

# Polarex Stainless Steel Cladding Cleaning & Maintenance Information

Stainless steel will stain and discolour due to surface deposits, no matter what grade it is. Therefore in order to reduce corrosion and keep the product looking aesthetically pleasing it is important that the surface of the product is routinely maintained. This also will increase the lifetime of the product. Due to its smooth and pore-free surface, stainless steel does not harbour bacteria and is generally easily cleaned.

## General Cleaning Methods

We recommend using the following method to clean your stainless steel cladding:-

- When installed in general domestic environments washing the product with soap or a mild detergent and warm water, followed by a clear water rinse is quite adequate
- It is recommended that once cleaned the surface is wiped dry as this will ensure all residues are removed and will enhance the aesthetic appearance of the product

## Specialist Cleaning

### External

Areas sheltered from rain will collect dirt and will require more maintenance than areas that are regularly washed down with rain water. In coastal or industrial areas more frequent cleaning will be required as the product is more liable to be contaminated with corrosive particles. Sponging the product down with water containing soap, detergent or ammonia followed by wiping down is generally sufficient in maintaining the product.

### Domestic and Institutional

The product should be cleaned with soap or a mild detergent and warm water, followed by a clear water rinse. If routinely performed this is usually quite adequate for domestic and commercial premises. If installed in an area that has hard water it is recommended that the product is dried with a soft cloth (e.g. a microfiber cloth) to prevent water spotting.

Discolouration, thick dirt or rust can be removed using a stainless steel cleaner followed by a clear water rinse. Nearly all abrasive cleaners will scratch a bright annealed or 2B finish of stainless steel, therefore a clean dust free cloth is the best cleaning utensil to use to avoid scratching.

### Catering Equipment

Following periods of neglect or being installed in an aggressive environment the stainless steel may become extremely dirty. In instances such as this mild abrasion (scrubbing with a nylon or non-scratching scourer) may be required. Steel wool soap pads should never be used as they may leave particles of steel on the product which may cause rusting. However, stainless steel soap pads are suitable.

## Alternative Cleaning Methods

Please refer to the table below on how to remove common stains and marks\*:-

Requirement:	Recommended Method:	Comments:
Fingerprints	Detergent and warm water, alternatively, hydrocarbon solvent.	Proprietary spray-applied polishes available to clean and minimise remarking.
Oil and grease marks	Hydrocarbon solvents (methylated spirit, isopro-pyl alcohol or acetone) .	Alkaline formulations are also available with surfactant additions.
Stubborn spots, stains and light discolouration. Water marking. Light rust staining	Mild, non-scratching creams and polishes. Apply with soft cloth or soft sponge and rinse off resi-dues with clean water and dry.	Avoid cleaning pastes with abrasive additions <sup>3</sup> . Suita-ble cream cleansers are available with soft calcium carbonate additions. Do not use chloride solutions.
Localised rust stains caused by carbon steel contamina-tion	Proprietary gels, or 10% phosphoric acid solution (followed by ammonia and water rinses), or oxalic acid solution (followed by water rinse).	Small areas may be treated with a rubbing block com-prising fine abrasive in a hard rubber or plastic filler. Carbon steel wool should not be used, nor should pads that have previously been used on carbon steel. A test should be carried out to ensure that the original sur-face finish is not damaged.
Burnt on food or carbon deposits	Pre-soak in hot water with detergent or ammo-nia solution. Remove deposits with nylon brush and fine scouring powder if necessary. Repeat if necessary and finish with 'routine cleaning'.	Abrasive souring powder can leave scratch marks on polished surfaces.
Tannin (tea) stains and oily deposits in coffee urns	Tannin stains - soak in a hot solution of washing soda i.e. sodium carbonate. Coffee deposits - soak in a hot solution of baking soda (sodium bicarbonate).	These solutions can also be applied with a soft cloth or sponge. Rinse with clean water. Satisfactory on most surfaces.
Adherent hard water scales and mortar/cement splashes	10-15 volume % solution of phosphoric acid. Use warm, neutralise with dilute ammonia solution, rinse with clean water and dry. Alternatively soak in a 25% vinegar solution and use a nylon brush to remove deposits.	Proprietary formulations available with surfactant ad-ditions. Take special care when using hydrochloric acid based mortar removers.
Heating or heavy discolouration	a) Non-scratching cream or polish. b) Nylon-type pad.	a) Creams are suitable for most finishes. Some slight scratching can be left. b)Use on brushed and polished finishes along the grain.

Badly neglected surfaces with accumulated grime deposits	A fine, abrasive paste as used for car body refinishing, rinsed clean to remove all paste material and dried.	May brighten dull finishes. To avoid a patchy appearance, the whole surface may need to be treated.
Paint, graffiti	Proprietary alkaline or solvent paint strippers, depending upon paint type. Use soft nylon or bristle brush on patterned surfaces.	Apply as directed by manufacturer.

\*When cleaning a surface with any chemical or abrasive material a trial should always be carried out on a small area to check the finish.

### **Factors that will affect Maintenance**

Depending on the environment in which the product is installed, a more rigorous maintenance programme may be required. Particles of iron or rust from other sources used in the building where the product is installed can form deposits and be incredibly corrosive and must be prevented to prolong the life of the product.

Aggressive working conditions e.g. a hot kitchen or swimming pool will increase the speed of discolouration. General cleaners (such as bleach) are safe to use on the product if used as per the manufacturer's instructions. However if used incorrectly (concentrated or heated) they can cause any quality of stainless steel to become discoloured and corrode.

Strong acid solutions must never be permitted to come into contact with stainless steel. If this should occur the product must be immediately cleaned with water.

### **Maintenance Programme**

If great care has been taken during installing the product the final cleaning should present no problems. However, if the installation has been prolonged it may cause some surface contamination. Immediate attention to this will prevent any further problems.

The general rule of thumb is to clean the product as soon as it becomes dirty as this is key to maintaining its appearance.