

Ask Jon Eakes

Cleaning floors -- avoiding problems

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When cleaning floors remember sheet vinyl is the only floor covering that is actually impervious to liquids, and even there don't get too much water around the edges where it could go under and cause problems. All floor tiles, even highly glazed ceramic tiles are not waterproof, and the grout between the tiles lets in even more water. That may surprise you, but you have to be careful to not continuously soak a tile floor with mopping water, wet rugs or dripping laundry. Water will get through and cause problems with the adhesives and the wooden floor below. Silicone sealers do not waterproof the grout, it slows down the water absorption and makes it easier to clean off dirt. Tiled shower floors have a rubber or plastic water barrier down below inside the mortar layers that drains into a double floor drain. Without that, the floor under will eventually rot out. Wood floors of course have many cracks between boards that can let water under the finish. So when you clean floors, don't flood them with a mop. Work damp and get any liquids up quickly.

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