

What is Damaging Your Maple Gym Floor

By Daniel Henry on May 10, 2016



IMAGE BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Six things that could be causing damage to your maple gym floor.

After performing over 200 field inspections on maple gym floors in North America over the last 20 years, a few takeaways have been the most common ways to damage your maple gym floor:

1. [Using tape for temporary markings.](#)

Using tape to show temporary markings on the surface of a maple floor can peel away layers of the finish. Removing the surface paint and exposing the maple can result in additional chipping of the remaining paint in adjacent areas.

2. [Not monitoring the temperature and humidity levels.](#)

It is recommended maintaining the indoor relative humidity between 35 to 50 percent, and air temperatures between 55 to 75 degrees year-round. Excessive shrinkage and/or expansion may occur with indoor relative humidity variations in excess of 15 percent.

The most important part of that recommendation is the 15 percent fluctuation. Based on the facility's geographic location, it might not be possible to maintain 35 to 50 percent humidity and a temperature between 55 to 75 degrees. However, if you maintain an average high and low IRH that are not separated by more than 15 percent on average for the year, you will not see excessive movement in the floor system.

3. Dirty wheels on carts and portable gym equipment.

Keep wheels on carts and portable gym equipment clean and free of debris. Dirty wheels can mark up the floor finish and debris can damage the wood flooring.

4. [Using water to clean your floor.](#)

The use of water or an automated power scrubber that uses water for maintenance may lead to damaging side effects. Possible effects include shaling, splintering, excessive shrinkage and expansion, splitting of individual pieces and cupping. Possible effects to the floor finish and paint include premature/excessive finish wear, chipping and peeling of paint and finish and a dull finish appearance.

5. Not protecting floor from heavy loads.

Maple floor systems function extremely well under normal loads, however, occasionally significant loads can have detrimental effects. Excessive loading like those resulting from the use of high-point load lifts can lead to surface degradation and weaken structural components, leading to system failure.

Use multi-layer protection when loading a flooring system with any size lift to protect the integrity of the system and quality of the surface finish. Do not leave heavy loads on the floor overnight or extended periods.

6. Proper weatherproofing on exterior doors.

Seals on all exterior doors should be sufficient to prevent moisture from entering the gymnasium. Sunlight should not be visible when the doors are in the closed position.

♥ *Daniel Heney is the executive director of the [Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association](#).*

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