

CARE OF METAL FINISHES GUIDE

Technical Edition – Metal Sheets Ltd

Purpose

This guide provides practical care and maintenance advice for zinc, copper, brass, stainless steel and decorative metal finishes supplied by Metal Sheets Ltd. It applies to materials and fabricated products including table tops, bar tops, splashbacks, wall panels, signage, kitchen countertops, worktops and architectural metal components.

Correct care will help maintain appearance and performance over time.

Understanding Natural Metal Surfaces

- Surface darkening or patina development is natural.
- Colour variation and tonal differences are inherent characteristics.
- Marking from handling may occur prior to installation.
- Natural ageing is not considered a material defect.

Installation or modification of materials constitutes acceptance of surface condition at time of fitting.

General Cleaning Guidelines

- Use a soft cloth and warm water.
- Use mild, non-abrasive soap if required.
- Dry surfaces thoroughly after cleaning.
- Avoid harsh chemical cleaners.
- Do not use abrasive pads or scourers unless restoring finish.
- Always test cleaning products on a small inconspicuous area first.

Heat Exposure

- Always use trivets or heat-resistant mats.
- Avoid placing hot pans directly onto surfaces.
- Prolonged direct heat exposure may cause discolouration, distortion or lacquer failure.
- Heat-related surface change is not considered a material defect.

Ferrous Contact & Cross Contamination

- Avoid contact with iron or carbon steel objects.
- Do not use steel wool or metal scourers.
- Keep work areas free from steel swarf and fabrication debris.
- Rust transfer marks and iron contamination are not considered material defects.

Moisture & Water Exposure

- Do not allow water to pool on horizontal surfaces.
- Wipe up standing water promptly.
- Ensure adequate ventilation behind panels and splashbacks.
- Avoid prolonged exposure to damp conditions.

High-Use & Hospitality Environments

Bar tops, counters, tables and other high-contact surfaces may develop tonal change, darkening or patina more rapidly during initial use. Cleaning, handling, moisture, food preparation and drink service can accelerate the natural ageing process of copper, brass and zinc surfaces, particularly during opening periods or heavy commercial use.

This is a normal characteristic of reactive metal finishes and contributes to the material's evolving appearance over time.

Surface Restoration & Refreshing

- Beeswax spray may be used sparingly for decorative maintenance.
- Apply using a clean microfibre cloth and buff thoroughly.
- Creamy beeswax may moderate the rate of further patina development.
- Brasso-type products or eco-friendly metal cleaners may remove tarnish from mirror copper and brass.
- Renaissance Wax may be applied after polishing to extend maintenance intervals.
- Bar Keepers Friend may refresh copper, brass and stainless steel (not recommended for zinc).
- Fine Scotchbrite-type pads may remove tarnish and patina where required.
- Use abrasive pads lightly and consistently to avoid uneven marking.
- Not suitable for mirror finishes or zinc surfaces.

Stainless Steel – General Cleaning

- Use a quality stainless steel cleaner for domestic or commercial use.
- Clean along the grain using a soft cloth.
- Ensure surfaces are free from grit before polishing mirror finishes.
- Silicone-free cleaners may be used for combined cleaning and protection.

Antimicrobial Copper Surfaces

Where copper is specified for antimicrobial properties (e.g. handles or push plates), gentle cleaning that preserves exposed metal surfaces is recommended. Excessive sealing or coating may reduce antimicrobial effectiveness.

Need Advice?

If you are unsure about cleaning methods or surface care for your metal products, contact Metal Sheets Ltd before undertaking maintenance.

Metal Sheets Ltd does not supply or endorse specific third-party cleaning products. Users should follow manufacturer safety instructions when using any cleaning agents.

This document provides general care and maintenance guidance only. Installation methods, environmental conditions and project-specific requirements remain the responsibility of the contractor and specifier.

Document Version: 2.4 | Technical Edition | metalsheets.co.uk | 0151 526 4777