

# Information Sheet



## EFFECTIVE MEANS OF CLEANING STAINLESS STEEL

### Quick & easy tips for keeping the finish looking great

Retaining a great finish on stainless steel surfaces is just a matter of a few simple steps.

And you don't need any expensive cleaning agents or special equipment – ordinary household cleaners are usually all that's required. You just need to bear in mind a few easy DOs and DON'Ts ...

#### KEEPING STAINLESS STEEL CLEAN

- \*Stainless steel looks best if it's cleaned regularly with plenty of water.
- \*Drying afterwards makes sure streaky marks aren't left behind.
- \*Wiping with a damp cloth is basically ineffective, as it can smear dirt without removing it.
- \*Routine cleaning prevents any stubborn stains building up.

#### WHAT TO USE:-

For day to day cleaning, plenty of water, some mild detergent and a cloth or soft brush will do the job. You can use a 1% ammonia solution **but, don't use bleach** – it's just too easy to make the solution too strong making it difficult to properly rinse it off the surface afterwards.

**After washing, thoroughly rinse with clean water and wipe the surface dry with a soft absorbent cloth.**

On brushed stainless steel, follow the direction of the grain for best results.

An excellent cloth to use is 3M's Scotch-Brite high performance cleaning cloth.

#### AVOID SCRATCHES!

Remember, stainless steel can be scratched by careless handling or aggressive scrubbing.

Avoid dragging rough items across the surface and be aware that grit, trapped under other materials, can actually cause surface scratches.

#### CHEMICAL RE-ACTION

Stainless steel may discolour if left in contact with salts or acids for extended periods.

**Do not** leave carbon steel items in contact with stainless steel, particularly if wet.

Applying regular hygiene measures, like a maintenance/cleaning schedule, will minimise any potential problems.

#### HANDLING TOUGH MARKS & STAINS

Here's how to get rid of the most common tough marks on stainless steel:

##### **Fingerprints, oil & grease marks**

If a mild detergent or dishwashing detergent doesn't shift unsightly fingermarks, eliminate them with a quality glass cleaner on a soft cloth. Also, use of a small amount of alcohol, methylated spirits, acetone or mineral turpentine will remove these type marks.

**Thoroughly rinse with clean water and dry.**

Longer protection to high volume usage items can be achieved by lightly rubbing with olive oil or baby oil followed by a polish and shine using a soft cloth.

##### **Tea & coffee stains on stainless steel shelves, benchtops etc**

Discolouration from tea and coffee stains can be removed by using a solution of boiling water and baking powder, applying it to the grain and lightly rubbing it with a soft cloth.

**Thoroughly rinse with clean water and dry.**

#### REMOVING STICKY LABELS

Remove sticky labels as soon as possible.

Gentle heat from a hair dryer or a glue gun generally softens the glue for easy removal

Eucalyptus oil based cleaners (or eucalyptus oil on its own) often work well to remove adhesives.

Ensure you don't leave any glue on the surface – it could trap dirt or break down and cause staining.

#### RUST MARKS

Apply cream cleanser with a soft damp cloth and rub gently.

If the mark still won't shift, it might be necessary to use a proprietary stainless steel cleaner. These are usually based on dangerous chemicals (such as phosphoric, oxalic or sulphamic acids) and must be handled with care according to the manufacturer's directions.

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**After cleaning it is important to neutralise the acid with a 1% ammonia or baking powder solution, rinse with clean water and wipe dry.**

If the rust has worn away the surface, it may be able to be repaired with professional polishing however, seek expert advice.

A common problem is rust marks and "leakage" on soap dispensers. This is primarily caused by use of inexpensive liquid soaps, with a very high percentage of water being the carrier agent. It is recommended that only coconut or vegetable oil based quality soaps are used in stainless steel dispensers as they will provide both personal hygienic benefits and functional longevity.

## **PAINT**

Apply paint stripper, taking care to follow the safety instructions.

You may need to use a nylon brush or nylon scouring pad but, **DO NOT USE** metal scrapers as they will damage the surface.

## **CEMENT & MORTAR**

Cement and mortar splashes should be washed off before they set.

Mild acids such as vinegar may be needed but **not** those using chloride rich chemicals.

**Never** use brick cleaning liquids which contain hydrochloric acid.

Be very careful that loosened particles don't scratch the steel surface.

## **DON'T GO AGAINST THE GRAIN**

Always rub stainless steel in the same direction as the grain.

Rubbing against the grain will spoil the finish and the surface will lose its shine. Worse, rubbing against the grain can damage the surface by creating microscopic crevices where dirt can collect. This can lead to corrosion spots. Fortunately, it's usually easy to tell which is the right direction. You need to watch out for items like round handrails, which are often polished around their circumference when they're manufactured, rather than up and down the length of the tube.

If you have to scrub a mark or stain to remove it, make sure you use a clean nylon scourer or a cloth with chalk-based cream cleaner. But test an inconspicuous area first as you could end up with a bright polished spot which doesn't match the rest of the surface.

## **NEVER EVER** use

\*steel wool (wire wool) to clean stainless steel. It is usually made of carbon steel and any fragments left behind will rust onto the stainless steel surface.

\* pre-used scourer, which may previously have been used on ordinary (carbon) steel is also a **NEVER DO**, for the same reason.

\* Stainless steel wool scouring pads are available for heavy duty work, like removing burnt food from stainless steel saucepans. These will scratch the stainless steel surface, but won't leave fragments to go rusty.

## **TOTALLY AVOID**

- \* **Rubbing with steel wool (wire wool) or scraping with steel tools**
- \* **Using scourers and cleaning cloths that have been used on ordinary steel**
- \* **Rubbing plastic scourers across the grain of brushed surfaces**
- \* **Using concentrated bleach or hydrochloric acid-based cleaning**
- \* **Contact with product containing chlorine bleach, hydrochloric or muriatic acid**

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