



## **SAUNA CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE**

RT 91-11261 / KH 62-00626  
April 2017

*Professional Guide for Sauna Building Maintenance*

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# 1 GENERAL

With proper building and maintenance practices, saunas can remain pleasant and long-lasting. This document provides guidance on cleaning and maintenance procedures that preserve sauna quality and extend service life.

## **Factors affecting sauna longevity and service life:**

Cleaning

Drying

Ventilation

Surface material quality

Cleaning is building maintenance. By cleaning, factors affecting building function are maintained, including comfort, hygiene, presentation, and work and personal safety. Cleaning reduces surface wear, repair and replacement needs, and preserves building aesthetic values. This information and guidance is intended for use in material selection, considering their chemical resistance.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

**Cleaning (siivous):** Interior maintenance including surface cleaning, protection, and care, as well as various organized tasks where cleanliness is maintained professionally

**Maintenance cleaning (ylläpitosiivous):** Regular hand/machine cleaning at defined intervals

**Inspection cleaning (tarkistussiivous):** Intermediate-level check cleaning between maintenance cleanings

**Interim cleaning (välisiivous):** Supplementary cleaning between maintenance cleanings

**Deep cleaning (perussiivous):** Thorough one-time cleaning that returns surfaces to baseline condition

**Mopping:** Wet or dry mop-based floor cleaning

**Damp wiping:** Removing loose dirt and stains with damp cloth

**Wet scrubbing:** Removing stuck-on dirt with wet mop

**Steam mopping/cleaning:** Removing dirt using steam

**Washing (pesu):** Mechanical or chemical removal of stuck-on dirt, followed by rinsing and drying

**Biofilm:** Protective microbial layer on surfaces, difficult to remove

**After-use cleaning:** Measures taken by the bather after their session to remove traces of use. Each bather's responsibility is to rinse their own traces.

### **Wet area soiling types:**

**Human origin:** Perspiration, skin proteins, body oils, hair, secretions (urine, etc.)

**External dirt:** Dust, sand, clay, soot, soil

**Cosmetic products:** Skincare, makeup residue, treatments

**Hard water deposits:** Limescale, calcium buildup

**Dry loose dirt:** Dust, hair, textile fibers

**Harmful microbes and biofilm:** Pseudomonas, E. coli, norovirus

## 3 CLEANING

### 3.1 Cleaning Agents and Safe Use

The following cleaning agents are used in sauna maintenance:

Mildly alkaline or alkaline general cleaning agents, or alkaline combined with disinfectant

Disinfecting cleaning agents (e.g., chlorine-based or peroxide)

Acidic cleaning agents for limescale removal

**CRITICAL: NEVER use chlorine-based products in a heated sauna** — Chlorine forms toxic fumes at sauna temperatures that are harmful to health and the environment. Chlorine-based cleaners must only be used when the sauna is fully cooled.

For private and holiday home saunas, general cleaning agents are sufficient. For public and high-traffic saunas, disinfecting agents are also used.

**Table 1: Cleaning Agent Compatibility by Surface Material**

Surface Material	Alkaline	Acidic	Disinfectant
Untreated wood (spruce, pine)	Yes*	No	Limited*
Abachi and aspen	Yes*	No	Limited*
Tile	Yes	Yes	Yes
Painted/lacquered wood	Yes	Limited	Limited
Sauna-treated wood	Yes	No	Limited*
Painted stone surface	Yes	Limited	Yes
Ceramic tile/clinker	Yes	Yes	Yes
High-pressure laminate	Yes	Limited	Yes
Vinyl flooring	Yes	Limited	Yes
Stainless steel	Yes	Limited	Yes

\* = With caution and proper dilution

### 3.2 Cleaning Machines and Equipment

Equipment must be durable, versatile, easy to clean, and disinfectable. Dedicated cleaning equipment should be used for sauna areas to prevent cross-contamination. Recommended equipment includes:

Combination floor care machine

Floor care machine with rotary brush

Various brushes (soft and hard bristle)

Steam cleaner

Hand scrubbers and micro-scrubbers

Floor scrubbers

Wet/dry mops and cloths

Hand sponges and scouring pads

Window squeegees and cleaning cloths

Bench brushes

Foam application devices

### 3.3 Cleaning Frequency

The following table shows recommended cleaning frequencies for different sauna types and usage levels:

Cleaning Type	Holiday Sauna	Yard Sauna	Apartment Sauna	Building Sauna	Public Sauna	Hotel Sauna	Hotel Room Sauna	Corporate Sauna
After-use cleaning	X	X	X	X	X	—	—	X
Maintenance cleaning	1-4/mo	1-4/mo	1-4/mo	1-4/mo	1-2/wk	1-2/day	1-2/day	After each group
Deep cleaning	1/yr	1/yr	1/yr	1/yr	2/yr	2/yr	1/yr	1/yr

### 3.4 Sauna Washing

The sauna room requires regular washing to maintain hygiene and prevent biofilm formation. Critical cleaning areas include floor channels, heater guard rails, and lower bench support brackets where temperatures are not high enough to kill microbes.

#### Washing Procedure:



Figure 3. Lifiable bench platforms and supporting rails are removable.

1. Apply general cleaning agent, and if needed, disinfectant solution to all surfaces
2. Allow 5-10 minutes contact time for benches and walls, including hard-to-reach undersides
3. Clean benches on all sides, including undersides and between slats using appropriate brushes
4. Thoroughly clean floor channels and drain areas
5. Clean door handles, seals, and surfaces with general cleaner
6. For glass sauna doors, wash using standard glass cleaning solution
7. Apply cleaning solution to floor, allow contact time, then scrub with brush or floor machine
8. Remove floor drain grate and clean drain cavity with brush
9. Rinse all surfaces thoroughly with clean water
10. Leave door and window open to allow drying; residual heater heat aids the drying process

### 3.5 Washing Room Cleaning

Washing rooms adjacent to saunas require the same cleaning frequency as the sauna itself. Use general cleaning agents appropriate to surface materials. Pay special attention to wet areas, drains, and floor channels where water accumulates.

### 3.6 Changing Room Cleaning

Changing rooms are typically dry areas and require standard cleaning with general agents. Benches, lockers, and flooring should be cleaned regularly. Good air circulation and ventilation help prevent moisture accumulation and biofilm formation.

### 3.7 WC Cleaning

WC facilities connected to saunas require regular cleaning with appropriate sanitizing agents. Follow standard bathroom cleaning protocols with special attention to ventilation to prevent humidity issues.

### 3.8 Quality Control

Quality control involves regular inspection of cleaning results and verification that all surfaces meet hygiene standards. Inspection cleaning (tarkistussivous) should be performed between maintenance cleanings to identify areas requiring attention. Documentation of cleaning activities supports quality management.

### 3.9 Deep Cleaning

Deep cleaning is a comprehensive cleaning operation that covers all surfaces including those not typically addressed in maintenance cleaning. It returns surfaces to baseline condition.

**Deep Cleaning Coverage and Procedure:**

**Areas covered:** Ceiling, fixtures, walls, benches, doors, windows, heater exterior, and heater surround

**Sequence:** Start from ceiling working downward

**Ceiling:** Use brush or scrubbing pad with cleaning solution. Wash systematically, rinse, then dry from top down

**Windows:** Clean with glass cleaner and squeegee to remove limescale and deposits

**Fixtures:** Clean with cloth and appropriate cleaning solution for material type

**Floor:** Remove limescale and rust deposits using acidic cleaning agent, then clean floor drain thoroughly

**Post-cleaning:** Ensure adequate drying with ventilation before next use

## 4 MAINTENANCE

Beyond cleaning, regular maintenance inspection and preventive work extend sauna service life and ensure safety. The following maintenance tasks should be performed at appropriate intervals:

- Sauna-treated surface re-treatment and refresh
- Bench condition inspection for cracks, splinters, and warping
- Interior cladding condition inspection
- Heater structural condition inspection
- Heater stone inspection and replacement as needed
- Heater control equipment inspection and testing
- Heater safety rail inspection
- Chimney sweeping (for wood-fired saunas)
- Lighting system inspection and bulb replacement
- Ventilation system inspection and filter replacement
- Door seals and hardware inspection
- Floor drain and drainage system inspection

Regular maintenance performed according to manufacturer recommendations and building codes ensures that saunas remain safe, functional, and pleasant for users. Proper care significantly extends the lifespan of sauna facilities and maintains their value.