



Consumer information for kitchen furniture

Information for customers, traders and workmen

This brochure describes the materials used in the construction of kitchens with their typical properties and essential care. The contents is designed, primarily, to provide the purchaser with a short and informative introduction to these topics.

This consumer information document also acts as a guideline for companies in the kitchen industry and can be adopted in full or in part by AMK and BDVM members. Legal obligation cannot be derived from this.

AMK Arbeitsgemeinschaft Die Moderne Küche e.V.- in conjunction with the BVDM - Bundesverband des Deutschen Möbel-, Küchen- und Einrichtungsfachhandels

AMK

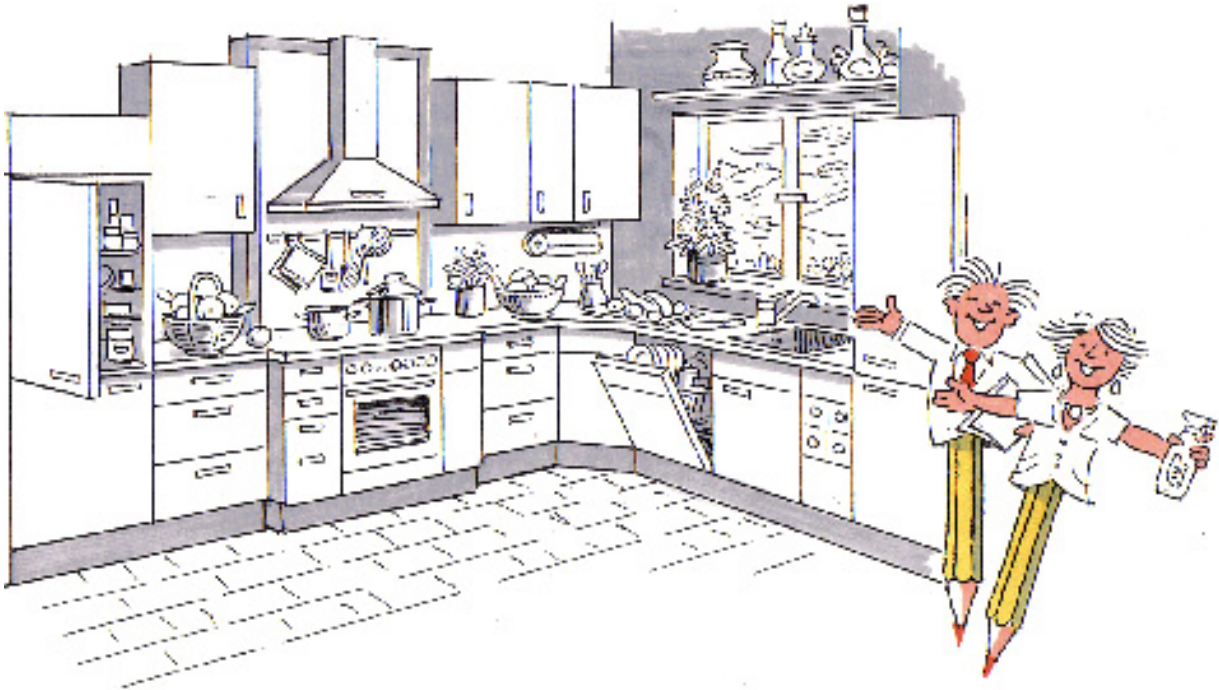
 **BVDM**

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1 Functions and use of the kitchen

Like all components of our day to day life, the image of a modern fitted kitchen has also changed considerably. In the past, a kitchen was made up of individual items, sideboard, oven and sink unit. Work in the kitchen took up the majority of the day and consisted mainly of cooking, clearing up and cleaning. This was primarily due to the work surfaces and functions not being connected thus creating longer distances, and on the other hand due to the preparation times that were still long at the time.

With the appearance of the fitted kitchen, work in the kitchen was revolutionised completely. Cleverly arranged work surfaces and functions ensure that cooking, today, is a rational process. As a result, a change in demands also became unavoidable. Alongside the pure "work functions", today, great value is placed on a pleasant atmosphere. The kitchen has mutated from a workshop into a room in which you feel at home. A modern kitchen thus makes use of materials that would originally have only been used in the living areas. These materials have been improved considerably in terms of quality in order to meet the requirements of the kitchen setting, but they still require special treatment that we will go into here.



2 Tips regarding use

Kitchen work means handling high temperatures, steam and moisture. In addition, a lot of foodstuffs also leave considerable stains. The furnishing materials used today are resistant when it comes to the majority of demands placed upon them, but they still have their limitations and these are founded in the specific properties of the materials used. In order to prevent damages to your new kitchen and to ensure that you are able to enjoy it for a long time, you should bear the following tips in mind. They are few, but important.

You should also pay additional attention to the product information provided by the relevant manufacturers.

When cooking, ensure a sufficient flow of air to and from the kitchen.

Note:

The kitchen itself must be heated appropriately to ensure that the warm vapours (steam) do not land on cold furniture surfaces!



Kitchen furniture tends to consist of elements made of wood-based materials which react sensitively to moisture. Careful handling of moisture will help to prevent damages to the furniture.



Always use the extractor hood. Switch the hood on and select a suitable setting before starting to cook and allow it to continue operating even after cooking is finished. Wipe any condensation on neighbouring cabinets dry after you have finished cooking.

The performance levels of the extractor hood should be matched to your individual cooking habits and to the spatial requirements. The extractor hood operating instructions will help you here.

2 Tips regarding use

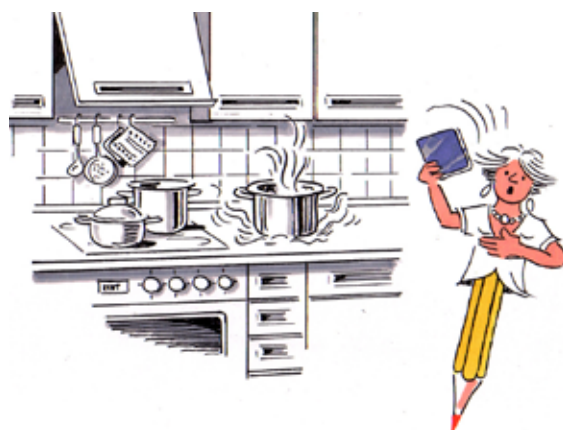
**Avoid splashing water. If water does splash:
Wipe dry immediately – this includes spilt
water under the coffee machine!**



**Open the dishwasher approximately 20 minutes after
the program has been completed in order to allow the
steam to condense inside the dishwasher.**

**If you need to retrieve an item immediately: Open the
dishwasher door fully, remove the item and close the
dishwasher up again completely (don't leave the door
ajar).**

**Never put hot saucepans down
directly on the work surface or on
other parts of furniture (always use
something to protect the surface).**

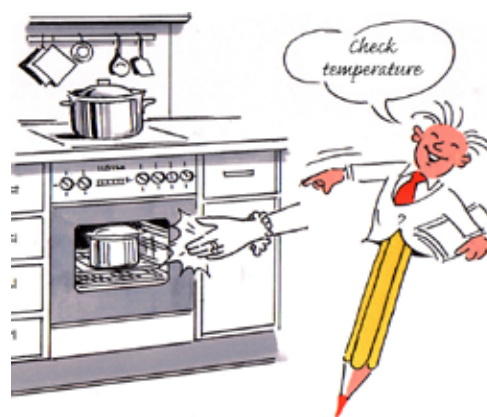


2 Tips regarding use

Occasionally check the surface temperatures at the side edge of the oven door.

Note:

As long as you are still able to touch the edge with your finger tip, the temperature is lower than approximately 70°C and the released heat is acceptable. If this is not the case, the oven should be tested by your customer service to ensure that the door seal is intact.



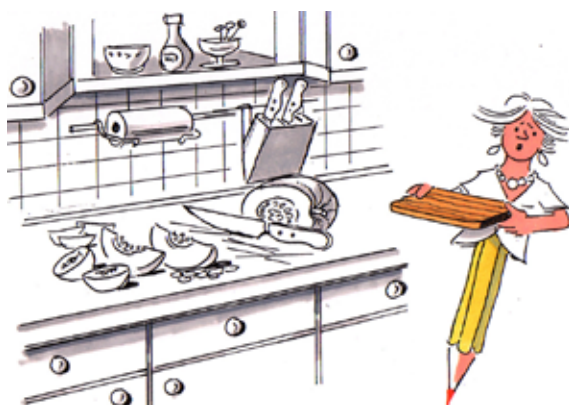
Do not position coffee machines, kettles or toasters underneath wall cupboards. Over time, the steam/raised temperatures will damage the furniture.

Thus, wipe away condensation immediately, dry split water.

You should also pay attention to the operating instructions supplied by the appliance manufacturer.

2 Tips regarding use

Regularly check the condensation run off of your fridge to ensure that it does not become blocked and the overflowing condensation is not able to damage the furniture.



Do not cut directly on the work surface, use a chopping board.

Earthenware crockery has a unglazed rim on the underside. If these items are pushed across the work surface, they may cause scratches.



3 Care tips

Primarily, the product information and care instructions supplied by the relevant manufacturer should be observed! These may deviate from the tips given below as a result of special material properties.

The regular care of your fitted kitchen maintains the value of your purchase and considerably increases the durable lifetime.

And also ensures that the kitchen is in a hygienic state.

- Always use a mild and water-soluble household cleaning agent (for example, neutral soap) which is designed specifically for use with kitchen furniture.
- For best results, use a soft, lint-free cloth or leather. Only use micro-fibre clothes when the manufacturer of your kitchen expressly permits them. Ensure that you only use clean cloths.
- Remove soiling as quickly as possible. Fresh stains are much easier to remove, and can usually be removed fully.
- After cleaning, thoroughly dry all parts.

Never use solvents, scouring powder, steel wool or pan scourers as these will destroy the surface in such a way that it cannot be restored.



Never use a steam cleaner or a hose.

3 Care tips**Varnished wood**

Varnished wood surfaces are cleaned with a little warm water and a mild household cleaning solution on a lightly moistened cloth. Then dry the surfaces carefully in the direction of the structure.

For particularly tough stains, use the household cleaning solution undiluted or a glass cleaner. Before using, test the glass cleaner in a concealed location to make sure it doesn't damage the surface.

Furniture polishes or similar products are not suitable as care products because they contain solvents and oils and often leave behind a film that will change the appearance of the surface.

Waxed or oiled wood

Work surfaces made of solid wood are treated by the manufacturer with special oils and waxes. Despite this treatment, the protection from stains (e.g. intensively coloured fruit or vegetables) is not absolute.

Clean the work surface with a mild household cleaning solution, you could also use a hand brush, and dry the surface carefully. Then you will need to treat the work surface with the care product recommended by the manufacturer. The work surface is made up of a wood material that changes according to the humidity in the room.

Avoid standing water on the work surface as this may cause the board to distort and create a rough surface.

Plastic-faced surfaces (fronts, carcasses and work surfaces)

There are different types of plastic-facings, thus observe the product information supplied by the manufacturer. These are generally cleaned with a mild household cleaning agent and a soft cloth, then washed off with clean water and dried with a cloth. For particularly tough stains, use the household cleaning solution undiluted or a glass cleaner.

Avoid moisture along the edges and joins of the furniture.

"Velvet matt" surfaces

The velvet matt effect of kitchen furniture surfaces is achieved by a particular porosity of the surface. This makes the surface extremely susceptible to intensively coloured liquids, for example, blackcurrant juice, tomato ketchup or red wine, but also to fats. Here it is very important to ensure that these items are cleaned up immediately. Because once the stain has dried it is almost impossible to remove it fully. Aggressive cleaning solutions or scouring solutions polish the surface creating a visible shiny spot.

3 Care tips

High gloss surfaces

There are different types of materials use for high gloss surfaces, thus observe the product information supplied by the manufacturer. Only clean high gloss surfaces with a soft, clean and damp leather or a soft and clean cotton cloth. Even the smallest dirt particles caught in the cloth will cause scratches. Under exceptional circumstances in the event of tough stains, a mild non-abrasive household cleaning agent may be used. Then wipe with a damp cloth and dry with a leather cloth.

Micro-fibre cloths are not suitable for cleaning high gloss surfaces.

You should also pay attention to the individual care information from the supplier.

Natural stone work tops

Different types of materials are used, thus always pay attention to the individual production information and care instructions from the manufacturer.

Grease, oil and other commonly used liquids should be removed immediately to ensure that no stains are left behind.

Mineral material work tops

Different types of materials are used, thus always pay attention to the individual production information and care instructions from the manufacturer. Grease, oil and other commonly used liquids should be removed immediately to ensure that no stains are left behind.

Glass surfaces

Clear glass can be cleaned with a mild cleaning agent and a sponge or cloth, as well as with ordinary household glass cleaners. Improper use, such as scouring, scratching and cutting on glass should be avoided. To prevent scratches when cutting or chopping, use a chopping board. When cleaning satinised glass surfaces, you should not use cleaning agents containing silicone or acid. On satinised glass surfaces, oily and greasy substances leave stains with a slight shadowing effect, these can however be removed with a glass cleaner.

Glass ceramic hobs

Dirt that is not burnt on can be removed with a damp cloth without additional cleaning agents. Metal abrasion from saucepan bottoms, limescale and water stains can be removed with a stainless steel cleaner or a special glass ceramic cleaner.

Burnt on dirt is best removed with a razor blade when still hot. In the event of sugar or ingredients containing sugar, the dirt must be removed immediately.

3 Care tips

Plastic sinks

To clean plastic sinks, you can use ordinary washing up liquid or a non-abrasive household cleaning agent. More difficult to remove stains can be treated with dish washer cleaner, limescale stains are best removed with vinegar or a limescale remover. Caution: Only use on plastic sinks, these may cause damage to other plastic parts.

Stainless steel

Ordinary household washing up liquid is ideal for care purposes. More difficult to remove stains and water stains can be removed with a special stainless steel care product. Surface rust stains on stainless steel can be removed using a 10% citric acid solution or an ordinary metal polish cleaner. Manufacturers offer special cleaning/care products for both polished and brushed stainless steel surfaces.

Enamel

Ordinary household washing up liquid is ideal for the care of enamel surfaces.

Aluminium

Aluminium surfaces can usually be cleaned with a damp, soft cloth with no additional product. To prevent water stains, it is recommended that you dry aluminium surfaces well. In the event of coarse dirt, use washing up liquid or glass cleaner or an aluminium care product.

Do not use alkaline based or abrasive cleaning agents.

Extractor hoods

Alongside the normal cleaning of the housing, the grease filter - if made of metal - also needs to be cleaned regularly in soapy water or in the dish washer. Grease filters made of fibre fleece must be replaced. Extractor hoods with fan operation need to have their active carbon filters replaced every 3 to 6 months.

Please pay attention to the manufacturer specifications as well!

Ovens

The inside of the oven is best cleaned using an ordinary washing up agent when still warm and as long as the dirt is not burnt on. More heavy-duty contamination requires a specially designed oven cleaner.

Please pay attention to the manufacturer specifications as well!

Fridges

For hygienic reasons, your fridge should undergo a "general clean" every 6 months. To do this, switch off the fridge, allow it to defrost and remove all compartments and baskets. To clean, use a mild cleaning solution and a soft cloth.

Please pay attention to the manufacturer specifications as well!

4 Summary

As you can see, cleaning a kitchen doesn't require magic. You also do not need a wide range of chemical substances to take care of stains. In the majority of instances, the described ordinary mild household cleaner and a soft cloth or leather are sufficient. The operating instructions from your furniture, appliance and accessory manufacturers will contain additional special information regarding the care of the individual components of your kitchen.

The important thing to remember for all stains, is to eliminate them as quickly as possible. This will allow you to enjoy your new fitted kitchen for a long time.

This consumer information from AMK and the BVDM contains recommendations regarding the cleaning and care for kitchen furniture. These are based on laboratory tests and practical experience and correspond to the current technical state-of-the-art. If in doubt, test cleaning agents on a concealed area to see whether it will damage the surface. This consumer information document does not claim to be complete. New materials are constantly being introduced onto the market and will not have been taken into consideration here.

Thus, please always pay attention to the product information and use and care tips provided by the manufacturer of your kitchen furniture!

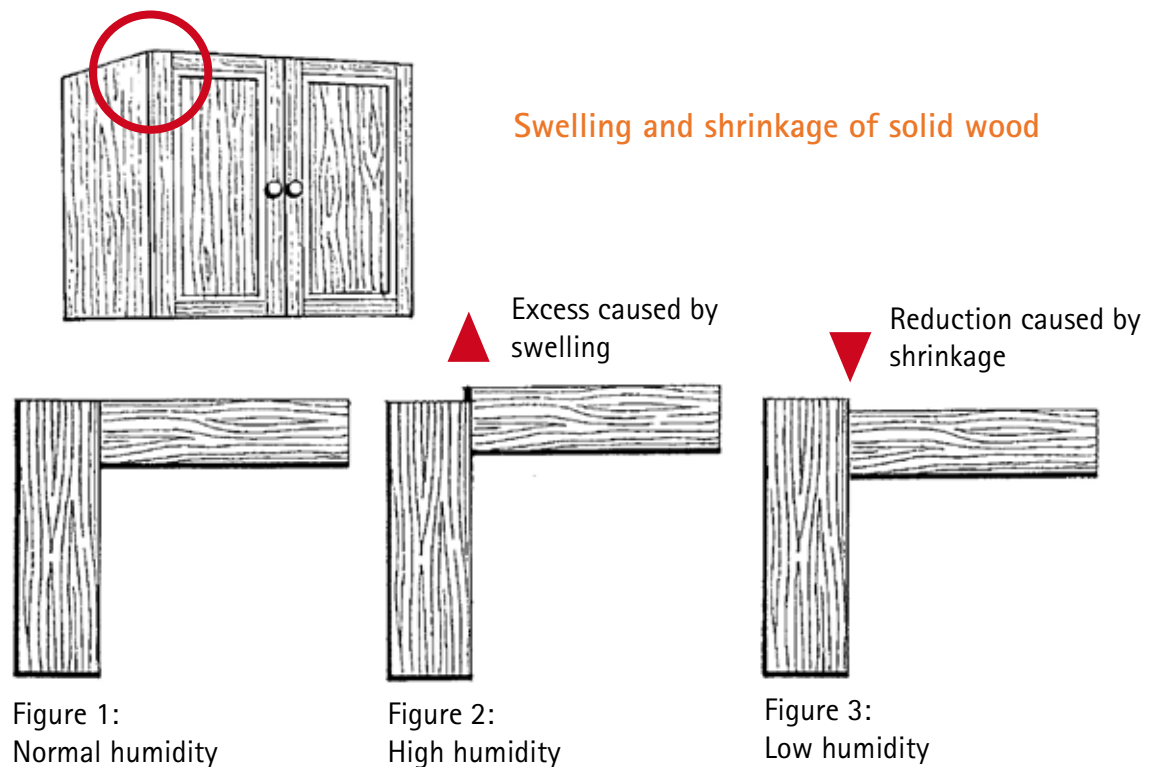


5 A small material compendium

Solid wood and wood-based materials

Solid wood and wood-based materials are living materials which react, in particular, to humidity. We often say that wood "works". Surface treatments can slow these material specific properties, but cannot prevent them fully. Ensure that the humidity in your kitchen is between 40% and 65% relative humidity for best results.

Short periods of up to 2 or 3 days in which these figures are undershot or exceeded will have no negative effects. Generally speaking, you will also feel at home at these relative humidity levels.

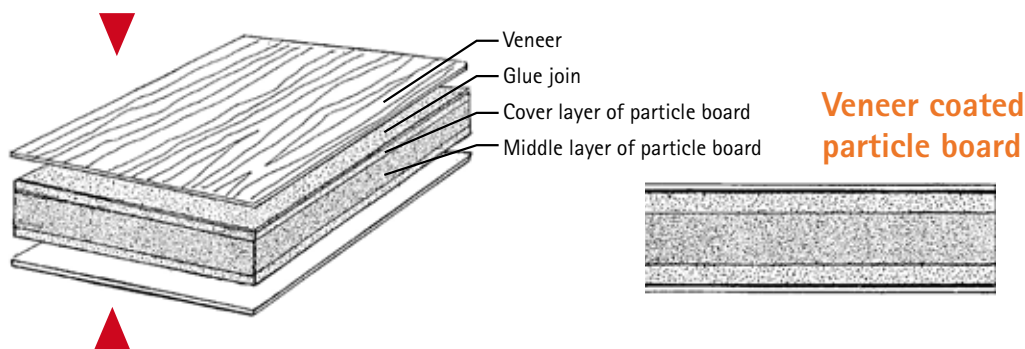


Wood is a pure natural product and as a result of the different growing regions it is subject to minor deviations in colour and structure. For lovers of solid wood, this is a sign of quality.

5 A small material compendium

Veneer

Veneer is a thinly cut piece of "solid wood" with a thickness of up to 8 mm. By gluing this onto a wood-based material you can achieve an optical effect that looks like solid wood, but at the same time reduces the sensitivity of the product to variations in humidity.

**Wood-based materials (particle board, HDF and MDF)**

Wood-based material is a collective noun for board materials made of wood fibres, chips or veneers. Particle board is made from glued wood chips made at high pressure and at temperatures of around 100° C. The middle layer is made up of coarse chips, the covering layer of finer chips. This creates a "plank" effect that ensures the stability of the board form. Particle boards are always coated with veneer or plastic facings on both sides.

HDF board (HDF = high density fibre board) and MDF board (MDF = multi-density fibre board) are both made in a similar way to particle board. Unlike particle board, fine wood fibres are used which means that the HDF/MDF boards are heavier. HDF and MDF boards have almost closed-pore surfaces and are particularly suited as carrier material for 3D pre-formed foil fronts and painted coloured fronts.

Plastics

Plastics are mainly used for surfaces of fronts and carcasses. There is a difference between duroplastic and thermoplastic plastics. Melamine resin is used as a duroplastic plastic. Melamine resin can be used for many purposes and can be printed or left as a single colour. It is particularly easy to clean as it has a smooth closed-pore surface. Especially for the purpose of work surfaces melamine resin layered materials are used which fulfil particular requirements made of work surfaces. Thermoplastic plastics are used as surfaces for fronts. The advantage of this is that surfaces profiles can be made seamlessly as well.

Metals (stainless steel and aluminium)

Metals in the kitchen are either required technically or serve to improve the optical effect. They are used, among other things, for electrical appliances, sinks, work surfaces, niche facings, handles and kickboards. It is mainly stainless steel and aluminium that are used.

5 A small material compendium

Varnish

Environmentally friendly varnish systems are used. These protect the surface of the furniture. They are available as clear or coloured varnish and can be matt or highly polished or even as structured varnish. Metallic carrier materials (fixture and fittings) are also powder coated. Here a dry varnish powder is "burnt on" to the carrier.

Oils and waxes

A particularly attractive surface can be achieved through the use of solid wood treated with oils and/or waxes. The natural wood structure is emphasised and the surface layer is invisible. The disadvantage is that it is more sensitive to stains as there is no protective layer.

Glass

The use of glass in the kitchen is required either for technical purposes, or it serves to provide an optical effect.

Natural stone and mineral boards

The natural stone most frequently used for work tops is granite. Granite is a plutonic rock and is very hard. The surface naturally contains fine joins and is capable of soaking up liquids. Impregnation with silicone or another similar product delays the soaking up of liquids, but cannot prevent it.

Because it is a natural product, every stone is individual and each individual board may vary in colour and structure. Mineral boards are made up of natural stone particles bound together with synthetic resins. The properties are mainly determined by the resin used.

6 Imprint and legal notes

There are other materials used in kitchen construction that are not discussed here.

As a result, please pay attention to the product and care information provided by the relevant manufacturer to ensure that your kitchen does not undergo damage as a result of use or care.

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