

autostone

floor systems

a culture of clean

a Culture of Clean

We are here to indoctrinate with the AutoStone “culture of clean”! You have just purchased the best automotive floor system for your dealership. Regardless if you purchased our shop floor, service drive or showroom floor system, your floors should be cleaned on a regular basis. Your floors need to be cleaned with standard floor scrubber-sweeper equipment.

While AutoStone is an easy to clean floor, it is not a self-cleaning floor! Cats and ovens are self-cleaning, AutoStone is not. The good news is, with proper and regular cleaning practices, your floors can be kept looking clean and professional for many years to come. A key phrase to remember is “proper and regular cleaning practices”. Gravity causes all things to fall to the ground and an AutoStone floor system is not exempt from the laws of physics – at least not yet.

A culture of clean means AutoStone is here to educate you on some fundamental principles and practices we recommend you implement in your cleaning procedures. AutoStone provides your dealership life time (technical) cleaning support on how to maintain your floor properly. Lastly, if your cleaning practices have fallen off and you need assistance in getting your facility to look “like new-again”, we can direct you to qualified 3rd party cleaning companies who specialize in the proper care and maintenance of porcelain tile flooring.

What to expect from AutoStone

You can download this document as a guide to help you with proper methods and practices related to keeping your floor clean. If your dealership elects, we can meet with your cleaning service company and/or facility director during the installation phase of your floor. We have an AutoStone Project Manager who will visit your dealership during the renovation and/or new construction. This is an ideal time to get your team up to speed with proper cleaning practices.

AutoStone associates can review your equipment to assist you in making sure your floor scrubber-sweeper is correctly configured to maximize its ability to clean your tile and grout. AutoStone does recommend you have at least (2) floor scrubber-sweepers for your dealership. One for your AutoStone shop and service drive and another unit specifically for your showroom. Each facility has its own unique set of requirements and needs.

Historical evidence has shown that when floor scrubbers get dirty from cleaning the shop, they have a tendency to leave them outside the showroom use. This usually means cleaning services use mops in the showroom. Using a mop is NOT cleaning your floor. Mops only sling around dirty water, which dries and leaves soap and dirt contaminants behind.

We always recommend a good wet-vacuum to suck up dirty water. We also recommend a good flood rinse at the end of your cleaning with chemicals to remove all chemical residue which in many cases can negatively impact the performance of your floor.

PH Neutral and the flood rinse

We encourage your cleaning crews to be very careful about the type of chemicals to use. An AutoStone Floor System does not require a lot of chemicals to clean. The chemical should be used lightly and sparingly and we always recommend a flood rinse with CLEAN water after each chemical introduction.

The biggest problem we see is chemicals left behind on the tile surface and in the grout joints.

Whitening of grout joints is usually related to dried soap residue or efflorescence residue. Both can be better controlled by sucking up all water from the joints and using clean water as a rinse to remove any remaining chemical.

Grout joints are the lowest point on the floor. Therefore all the contaminants usually end up in the grout joint. The best manner and method to keep them clean and true in color is to have a machine that scrubs out the joints and sucks up the cleaning chemical after scrubbing. Again, after this process, a good flood rinse will help remove any remaining contaminants and remove the chemical residue that may remain on the tile and in the grout joint.

Multi-step “sponge” mopping

We have seen multi-step “sponge” mopping work for grout joints in showroom applications. This requires (2) sponge mops and (2) separate buckets of water. You can spray a light chemical in the joint and wipe it out with the 1st sponge mop and wring it out in the bucket. The 2nd sponge mop and clean bucket of water is to act as the final clean water rinse.

In both cases, you need to empty the buckets of water, especially the 2nd bucket to make sure that you are not just re-applying chemicals to the grout joint. You can substitute the 2nd sponge mop with a good wet-vacuum system to suck up the chemicals.

This low-tech manner can help get your grout joints back to a cleaner state.

Tire tracking – the signature of too much acidic cleaning compound

When you see rubber transfer on your floor that appears soon after cleaning, it is usually the indication that there is an acidic residue that remains on your floor. Acidic chemicals are used by most cleaning crews and without a flood rinse to remove it, it stays on your floor and holds onto rubber when activated with water, etc.

Acids will remain on the floor and need to be rinsed off a number of times with a clean water rinse.

Life time technical cleaning support

AutoStone is here to service and support your facility for the life of your facility. As a reminder, if your cleaning practices diminish, for whatever reason, AutoStone is here to provide you our life time technical cleaning assistance.

How to clean your floor

Former cleaning practices need to be re-evaluated and a new understanding of your floor system should be embraced. There are two components that need to be cleaned: your tile surface and your grout joint. Both can be addressed in the same cleaning process with correct and proper cleaning equipment and techniques.

What **NOT** to do

Mops are not for maintenance cleaning.

1. Mopping is not cleaning your floor. Mops should only be used to clean-up immediate spills or other type scenarios. They should not be used for normal maintenance and floor cleaning.
2. Mops only spread dirty water and contaminants around.
3. Once the water evaporates from your floor, the dirt, soap and other chemicals/contaminants are left behind and on the surface of your tile and in your grout joint.
4. Even the best mopping practices are insufficient for your dealership requirements.

Mopping hazards:

1. Mopping your floor will leave soap residue behind. When soap dries, it leaves a film on your tile surface, which becomes an adhesive which attracts other contaminants. This will make your floor look even dirtier.
2. When soap residue is left behind, it can be easily re-activated with a light amount of water (misting from a light rain or even humidity). When soap is re-activated, it becomes very slippery and can negatively impact your DCOF (dynamic coefficient of friction) level. Your DCOF level is your “slip-and-fall” rating. Soap residue will create a scenario for greater slip-and-fall accidents.
3. Mopping leaves soap residue, dirt and other contaminants in your grout joint. Initially, you will see a white residue in your grout joints – after each mopping (once the water has evaporated). This “white” contaminant is the soap residue sitting on top of your grout, in the “U” channel that makes up your grout joint.
4. Once the water has evaporated it leaves behind a chemical residue. This contaminant sits on top of the grout joint (not staining it), but remaining behind due to incorrect cleaning practices. Mopping is not the only culprit when grout looks this way. Dealers need to use a good floor scrubber-sweeper with a rotary brush and **vigorous wet vacuum** to suck up the dirty water.
5. A good regimen that includes using a wet vacuum that sucks up dirty water is the only way to remove all dirt,

chemicals and other such contaminants. Mopping does not provide this important step in keeping your tile surface clean and your grout joint free of such contaminants.

Proper equipment you should have

As previously mentioned, you should have a good operating floor scrubber-sweeping machine. While you can use a floor scrubber – we recommend the scrubber-sweeping option. The difference is significant and greatly impacts both the tile and your grout joint.

Scrubber-Sweeper Machines

These machines offer cylindrical brushes that provide the added benefit of sweeping up debris while scrubbing simultaneously. This eliminates the need to pre-sweep any area and increases productivity. When it pertains to your grout, it actually gets into the grout joint, sweeps it clean so when the wet vacuum (on the back-end of the machine) sucks-up with contaminated water, your grout joint is left free of debris.

Floor scrubber-sweeper machine hazards

1. Too much soap is applied in the machine dispenser.
 - a. Too much soap costs you more money than needed on chemicals.
 - b. Soap residue will be left behind, when too much soap is applied to your dispenser. Soap residue will act like an adhesive and attract more dirt and grime. This makes your facility look dirtier.
 - c. No more than 3% soap should be applied in your floor scrubber-sweeper.
2. Poorly operating vacuum motor on your floor scrubber-sweeper machine.
 - a. If the vacuum motor is not operating correctly and sucking-up dirty water, you are left with dirty water being left on your floor. Make sure your motors are operating a full efficiency.
3. Disposable / replaceable components are left on floor scrubber-sweeper past their life expectancy.
 - a. Your maintenance person needs to be on top of the life-cycle expectancy of the equipment necessary to properly run your floor scrubber-sweeper.
 - i. Training and understanding of how to correctly operate your floor scrubber-sweeper is necessary.
 - ii. Maintenance is not an after-thought, it becomes a passion which leads to a dealership that looks exceptional!
 - iii. Keep your floor scrubber-sweeper in top condition. If you take care of it, it will take care of you.
 - b. Brushes get worn down and are used past life expectancy.
 - i. Worn down brushes will not properly scrub your floor and provide the proper friction necessary to clean your floor.
 - ii. Use the right type of cylindrical brush and keep fresh rigid brushes on your machine to maximize your cleaning efficiency.

- c. Rubber blades can become damaged or bent and don't properly squeegee your floor.
 - i. This is another critical element to make sure that dirty water and contaminants are removed from your floor. Bent or worn-out blades will not remove this water and will result in improperly cleaned floors.
 - ii. Make sure blades are fresh, rigid and operating properly.
 - d. Check you internal vacuum pipes are not partially blocked.
 - i. Have your machine regularly checked to make sure all functions are working correctly.
 - ii. Vacuums suck-up all types of things that can block your vacuum tubes. This can lead to blockage that will reduce the operating efficiency of your machine. This will lead to cleaning practices that do not correctly clean and maintain your floor.
4. Operator errors.
- a. Dirty floor are the result of operating a machine at too fast a pace. The operator is in a hurry to get the job done. There is a specific pace each machine should operate at. This is referred to as a dwell time or lag time.
 - i. Chemicals and cylindrical brushes need to have time to agitate and clean the floor. Operating at a pace faster than recommended will not result in a clean floor.
5. Operator manually dispensing chemicals on the floor.
- a. Operators need to correctly dispense chemicals in the machine and not broadcast them on the floor surface and then scrub the floor.
 - b. Chemicals need to be applied in the correct ratio and through the floor scrubber-sweeper machine, not outside the machine and at the operator's personal judgment.
 - c. Operator must not manually apply water broadcast across the floor surface. The same principal as the chemicals. There is a formulation and process that needs to be followed.
 - d. Too much water applied to the surface can also lead to water residing beyond blade spread. If the rubber blade cannot remove the water due to it being beyond the reach of the spread, it will leave dirty water on the surface of the floor.

Summary

If you follow these guidelines and embrace a passion for cleaning, your dealership will have a culture of clean. Clean floors result because your dealership cares about your facility and the appearance of your dealership.

Buying and AutoStone Floor System is the first step in building a better dealership with the best shop floor, service drive and showroom floor system possible. However, the next step is keeping them clean.

AutoStone floors can always be restored to "like-new again". Keeping them in good condition for the life of your facility can only be achieved if your dealership embraces this passion for keeping your floors clean. AutoStone is always here to support your passion.

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Thank you for your business. Please reach out to AutoStone any time at:

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