



Hints For The Home

Wood Finishing Tips That Will Have You and Your Guests Floored

(NAPSA)—While often overlooked, your floors are your home's greatest canvas and one of its true untapped features. Replacing your hardwood floors can be expensive and time consuming, but refinishing them will not only restore the richness and elegance of the wood to a beautiful appearance, it will also protect it from everyday wear and add value to your home.

To ensure that your floor finishing is a success, consider these tips from Minwax® spokesperson and wood finishing expert, Bruce Johnson:

- **Test it First:** Always test any stain you are considering on an inconspicuous spot, such as in a closet. All woods react differently to stain, so what you see on a sample in the store or online may not be the same as how your wood accepts and responds to the stain you apply.

- **Sand Away:** Don't skip on the sanding before you stain. Stains depend on open pores for adequate absorption and only by sanding off any old finish can the pores be opened to receive your new coat of stain. Never sand after you apply your stain.

- **Brush it Off:** Dust is the enemy of a smooth finish. To remove all the sanding dust from the pores and joints, use the bristle attachment on a shop vacuum. Then wipe the floor with a clean, damp cloth.

- **Note the Exit:** Plan carefully so you can exit the room without walking across wet stain. Also plan to complete the staining of the entire room in one session to avoid lap marks that are darker in color.

- **Timing is Everything:** Keep in mind that the final color of any stain is determined in part by how much stain the wood absorbs. The longer the stain sits on the wood, the darker and richer the color will be. During your test, note the amount of time that lapses between applying the stain and wiping off the excess so you can repeat this for the color you desire.

- **Remove Excess Stain:** Never let stain sit on the wood for longer than the label directions rec-



Clear finishes, sometimes called "topcoats," can protect your wood floors from damage due to water, household chemicals and everyday wear.

ommend. And always remove any stain that the wood does not absorb. Allowing stain to dry on the wood surface will prevent your clear protective finish from adhering.

- **Between the Lines:** When staining in sections, stop your stain application at a joint between two boards rather than in the middle of one board. Individual boards may accept the stain slightly differently, so a slight change in color between boards will not be as noticeable as a change in color created by stopping in the middle of a board.

- **Give it Time:** Do not apply your first coat of clear protective finish until the stain is completely dry. If a clear finish is applied over a wet stain, the stain will be pulled back out of the pores of the wood and will mix with the finish, creating a 'muddy' effect. Or worse, your protective finish may not adhere to the floor. You should allow 24 hours for your stain to dry before applying the finish.

- **Protect Your Floor:** Stain adds color to wood but will not protect your floor from foot traffic, spills and everyday wear. For the best results, apply Minwax® Ultimate Floor Finish, a technologically advanced topcoat for floors that provides a crystal clear finish with superior durability. It dries in just two hours, and cleans up with soap and water. Minwax® Ultimate Floor Finish is certified to GREENGUARD standards for low chemical emission into indoor air during product usage.

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