinishing estimate.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Eshine Cleaning Services
- Mr & Mrs Paintastic Inc
- True North Overhead Doors
- Calgary Custom Concepts
- Upper Cut Landscaping LTD

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q17

Can I use a steam mop on laminate floors in Calgary?

No — do not use a steam mop on laminate flooring. Steam mops are one of the fastest ways to damage laminate, and using one will likely void your manufacturer's warranty. This is one of the most common and costly cleaning mistakes homeowners make, and it is important to understand why steam and laminate are a destructive combination.

Laminate flooring is NOT waterproof. While the surface layer (a melamine wear layer over a photographic image layer) resists casual spills, the core of laminate is **HDF (high-density fibreboard)** — essentially compressed wood fibres. HDF absorbs moisture readily, and once it swells, it does not return to its original shape. A steam mop forces superheated moisture into the seams between planks at high temperature, and this moisture penetrates directly into the HDF core. The result is **swollen edges, warped planks, delaminating surface layers, and damaged click-lock connections** that develop over weeks and months of steam mop use — often by the time you notice the damage, it is irreversible.

Calgary's dry climate creates an additional risk. In Calgary's extreme winter dryness, laminate planks contract slightly and the seams between boards open up a fraction. These wider seams during the heating season provide an even easier path for steam moisture to reach the HDF core. Homeowners who steam mop their laminate during winter — when the urge to deep clean salt and grit residue is strongest — often see the worst damage because the

steam finds those expanded seams readily.

What to use instead for cleaning laminate in Calgary:

A **damp microfibre mop** with a laminate-specific cleaner is the right tool. Spray the cleaner onto the mop head — not onto the floor — and mop in the direction of the plank length. The key word is damp, not wet. You should never see standing water or puddles on laminate during cleaning. For everyday cleaning, a dry microfibre mop or vacuum on the hard floor setting (beater bar off) removes the grit and salt that Calgary homeowners track indoors. For road salt stains in the entryway, a 50/50 vinegar-water solution on a damp cloth works well on laminate — just wring out the cloth thoroughly.

Avoid these other common laminate cleaning mistakes in addition to steam mops: no soaking wet mops, no abrasive cleaners or scrubbing powders, no wax or polish products (laminate cannot be waxed — the melamine surface rejects it and the wax builds up as a hazy film), and no oil soap (Murphy's and similar products leave a residue that dulls the surface).

If your laminate is already damaged from steam mopping, the bad news is that swollen HDF cannot be repaired — affected planks need to be replaced. The good news is that laminate's click-lock installation system makes individual plank replacement relatively straightforward if you have leftover planks from the original installation. A flooring professional can remove and replace damaged sections without redoing the entire floor, typically for **\$3–\$7 per square foot** including labour.

If your laminate needs repair or you are considering upgrading to LVP — which is genuinely waterproof and handles more aggressive cleaning — browse flooring contractors in the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory/?trade=flooring for professional advice.

Q18

How does Calgary's hard water affect my tile and stone floor surfaces?

Calgary's hard water leaves mineral deposits — primarily calcium and magnesium — on tile and stone surfaces that accumulate over time, dulling the finish, staining grout, and potentially damaging natural stone if not addressed regularly. The Calgary region's water supply, drawn from the Bow and Elbow rivers, is moderately to very hard, and the mineral content affects every wet surface in your home, with floors taking a cumulative beating in bathrooms, kitchens, and entryways.

On porcelain and ceramic tile, hard water deposits appear as a white, chalky haze or film that makes the tile look perpetually dirty even after mopping. The deposits are most visible on dark-coloured tile and on glossy finishes

where they contrast sharply with the clean surface underneath. Regular mopping with plain water does not remove them — it actually makes the problem worse by depositing more minerals with each cleaning. The good news is that porcelain and ceramic tile are chemically resistant, so you can use acidic cleaners to dissolve the mineral buildup without damaging the tile itself. A monthly cleaning with a **50/50 white vinegar and water solution**, or a commercial lime and calcium remover, dissolves the deposits effectively. Let the solution sit on the tile for 5–10 minutes, scrub with a soft brush, and rinse thoroughly with clean water.

On natural stone — marble, granite, travertine, limestone, and slate — hard water is a more serious concern. Natural stone is porous and chemically reactive to varying degrees. Calcium deposits that sit on marble or limestone will eventually etch the surface, creating dull spots that cannot be cleaned away — they require professional polishing to remove. Travertine, with its naturally pitted surface, traps mineral deposits in its pores where they are very difficult to remove. **Never use vinegar or acidic cleaners on natural stone** — the acid dissolves the calcium in the stone itself, not just the mineral deposits. Use only pH-neutral stone cleaners and wipe surfaces dry after cleaning to minimize deposit formation. Professional stone cleaning and polishing costs **\$3–\$8 per square foot** and may be needed every 1–2 years for bathroom floors exposed to hard water daily.

Grout takes the worst damage from hard water. Cement-based grout is porous and absorbs mineral-laden water, which deposits calcium and magnesium deep within the grout structure. Over time, this causes white discoloration in coloured grout, a rough texture that traps more dirt, and eventually grout deterioration as mineral crystal growth creates micro-cracks. **Sealing grout** is the single most effective defence — a quality penetrating grout sealer prevents water from absorbing into the grout in the first place, keeping minerals on the surface where they can be wiped away. Grout sealing costs **\$2–\$4 per square foot** professionally and should be renewed every 1–2 years in wet areas.

A whole-home water softener is the ultimate solution for hard water damage to floors and every other surface in your home. A quality water softener system costs **\$1,500–\$3,000 installed** in the Calgary market and eliminates the mineral content before it reaches your taps, shower, and mopping bucket. For homeowners with significant natural stone investment, a water softener often pays for itself in reduced maintenance costs within a few years.

If your tile or stone floors are already showing hard water damage, a flooring professional can assess whether cleaning, resealing, or polishing will restore them. Find local contractors through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Eshine Cleaning Services

- Wise Abatement
- Durable Decks
- Dealtwith.
- True North Overhead Doors

[View all contractors ?](#)

What maintenance does heated flooring require in a Calgary home?

Heated flooring systems — both electric radiant and hydronic — are remarkably low-maintenance once properly installed, which is one of the reasons they are so popular in Calgary homes where cold subfloors are a genuine comfort issue from October through April. The vast majority of heated floor maintenance involves the flooring surface above the system rather than the heating system itself, but there are a few important checks that Calgary homeowners should perform regularly.

Electric radiant floor heating (the most common type in Calgary residential installations, typically electric mats or cables embedded in thinset beneath tile) has essentially no moving parts to maintain. The heating element itself — a resistance wire in a mesh mat or loose cable — is sealed in thinset or levelling compound and requires zero ongoing maintenance. The thermostat and floor temperature sensor are the only components that may need attention over the life of the system.

Annual maintenance for electric systems includes checking the thermostat for proper calibration by comparing its temperature reading to a standalone thermometer placed on the floor surface. If the readings diverge by more than 2–3 degrees, the floor sensor may need recalibration or replacement — a job that costs **\$150–\$300** for a qualified electrician. Inspect the thermostat wiring connections annually for any signs of overheating (discolouration, burning smell, warm cover plate). If the system has a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) — which it should under the Alberta Electrical Code — test it monthly by pressing the test button and confirming the system shuts off, then resetting it.

Hydronic heated floors (hot water circulated through PEX tubing, connected to a boiler) have more maintenance requirements because the system includes a boiler, circulating pump, manifold, and fluid. The boiler should be serviced annually by a qualified technician — expect to pay **\$150–\$250 per service call** in the Calgary market. The circulating pump should be checked for proper operation and any unusual noise. The system's glycol mixture (antifreeze solution used in many hydronic systems to prevent freezing in unheated zones) should be tested every 2–3 years and topped up or replaced as needed — glycol degrades over time and loses its protective properties.

The flooring surface above the heated system requires standard maintenance appropriate to the material — tile grout should be inspected and resealed regularly (every 1–2 years in bathrooms), hardwood or engineered hardwood over hydronic systems should be monitored for excessive drying (heated floors amplify Calgary's already extreme winter dryness), and LVP over heated floors should be checked for any seam separation caused by thermal cycling. One important note: **never exceed the manufacturer's maximum surface temperature** for the flooring material above the heating system. Most engineered hardwood and LVP are rated for a maximum floor surface temperature of **27–28 degrees Celsius** (80–82 degrees Fahrenheit). Exceeding this causes accelerated

wear, warping, and adhesive failure. Tile has no practical temperature limit for residential heated floors.

Calgary-specific considerations: The heated floor system works hardest during Calgary's extreme cold snaps (-25 to -35 degrees) and should be on a programmable schedule that ramps up gradually rather than blasting from cold to maximum. Rapid temperature swings — especially during chinook events — stress both the flooring and the heating system. Using the programmable thermostat to maintain a consistent base temperature with modest boosts during occupied hours extends the life of both the system and the flooring above it.

Any electrical work on heated floor systems — including thermostat replacement, sensor repair, or circuit modifications — requires a **licensed electrician** and an electrical permit inspected by a Safety Codes Officer under Alberta regulations. If your heated floor is not performing properly or you want to add heated flooring to a renovation, find contractors through the Calgary Construction Network at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Mr & Mrs Paintastic Inc
- Premium Built Structures
- Turnbull masonry
- Upper Cut Landscaping LTD
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q20

How do I protect carpet from fading near south-facing windows in my Calgary home?

Calgary's intense UV radiation — amplified by the city's high elevation at 1,045 metres above sea level — causes carpet fading near south- and west-facing windows significantly faster than in lower-elevation Canadian cities. Protecting your carpet from UV damage requires a combination of window treatments, UV-blocking film, and smart furniture placement, with the understanding that some fading is inevitable in sun-exposed areas no matter what measures you take.

UV window film is the single most effective protection for carpet and all flooring near sunny windows.

Professional-grade UV window film blocks up to **99% of UV rays** while still allowing visible light to pass through, so your rooms stay bright without the damaging radiation that breaks down carpet fibre dyes and causes colour shift. Professional UV film installation in Calgary costs **\$8–\$15 per square foot of glass**, with a typical south-facing living room window costing **\$200–\$500** to treat. This is a one-time investment that protects carpet, furniture, artwork, and hardwood for the film's 10–15 year lifespan. DIY UV film kits are available at Calgary home improvement stores for less, but professional installation provides better coverage, no bubbles, and a manufacturer's warranty.

Low-E glass (low emissivity) provides similar UV protection and is standard in many newer Calgary homes and windows. If you are replacing windows as part of a renovation, specifying low-E glass provides permanent UV protection without the need for applied film. If your home already has low-E windows and you are still seeing fading, the issue may be visible light degradation rather than UV — some carpet dyes are also sensitive to prolonged visible light exposure.

Window treatments add another layer of protection. Sheer curtains or solar shades filter UV and reduce heat gain while maintaining natural light — important in Calgary where winter days are short and homeowners value every bit of sunlight. Closing blinds or curtains during the most intense sun hours (roughly 11 AM to 3 PM on south-facing windows) dramatically reduces UV exposure. Automated blinds on a timer ensure protection even when you are not home to close them manually.

Carpet fibre type affects fade resistance. Solution-dyed nylon and solution-dyed polyester are the most fade-resistant carpet fibres because the colour is embedded throughout the entire fibre during manufacturing rather than applied as a surface dye. If you are choosing new carpet for a sun-exposed room, ask specifically for solution-dyed fibre — it costs marginally more but resists fading far better over the long term. Olefin (polypropylene) carpet is also highly fade-resistant and is a good choice for sunrooms and areas with extreme UV exposure.

Furniture rotation and area rugs help manage uneven fading. Move furniture periodically so that shaded and exposed areas swap, blending the fading more evenly across the room. Area rugs in front of sunny windows protect the carpet underneath but create a sharp colour difference when moved — this is a trade-off. If you use area rugs for protection, rotate them seasonally.

Calgary's sunny climate is a double-edged sword for carpet. The city averages over **330 days of sunshine per year** — more than almost any other major Canadian city. Combined with the high-altitude UV intensity, south-facing rooms in Calgary receive substantially more damaging radiation than equivalent rooms in Toronto, Vancouver, or any Maritime city. Homeowners who invest in UV protection early save significantly on premature carpet replacement.

If your carpet is already noticeably faded and beyond what cleaning or rotation can address, it may be time for replacement. Calgary Floor Installers can match you with a local carpet professional for a free estimate — browse options through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=flooring.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Calgary 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 April 5, 2026 and may change. Visit calgaryfloorinstallers.com for the latest answers.