

Walnut care

Walnut is prized for its deep tone, but it is softer than oak and lightens with UV exposure. Maintain a stable indoor environment and follow the damp-cleaning sequence to preserve the finish.

The Walnut Protocol: Managing Softness and UV Fade

A system to protect soft walnut from impact and slow the inevitable amber fade.

10

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SOFTNESS AND UV CONTROL

Walnut is prized for its deep tone, but it is softer than oak and lightens with UV exposure. This protocol prioritizes dust control, impact prevention, and light management.

Maintain a stable indoor environment and follow the damp-cleaning sequence to preserve the finish.

Asset card

Baseline material data before any intervention.

MATERIAL	American Black Walnut (Juglans Nigra)
VULNERABILITY	UV bleaching and impact sensitivity (Janka Hardness: 1010 - softer than Oak)
TOOLS REQUIRED	Microfiber dust mop, humidifier, UV-blocking window film

CRITICAL WARNING

The forbidden list

These actions accelerate fade and surface damage.

NEVER USE BLEACH OR AMMONIA

Walnut naturally lightens over time. These accelerators will turn deep brown wood to a lifeless grey or blonde instantly.

NEVER USE STEAM MOPS

Walnut is highly hygroscopic (absorbs water). Steam causes immediate swelling and cupping at the edges.

NEVER DRAG FURNITURE

Walnut is about 20% softer than White Oak, so it dents easily. Felt pads are mandatory.

The mechanism: the "Amber Fade"

Unlike Cherry wood which darkens with age, Walnut lightens.

- **The physics:** UV light breaks down the dark heartwood chemicals.
- **The control:** You cannot stop it, but you can slow it. Rotate rugs and furniture every 3 months to prevent shadow lines where covered wood stays dark and exposed wood turns blonde.

The step-by-step protocol

1. **Dry dusting (the priority):** Because walnut is soft, microscopic dust acts like sandpaper under your socks. Dust daily with a microfiber mop to prevent traffic-path dullness.
2. **The pH-neutral clean:** Mix a dedicated hardwood cleaner (for example, Bona or Woca) with water.
3. **The "damp" technique:** Wring the mop until it is almost dry. Walnut shows water spots more than lighter woods due to the dark contrast.
4. **Buff dry:** Immediately run a dry cotton towel over the floor to remove any streaks.

Maintenance schedule

MAINTENANCE NOTE

Maintain indoor humidity between 35-55%.

Walnut is notorious for developing gaps in winter if the air is too dry. If you see gaps appearing, check your HVAC humidifier immediately.