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# 5 Easy Steps To Improve Your Floor Cleaning Routine

Your guide from Arrow County Supplies

# **The condition of a building's floors can have a huge effect upon the perceptions of cleanliness to its patrons and visitors.**

Cleaning professionals face a huge challenge to minimise this risk quickly and efficiently with ever reducing budgets and increasing expectations to do more at a higher standard. Fortunately, due to the advances made within the industry in terms of equipment, processes and chemicals, it is possible to reduce floor care costs up to 50%.

Here is our best practice guide for streamlining this activity.

# Assess The Challenge

You will need to assess the materials of the floor areas within your facility. Do you have soft flooring such as carpeted areas? Or hard flooring such as stone, vinyl, Linoleum, wood or a combination of the two? When was the last time your floors received a deep clean? What condition are they currently in? How do your floors look? Aesthetics are an important factor to consider as this is the impression it gives to facility users. Are your floors dull or have clear “traffic marks”? Could this be down to wear and tear from ineffective cleaning?

Often dirt is tracked through particularly in high traffic areas which damages the surface of the flooring despite your best efforts to complete a daily floor care routine. The use of matting to trap dirt in doorways can help prevent a substantial amount of corrosive / dirt particles from damaging the floor.

**80% of contamination entering critical environments does so on feet or wheels.**

A good way to measure how effective your current cleaning methods are would be to perform an ATP monitoring test before and after cleaning.

Measuring and mapping the areas you have to clean is often a good planning tool as you can calculate the resources you need to complete the whole cleaning operation. Some surface types will take longer than others, so anticipating time and materials required on a case by case basis is essential.

Once you have a good assessment on paper, its worth discussing your plans with your cleaning staff. See what they have learnt from carrying out the tasks day in day out. They can have really useful practical insights that can be overlooked in desk based planning. Often getting colleagues from other facilities who don't see these floors every day can add valuable insights

# Develop Maintenance Plans

Armed with your assessment information evaluate the cleaning options available which meet labour, budgetary and environment restrictions.

Hard flooring is split into 6 categories:

- Resilient (including all vinyl types; composition tile, sheet solid luxury as well as rubber and cork)
- Stone (marble, granite, slate, travertine, limestone, agglomerate, and terrazzo)
- Wood (solid as well as laminated and manufactured)
- Clay & Masonry (includes ceramic, porcelain, brick and terra cotta)  
Concrete (coated, acid stained, dyed, overlay, polished, integrally coloured and dry shake)
- Speciality (including bamboo and cork).

Soft flooring mainly consists of carpet; soft pile, woven tiles, and any other surface which has the flex to bounce back.

## Prevention Plans

Prevention is better than cure!

- Keep soil track to a minimum.
- Use mats in doorways and make sure they are regularly cleaned.
- Discuss staff and visitor access requirements with other stakeholders
- Make plenty of regularly emptied waste bins available.

## Environmental Factors

- Retail outlets, educational facilities and commercial offices all have times when traffic is particularly high and require cleaning schedules that take this into account.
- Healthcare facilities have particularly high sanitary requirements as well the need to keep noise levels to a minimum.
- Airports, government and military buildings have to incorporate higher level security measures which may delay or inhibit cleaning routines.
- Industrial and manufacturing facilities have heavy soiling and require specialist cleaning.

# Invest In Staff Training

Up to date knowledge is key, not only for those in charge of the building environment but for the cleaning technicians using the equipment.

The latest advances in floor care are more efficient and simple to use, helping BSCs and in house cleaning staff to do more, in less time, often using fewer chemicals to a higher standard.

Ensure your staff have the knowledge to properly identify the correct product for use on a given surface. They need to have an understanding of why the product cleans, how the product can be applied, how the surface itself can be affected, and the quality standards that should be achieved. For example using a product with the wrong pH could damage the flooring surface, irrespective of how well it cleans

Engaging with staff through one-on-one meetings, supervisor training, videos, manuals and wall charts and supplier information, gives workers a better understanding of the products, systems and procedures. It is vital that training is an ongoing process - this will help keep standards rising with an constant eye on improvement.

**Staff knowledge and training, or the lack of, is one of the biggest causes of substandard floor care routines.**

# Use The Right Products

Cost is often a major driver in product selection; however it may be more effective to evaluate products on an overall “value” basis.

Product selection can have significant impacts on the overall performance of your floor cleaning routine. Selecting the right product for the right surface is essential. Neglect in planning this properly can not only lead to ineffective cleaning, but can also cause secondary problems such as increased risk of slips and trips.

Some products may be less costly but less effective requiring staff to take longer on the task. As labour costs are a far more significant part of overall budgets, the effect of using ineffective products can have an exponential effect on overall expenditure

Some products are difficult to dispense leading to persistent overuse, consequently wiping out any cost benefit.

A good product supplier will be able to advise on exactly the best products to achieve the results in terms of budget control, cleaning performance, high cleaning standards, sustainability and regulatory compliance. Choose a supplier who can demonstrate expertise across all these key areas and can assist with staff training.

## Try our Workplace Assessment Programme!

Want to find out how you can improve your floorcare routine? Book your free Workplace Assessment today!


📞 01743 283 600

@ askarrow@arrowcounty.com

🌐 arrowcounty.com

## Contact Us

Arrow County Supplies,  
Arrow House, Longden  
Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 9AE

 01743 283 600

 [response@arrowcounty.com](mailto:response@arrowcounty.com)

 [arrowcounty.com](http://arrowcounty.com)



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