

Mint robot puts shine on hardwood floors

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A general view of attendees in the lobby at the 2010 International Consumer Electronics Show at the Las Vegas Convention Center on January 7, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Evolution Robotics is betting that folks with hardwood or tile floors are craving mechanical maids to keep them beautiful.

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The firm used the [Consumer Electronics Show](#) ending Sunday in Las Vegas to show off a Mint Cleaner that automatically dusts or wet mops hard-surface floors using cleaning cloths such as Swiffer.

"We are using a lot of technology to very meticulously clean an area," Teresa Bridwell of Evolution said while a small, square Mint [robot](#) quietly tended to a spill on a mock floor set up at a demonstration booth.

"It's not random. It can sense everything in the room. If the furniture moves or there are kids or pets there, no problem."

The robots are designed to get into room corners and edges and under furniture or baseboards. An advanced [navigation system](#) uses [light sensor](#) feedback to let Mint clean around obstacles and avoid missing spots.

"To do the job well, Evolution had to rewrite the book on how floor cleaning is done," said the California firm's chief executive Paolo Pirjanian.

"Mint packs aerospace-grade technologies that were specifically tailored to deliver consumers with an appliance that cleans like they do, while still providing a hassle-free experience."

Mint robots can operate for three to four hours, cleaning approximately a thousand square feet (93 square meters), before needing to be recharged.

The devices will be priced less than 250 dollars (US) each when they hit the market in the second half of this year, according to Bridwell.

Evolution believes that folks drawn to robotic floor cleaners such as iRobot's disk-shaped Roomba will see advantage in also having a device specially designed for un-carpeted floors.

"We think people will want both," Bridwell said.

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