

Stainless Steel

Stainless Steels need to be cleaned for aesthetic considerations and to preserve corrosion resistance. Stainless steel is protected from corrosion by a thin layer of chromium oxide.

Oxygen from the atmosphere combines with the chromium in the stainless steel to form this passive chromium oxide film that protects from further corrosion. Any contamination of the surface by dirt, or other material hinders this passivation process and traps corrosive agents, reducing corrosion protection. Thus some form of routine cleaning is necessary to preserve the appearance and integrity of the surface. Stainless steels are easily cleaned by many different methods.

They actually thrive with frequent cleaning and, unlike some other materials, it is impossible to 'wear out' stainless steel by excessive cleaning. Stainless Steel performs best when clean - cleanliness is essential for maximum resistance to corrosion.

Stainless Steel Maintenance

All exposed stainless steel surfaces should be wiped over with a clean cloth and warm water with a mild detergent on a frequent and routine basis.

For more stubborn dirt or stains use mild, non-scratching abrading powders such as typical household cleaners. These can be used with warm water, bristle brushes, sponges or clean cloths. For more aggressive cleaning a small amount of vinegar can be added to the powder.

Carbon steel brushes and steel wool should be avoided as they may leave particles embedded in the surface, which can lead to rusting.

Cleaning should always be immediately followed by rinsing in clean hot water and the surface then wiped completely with a dry towel.

The maximum recommendation for routine cleaning is once a month and more often in areas subject to heavy soiling or frequent use.

Where routine maintenance is considered a pre-requisite of compliance with an associated guarantee a 'Maintenance Log' should be kept for each installation.

Flash Rusting on Stainless Steel

Where instances of what looks like Stainless Steel is rusting, mostly, it's foreign contaminants resting on the surface that discolours, giving the illusion of rust.

Cleaning with silicon oil, WD40 or GT85 can remove most of the discolouration. This applies for most items of hardware.

