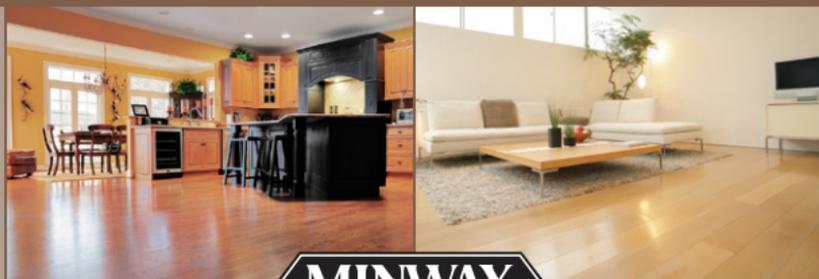




# Floor Refinishing & Care Guide

Hardwood floors provide years of beauty, warmth and elegance for your home. The Minwax® line of quality wood finishing and maintenance products will help you restore and preserve the richness of your hardwood floors, revitalizing their appearance and adding to the value of your home.

Restoring and refinishing hardwood floors is a large job, but it is one that DIY-ers can do, with some preparation and the right tools. The information in this booklet will give you your first steps toward tackling this rewarding project!



# Step 1

## Prepare the Room and Floor

### The Room:

- Remove all objects from the room, including furniture, drapes, pictures, knick-knacks, items in closets, vent covers, etc.
- Cover any permanent objects that you do not want to get dusty (chandeliers and other light fixtures, shelving, etc.) Make sure that any light fixtures are off.
- Snugly cover door openings to minimize the spread of dust. Remove these covers after sanding, before you stain or apply polyurethane.
- Place a mat or cloth outside the entrance to the room so you can wipe your feet as you leave.
- Carefully remove any quarter round molding from the base molding, then remove the base molding.  
*Tip!* Number each piece of molding on its back using pencil, and put the same number on the wall where you removed the piece. This way, you can put the pieces back in place more easily once the floor is done.
- Turn off air conditioning/heat to prevent dust from circulating throughout the house.
- Cover all vents.
- Open all windows for ventilation.
- Keep children and pets from entering the room.
- Read all warnings and safety precautions on labels before using before using products and equipment.

### The Floor:

- Use a nailset to ensure all nail heads are recessed into the floor.
- Replace or repair any damaged boards.
- If the floor has been finished in the past and is not new wood, clean the floor using a gentle cleaner that does not leave residue, like Minwax® Hardwood Floor Cleaner. Allow the floor to dry thoroughly.



## Step 2

### Sand the Floor

Whether you have a bare wood floor, or a wood floor that already has a finish on it, you will need to sand the floor. Rent or purchase a floor sander, and follow the sander manufacturer's directions to prepare your floor.

#### **You will need to sand your floor down to bare wood if:**

- You'd like to change the color of your floor, or
- Your finish is cracking, peeling, or completely worn away in areas, or
- Shellac, lacquer, wax or products containing wax or stearates had been applied to the floor.

#### **You can do a "screen and recoat" if:**

- You do not want to change the color of the floor, and
- Your existing finish is in good condition, with no chipping, peeling, or worn through areas, and
- Shellac, lacquer, wax, or stains containing wax or stearates had not been applied to the floor

In this case, there's no need to remove your existing floor finish. Instead, you can simply "screen" the existing finish to prepare it for the addition of new finish.

**In all cases**, including for new wood floors, follow the sander manufacturer's directions for your type of floor. Remove all sanding dust with a cloth dampened with mineral spirits, then let the floor dry thoroughly.

Special Notes: Is the floor laminate or factory pre-finished flooring? If so, then contact a flooring professional before you attempt to refinish the floor. Note that laminate floors can not be refinished.

If you have a parquet floor, carefully follow the instructions for sanding parquet floors from your floor sander's manufacturer, or consult a flooring professional before sanding.



# Step 3

## Stain the Floor

Floors only need to be stained if you want to change their color. If you are happy with your floor's existing color, you do not need to stain it.

NOTE: Since stain must be able to penetrate the wood of the floor, stain can only be applied to new, unfinished flooring or to floors that have been sanded down to bare wood.

- Choose your stain color. Minwax® Wood Finish™ offers many beautiful colors of wood stain, all appropriate for use on hardwood floors.
- Test your stain color on an inconspicuous area of the floor, like inside a closet, to ensure that the color is what you want. Remember that different woods take stain differently, so testing the color is important. In addition, the clear topcoat that you will later apply to your floor will give it a slightly warmer tone.
- If your floor is made of soft wood, like pine, pre-treat the floor with Minwax® Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner to ensure that the floor takes the color evenly. Follow the label directions for the Pre-Stain, and apply the stain within two hours of the pre-stain.
- Applying stain is easy, but be sure to read and follow the label directions and cautions on the stain.
- Stir the stain thoroughly before and occasionally during use.
- Start in a back corner and apply the stain with a natural bristle brush or a clean, lint-free cloth. Follow the label directions. Be careful to plan your exit so you don't stain yourself into a corner!
- Apply the stain in the direction of the wood grain. Follow the label directions, especially regarding the amount of time to leave the stain on to achieve the desired color and removing the excess with a clean cloth. Do not leave the stain on for longer than the label recommends.
- Once the floor is stained, let it dry for at least eight hours before applying the clear topcoat as a protective finish.



## Step 4

### Topcoat the Floor

Applying the clear topcoat is your final step! Minwax® offers a variety of clear protective finishes that are great for use on floors, including Super Fast-Drying Polyurethane for Floors, Fast-Drying Polyurethane, and Water Based Oil-Modified Polyurethane. These finishes provide superior durability and a warm, rich look.



- These Minwax clear finishes are available in three sheens: Gloss, Semi-Gloss and Satin. Your choice of sheen is a matter of personal preference. The sheen does not affect the product's durability.
- Before use, be sure to read all label directions and cautions.
- Stir the product well, but do not shake it. Shaking puts bubbles into your finish!
- Start in a back corner. Be careful to plan your exit so you don't coat yourself into a corner!
- Apply a thin coat of the Minwax clear finish per the label directions. Apply the product in the direction of the wood grain. Maintain a wet edge, where one area of top coat meets another, to avoid lap marks. For best results, overlap into the finish you previously applied by several inches. Try to feather in your start and stop marks with your applicator.
- Allow finish to dry, per the label directions.  
*Tip:* Before you walk on the floor, be sure that it is not tacky to the touch and can be walked on without damaging the surface. Wear soft, flat shoes.
- Apply additional coats following the directions on the label.



## Tips to Improve Your Finish

- Remove loose fibers from your applicator by rinsing it with water prior to use. Wring it out thoroughly and let it dry before you use it.
- Be sure to remove all dust from sanding and other sources as you go. If your room is at all dusty, the dust will settle into the finish as it dries and may cause the finish to look or feel bumpy.
- Finish floors in moderate weather (temperatures in the 70° F range) so that the finish dries appropriately. Finish applied in cold weather dries more slowly than finish applied in more moderate weather.
- Work when humidity is low (at or below 50% relative humidity) and there is no rain in the forecast, as high humidity extends dry times.
- Apply the finish in thin coats, and be sure that the area has good ventilation. Thick coats and poor ventilation also extend dry times.
- The floor will be able to accommodate light foot traffic about 24 hours after the final coat has been applied. Do not expose the finish to rugs, cleaners, spills or heavy traffic for one week. When replacing furniture, do not slide.

***Congratulations! You're done! Now, step back and admire a job well done.***

## Caring for Your Floor

- Once your floor is done, place mats at each entrance to your home to collect the dust and debris from shoes that otherwise might scratch your new floor.
- Sweep or vacuum your floor and mats frequently to remove dust and dirt.
- Put floor protector pads or glides on the bottom of furniture so that moving it does not scratch the floor.
- Do not walk across your floor in high heels, as these heels can dent your wood floor.
- Trim your pet's nails. Untrimmed nails can cause scratches in your finish.

To clean floors protected by Minwax® products, we recommend a gentle cleaner such as Minwax® Hardwood Floor Cleaner.



## PRODUCT SAFETY:

For your safety and the safety of those you work with, always read the safety warnings that are printed on the product labels and follow them carefully. In addition, be mindful of the safe way to dispose of rags and other waste. Rags and other waste products soaked with oil finishes or solvents may spontaneously catch fire if improperly discarded. Place rags, steel wool and other waste immediately after use in a water-filled metal container. Tightly seal and dispose of the waste materials in accordance with local trash removal regulations. Be sure to keep waste and finishing products out of the reach of children.

**WARNING:** Removal of old paint by sanding, scraping or other means may generate dust or fumes that contain lead. Exposure to lead dust or fumes may cause brain damage or other adverse health effects, especially in children or pregnant women. Controlling exposure to lead or other hazardous substances requires the use of proper protective equipment such as a properly fitted respirator (NIOSH approved) and proper containment and cleanup.

For more information, call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (in US) or contact your local health authority.



**Makes and Keeps Wood Beautiful™**

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