



# Wood Finishing Basics

APPLICATION TECHNIQUES &  
PRODUCT SELECTION



## GETTING STARTED

Your home is a unique expression of your individual decorating taste. And what better way to display your style than through the warmth and beauty of natural wood? From traditional to contemporary and everywhere in-between, the possibilities are endless! Wood's natural warmth and beauty add richness and character. And with a little know-how and Minwax® stains and finishes, it's easier than you think to create a statement of style.

In this guide, author and craftsman, Bruce Johnson, pairs application tips and techniques with product recommendations that best enhance the beauty of wood in your home. This booklet will take you through the wood finishing process including preparation, staining and topcoating, as well as maintenance of your wood pieces. Whether you are a beginner or a seasoned do-it-yourselfer, these ideas will help you achieve beautiful results with ease.

DIY expert, Bruce Johnson, has introduced millions to the world of wood finishing, home improvement and antique restoration. Through his many books, magazine articles and columns, as well as frequent appearances on national television talk shows, Johnson is recognized as an authority in the do-it-yourself community.



Before starting any wood finishing project it is important to have a proper workspace and supplies. When creating the ideal area please keep the following in mind:

- The work station must have adequate light.
- Always work in a well ventilated area.
- The workspace should be dry and warm. If the area is cool or damp it may alter the dry times indicated on the labels.

There are a number of items frequently used in wood finishing projects. This list does not include all the supplies needed, but what is most commonly used. Always consult the label of the Minwax® products you are using to see if special application tools are required.

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rags         | <input type="checkbox"/> Stir Sticks               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brushes      | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Glasses            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sandpaper    | <input type="checkbox"/> Rubber Gloves             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Towels | <input type="checkbox"/> Drop Cloths or Newspapers |

For best results, and for your own safety, always read and follow all label warnings and instructions carefully.

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# PREPARING YOUR WOOD SURFACE

While it has often been said, it can't be over-emphasized: the better the preparation, the better the project results.

You need to start every project knowing one thing for certain - wood is unpredictable. For that reason you always need to first test any technique, material or product on an inconspicuous spot. You can reduce the unpredictable nature of wood in two ways:

1. by making sure you have properly prepared the wood for the stain and finish you are about to apply.
2. by creating the best possible environment to work on your project, as discussed on page 2.

## PREPARATION TIPS

### Inspect Your Project

Start your wood finishing project by making a thorough inspection of the wood. Make note of any holes, cracks, splits or loose joints that need to be repaired. These are always best done prior to staining and finishing your project.

### Filling Holes and Cracks

To fill small holes and cracks in the wood, use Minwax® Stainable Wood Filler. Using the tip of a screwdriver, carefully pack the Stainable Wood Filler into the hole, mounding it slightly to allow for shrinkage as it dries.



### Sanding is Key

Sanding is a critical step in the preparation process for several reasons.

- It smoothes out the wood surface.
- It removes minor nicks and scratches that would otherwise become more obvious after staining and finishing.
- It removes any surface glaze, which can prevent stain or finish from entering the pores.
- It opens the pores of the wood to accept more stain and finish.



### Choosing The Right Sandpaper

Sandpaper is produced in various degrees of coarseness which is measured by grits.

- Sandpaper below #100-grit is only used to quickly remove wood or layers of an old finish.
- Medium sandpaper (#100-grit and #120-grit) is ideal for removing shallow scratches, dents and rough edges that could cause splinters. Either of these two grits can be used for a first sanding of most projects.
- A final sanding with #180 or #220-grit sandpaper, will remove any scratches left by the medium sandpaper and will eliminate any remaining loose fibers in the wood.

After the final sanding, the wood is ready for the first coat of a wood finishing product to be applied.

### Capturing Dust

Dust is the enemy of a smooth finish. Blowing sanding dust off your project with an air compressor or brushing it onto your floor can still result in it ending up in your wet stain or finish. Instead, use a bristle attachment on a vacuum to safely capture it once and for all.

## PRE-STAIN WOOD CONDITIONER

What makes wood so beautiful is that every piece is unique. Because of those differences wood rarely absorbs stain evenly. To reduce the blotchiness and uneven stain absorption use a pre-stain wood conditioner.

### Minwax® Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner (oil-based)

**GOOD FOR:** Bare or unfinished wood. It's formulated to penetrate the grain of the wood and to promote uniform acceptance of wood stain. It prevents streaking and blotching to help ensure a beautiful, even stain. When using an oil-based stain use only an oil-based pre-stain wood conditioner. Stain should be applied within two hours of application of Minwax® Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner.



**APPLY WITH:** brush or cloth

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 1

## Minwax® Water Based Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner

**GOOD FOR:** Bare or unfinished wood. Minwax® Water Based Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner is specially formulated to prevent streaking and blotching, ensuring a beautiful, even stain. When using Minwax® Water Based Stains, Minwax® Water Based Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner must be used to ensure even stain penetration and reduce grain raising. For best results, after applying Water Based Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner, wait 15-30 minutes before lightly sanding the surface with fine-grade sandpaper, then apply stain.



**APPLY WITH:** cloth, synthetic-bristle brush or foam applicator

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 1

## SANDING SEALER

A sanding sealer is not the same as a wood conditioner. Wood conditioner is a pre-stain treatment that promotes even stain penetration and reduces blotchiness. A sanding sealer is applied to new or bare wood that is not going to be stained. It will dry quickly, seal the pores and sand easily to create an ultra-smooth foundation for a clear protective finish.

## Minwax® Professional Formula Sanding Sealer

**GOOD FOR:** Bare or unfinished floors, doors, furniture and cabinets. It seals wood grain, is easy to sand and dries in one hour. It's specially formulated to be used prior to applying any oil-based or water-based clear Minwax® polyurethane finish.



**APPLY WITH:** synthetic-bristle brush, foam applicator or synthetic pad

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 1

## Minwax® Lacquer Sanding Sealer

**GOOD FOR:** Bare or unfinished woodwork, cabinets, furniture and interior doors. Lacquer Sanding Sealer is formulated to work as a base coat under Minwax® Clear Brushing Lacquer. It is easy to sand, dries quickly, and seals the wood in just one coat. Not recommended for use on floors.



**APPLY WITH:** natural-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 1

## PREPARATION DO'S & DON'TS

### Do...

- **Keep workspace dry and warm.** If the temperature drops below 65 degrees during the recommended drying time, the evaporation process will slow and the product will remain tacky for a longer length of time.
- **Keep products at room temperature.** Make sure your project and your products are at room temperature before starting.
- **Sand in the direction of the grain.** Sanding against the grain leaves scratches that will become obvious when they later absorb either stain or finish.
- **Use a pre-stain wood conditioner.** Apply a liberal coat of the pre-stain wood conditioner over the entire wood surface, including the end grain of any board, to ensure even stain absorption. On extremely soft or porous woods, apply a second coat to further reduce blotchiness when staining.



### Don't...

- **Work in direct sunlight.** The heat from the sun can cause moisture in the wood to create bubbles in your stain or finish.
- **Work beneath air vents.** Heating or air conditioning vents can blow dust directly into your wet finish.
- **Use a belt sander.** Belt sanders should not be used on any surface other than the hardwood floors, as they can quickly leave deep gouges and scratches in the wood.
- **Skip the pre-stain wood conditioner.** Wood Conditioner improves the appearance of any stained wood.
- **Exceed recommended wait time.** Be sure to apply stain within the time listed on the pre-stain wood conditioner label.

# WOOD STAINS

While wood in its natural state can provide breathtaking beauty, it doesn't always match the other colors or wood tones in our home. Adding stain to bare or stripped wood can both change the color and highlight the grain pattern of any interior wood. Since wood is a product of nature, it can vary from tree to tree, even in the same wood species. To avoid surprises, first test any stain you are considering on an inconspicuous spot to insure that the color of the stain – in conjunction with the natural color of the wood – produces the color you desire.

## Oil-Based vs. Water-Based Stains

Choosing one over the other is a personal preference, as both will achieve beautiful results. When making your decision, consider the following:

- Oil-based products can be applied with either natural-bristle or synthetic-bristle brushes, while water-based products must be applied with a synthetic-bristle brush.
- Oil-based stains are available in traditional wood tone colors.
- Oil-based products do not raise the grain, eliminating the need for additional sanding.
- Oil-based stains give you a longer working time, enabling you to stain floors, cabinets and doors without the worry of dried lap marks.
- Water-based products are lower odor and generally dry faster than oil-based products.
- Clean up for water-based products can be done using soap and water; mineral spirits or paint thinner are needed for oil-based products.
- Minwax® Water Based Wood Stains are available in a variety of both wood tone and decorator colors.
- After applying a water-based stain, a light sanding is required to reduce grain raise.

## PICK THE RIGHT STAIN FOR YOUR PROJECT

Every stain has unique characteristics and benefits. Choose the stain that offers the best results for your project.

### Minwax® Wood Finish™

**GOOD FOR:** Furniture, cabinets, doors, hardwood floors, trim and molding. Wood Finish™ is an oil-based wood stain that can be used to enhance any bare or stripped wood surface by providing a long-lasting wood tone color.

**APPLY WITH:** natural-bristle brush, cloth or foam applicator

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 2 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 4 to 6



### Minwax® Gel Stain

**GOOD FOR:** Wood, fiberglass, metal and veneer surfaces such as doors, cabinets, trim and molding. Gel Stain is a non-drip stain, which is ideal for vertical surfaces.

**APPLY WITH:** natural-bristle brush, cloth or foam applicator

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 1-2 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 8 to 10



### Minwax® Water Based Wood Stain

**GOOD FOR:** Furniture, cabinets, doors, trim and molding. It is fast-drying, low odor, and can be easily cleaned up with soap and water. Water-based stains are available in 50 wood tone and decorator colors.

**APPLY WITH:** synthetic-bristle brush, cloth or foam applicator

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 1 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 2



### Minwax® PolyShades®

**GOOD FOR:** Furniture, cabinets, trim, doors and moldings. PolyShades® provides rich wood color and polyurethane protection in one step. Available in satin and gloss.

**APPLY WITH:** natural-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 2 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 6



### Minwax® Express Color

**GOOD FOR:** Furniture and trim. Express Color creates stunning color and beautiful results with a stain and wiping finish in one product. Just wipe on, let it dry and you are finished in an hour! Express Color is water-based so it's low odor, fast drying and cleans up with soap and water.

**APPLY WITH:** soft cloth

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 1 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 1



## STAINING POPULAR WOODS

All woods have two characteristics that play important roles in determining their final appearance: their natural color and the size of their pores. Unlike paint, both water-based and oil-based stains are absorbed into the wood rather than lying on top of the wood. For that reason, the natural color of the wood, whether it be the reddish hue of cherry or the yellow tone of pine, will blend with the color of the stain you choose.

In order to accurately predict the final color of your project, always test any stain you select on an inconspicuous place on the wood first. Regardless of the type of wood, to prevent blotchiness and help absorb stain evenly, it is important to apply Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner.

In addition to their natural color, each species of wood has unique properties that will also affect the staining results. Here are a few examples:

- **Alder and Aspen** - These two hardwoods are popular in the unfinished furniture industry. However, they absorb stains unevenly, so don't forget to use a pre-stain wood conditioner before staining.
- **Ash and Chestnut** - These hardwoods share many of the characteristics of oak and should be treated the same way.
- **Birch** - Birch is often substituted for maple in furniture and kitchen cabinets because it is inexpensive. Like hard maple, it does not absorb stain evenly, so don't forget to use a pre-stain wood conditioner before staining.



- **Cherry** - Cherry has a subtle grain pattern and small pores which do not absorb as much stain, making it difficult to make any significant changes to its color. Because of this, most woodworkers prefer to keep cherry its natural color.
- **Mahogany and Rosewood** - In most instances, additional staining is not necessary. When it is, always use an oil-based stain, such as Minwax® Wood Finish™ or Minwax® Gel Stain, to insure compatibility with the natural oils in these woods.
- **Maple** - Maple, like cherry, is an extremely dense, tight-pored wood that does not absorb stain well, even after an application of a pre-stain wood conditioner. It's recommended not to stain maple, but to maintain its natural color.
- **Oak** - Always a popular hardwood, oak has a strong grain pattern and large, open pores that absorb stain readily. For that reason, oak is attractive with nearly any color of stain.



- **Pine, Fir and Cedar** - All three species absorb stain unevenly, especially around knots and blemishes. Be sure to use a pre-stain wood conditioner or Minwax® PolyShades® to lessen the appearance of blotches.
- **Poplar** - Poplar has a grain pattern similar to cherry, but lacks the same reddish hue. When stained with colors containing red dyes and pigments, less expensive poplar can be made to look very much like cherry.

## APPLICATION TIPS

- Penetrating stains require open pores for adequate absorption into the wood. Applying stain over a finished surface, will not change the color of the wood – your cloth will simply wipe off the stain blocked from the pores by the existing finish.



- Sand bare or stripped wood lightly to open the pores in preparation for staining. Always sand in the direction of the grain to avoid leaving unsightly scratches.
- The best way to remove dust is with a vacuum. Tack rags are not recommended since they may contain ingredients that interfere with the stain. Instead, use a damp cloth to pick up dust.
- On woods with large, open pores, such as oak, mahogany and ash, increase your pressure to work the stain into the pores. Rubbing or brushing against the direction of the grain will help fill deep pores with stain. Apply a liberal amount of stain, giving the wood an ample amount to absorb.
- Test and time how long you leave the stain on the wood before wiping off any unabsorbed liquid. For consistent color, use careful timing.
- Always end your staining by removing the last of any unabsorbed stain with a dry cloth wiped only in the direction of the wood grain. Swirl marks left by a stain-saturated cloth will become more obvious under a coat of clear finish.
- When staining vertical surfaces, such as unfinished cabinets or doors which cannot be removed, use Minwax® Gel Stain. Its thicker consistency enables it to



cling to vertical surfaces without immediately running, giving you more time to apply an even coat of stain.

- Although you may be tempted to stop after staining, remember this: a stain provides color, but not protection. Once the stain has dried, apply a clear finish to protect both the stain and the wood - and to make them look even more beautiful.

## DO'S & DON'TS

### Do...

- **Prepare the wood.** Always prepare the wood with a light sanding and an application of pre-stain wood conditioner.
- **Stir the stain.** To evenly redistribute any color pigments which may have settled to the bottom, be sure to thoroughly stir the stain.
- **Apply additional coats.** To achieve a darker, richer color apply a second coat according to label directions.



### Don't...

- **Forget to remove the hardware.** Leaving hinges, handles, knobs or pulls on a piece you are staining or finishing may also change the color of any metal hardware.
- **Leave unabsorbed stain on wood surface.** Stains are formulated to dry in the wood, not on the wood, so remove all unabsorbed stain, as this will later peel off.
- **Rush the dry time.** Applying a clear protective finish before the stain has completely dried will activate the damp stain, allowing your brush or cloth to pull it out of the pores of the wood.
- **Use steel wool.** It is not as effective as sandpaper. The particles on sandpaper actually cut and remove wood fibers, resulting in a smoother, more even surface. Also steel wool should never be used with water-based products, because the steel fibers can cause rust spots.

# CLEAR PROTECTIVE FINISHES

Without a topcoat to protect it from the elements, wood can become as dry and lifeless as day-old toast. Coating wood cabinetry, furniture, or trim with a clear protective finish, whether you stain it or not, gives it richness and depth while protecting it from knocks, scrapes, and the weather.

## What is Polyurethane?

It's a type of super-tough varnish formulated so that its microscopic chains of resin molecules will bond tightly with one another as it dries. The result is a finish that's much more resistant to water, solvents, abrasion, and impacts than traditional varnishes.

## Oil, Water or Both?

Consider the different characteristics of each type before you buy.

- **Oil-based.** Turns slightly amber, which warms up a wood's color. Forms a hard, durable film in a few coats. Dries more slowly than water-based polyurethanes, so there's a longer wait between coats. Cleans up with mineral spirits.



If you want wood to keep its natural color, use a water-based poly.

Some polys have oils that give wood a warm, amber tone.

- **Water-based.** Looks like milk in the can but dries crystal clear. Good if you're trying to preserve a wood's natural color. Dries quickly. Usually lower in odor than oil-based finishes, but still requires good ventilation during application. Cleans up with soap and water.

- **Water-based oil-modified.** Appears cloudy in the can but dries to a very durable, amber-color film, like an oil-based finish. Dries fast and cleans up with water.

## Gloss, Semi-Gloss, or Satin?

Choose whichever sheen you like best; there's no difference in durability. Just remember that the glossier the finish, the more it will show any underlying imperfections and any future wear and tear.

## Brush On, Wipe On, or Spray?

Every clear protective finish has its preferred applicator, typically a brush or cloth. Some finishes also come in aerosol spray cans.

- **Brush-on** clear finishes work best on flat surfaces where it's important to build up a durable film.
- **Wipe-on** polys are best for contoured surfaces - furniture legs and stair balusters - where brushing might create drips. Wipe-ons form thinner coats than brush-ons, so use them when wear isn't a concern and apply multiple coats.
- **Spray-on** clear finishes come in handy on hard-to-reach surfaces, such as shutter louvers and chair spindles. Aerosol sprays may require extra prep time to protect surrounding surfaces from overspray.



## Inside or Out?

Most polyurethanes are designed for inside use only. Spar Urethane can be used inside or out. It's specially formulated with ingredients that protect wood from UV rays and temperature changes.



## PICKING THE RIGHT CLEAR PROTECTIVE FINISH

Each clear protective finish is unique. Choose the one that best matches your particular project.

### INTERIOR FINISHES

#### Minwax® Fast-Drying Polyurethane

**GOOD FOR:** Cabinets, floors, furniture and trim, where abrasion resistance and durability are important. This versatile all-around poly provides good protection on a variety of wood surfaces. Available in gloss, semi-gloss, and satin.

**APPLY WITH:** natural-bristle brush or aerosol can

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 2-3 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 4 to 6



#### Minwax® High-Build Polyurethane

**GOOD FOR:** Tabletops and other surfaces subject to abrasion. Provides maximum durability with just two coats. Apply very thin coats to ensure an even finish. Available in gloss, semi-gloss, and satin.

**APPLY WITH:** natural-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 2 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 4 to 6



#### Minwax® Water Based Oil-Modified Polyurethane

**GOOD FOR:** Floors, doors, cabinets and furniture. Combines the durability and ambering of oil-based finishes with the fast-drying time and easy cleanup of a water-based product. Available in gloss, semi-gloss, and satin.

**APPLY WITH:** synthetic-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 3 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 2



#### Minwax® Super Fast Drying Polyurethane for Floors

**GOOD FOR:** Hardwood floors. A durable, protective finish for hardwood floors that has a 25% faster recoat time than regular polyurethanes and does not require sanding between coats. Available in gloss, semi-gloss, and satin.

**APPLY WITH:** lambswool applicator or natural-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 2-3 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 3-4



#### Minwax® Polycrylic® Protective Finish

**GOOD FOR:** Light-colored woods and stains where ambering would be undesirable. It goes on milky but quickly dries crystal clear. Not recommended for floors. Available in gloss, semi-gloss, and satin.

**APPLY WITH:** synthetic-bristle brush or aerosol can

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 3 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 2



#### Minwax® Wipe-On Poly

**GOOD FOR:** Furniture, railings, trim or anywhere a brush could leave drips. Its thin film offers moderate protection from abrasion. Also useful for hiding superficial scratches in previously finished wood. Available in gloss and satin sheens, and in oil-based and water-based formulations.

**APPLY WITH:** lint-free cloth

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 3 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 2 to 3



#### Minwax® Clear Brushing Lacquer

**GOOD FOR:** Cabinets, furniture, interior doors and accessories. It is a clear, protective finish for wood and metal. It requires no sanding between coats. Not recommended for floors.

**APPLY WITH:** high quality natural-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 3 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 2



### INTERIOR OR EXTERIOR FINISH

#### Minwax® Helmsman® Spar Urethane

**GOOD FOR:** Exterior doors, trim, and furniture. Contains UV absorbers that protect the finish and the wood from the sun's rays. Specifically formulated with resins that allows it to flex as the wood surface expands and contracts with temperature changes. Available in gloss, semi-gloss, and satin, and in oil-based or water-based formulas. Not recommended for floors.

#### Minwax® Helmsman® Spar Urethane (oil-based)

**APPLY WITH:** natural-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 3 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 4

#### Minwax® Water Based Helmsman® Spar Urethane

**APPLY WITH:** synthetic-bristle brush

**NUMBER OF COATS:** 4 **HOURS BETWEEN COATS:** 2



## APPLICATION TIPS

### **When working with any finish...**

- Choose the right brush. Use natural-bristle brushes for oil-based finishes and synthetic-bristle brushes for water-based and water-based oil-modified finishes. Don't use rollers - they create bubbles.
- Pour some finish into a clean container. Working from a separate container prevents the dust and other particles picked up by the brush from contaminating the finish in the can.
- Tap, don't wipe. After dipping about one-third of the brush into the finish, gently tap it against the inside of the container. Scraping the bristles over the edge of a container leaves the brush too dry to apply a coat of the right thickness.
- Always brush or wipe with the grain. It's the best way to work the finish into the wood pores and ensure an even appearance.
- Apply and move on. Too much brushing can leave topcoats rough and ragged.
- Don't smooth with steel wool. When working with water-based finishes steel wool can leave behind tiny bits of steel that you can't see - until they rust. Use sandpaper instead.

### **When working with exterior finishes....**

- Protect the entire surface. Often times the tops and sides of exterior surfaces are forgotten. Be sure to protect the entire surface.
- Give your door a yearly check up. Because your door is exposed to the sun's rays and changes in weather, it can take a beating. Check your exterior door each year for signs of wear and tear. Reapply when necessary.

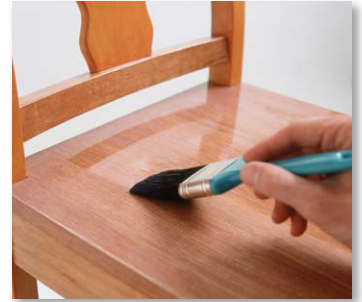


## Do's & DON'TS

In addition to reading the directions on the can, keep these basics in mind.

### **Do...**

- **Stir the finish.** Do this before and during application to evenly blend the ingredients that control sheen and UV resistance.
- **Apply thin coats.** Thick ones take longer to dry and are more likely to drip or wrinkle.
- **Sand between coats.** Using 220-grit paper helps ensure good adhesion and smoothes away imperfections.
- **Wipe after sanding.** Dust interferes with adhesion and leaves unsightly bumps in the finish. Use a cloth dampened with mineral spirits on oil-based finishes; use a water-dampened cloth on water-based finishes.



### **Don't...**

- **Shake the can.** Shaking creates bubbles, which leave a rough, pitted surface. It's okay to shake wipe-on polys, however.
- **Thin the finish.** Thinning doesn't improve adhesion, and you'll have to apply more coats and use more solvent.
- **Use tack cloths.** Some contain chemicals that prevent good adhesion.
- **Wax the finish.** Wax isn't durable and will interfere with any subsequent coats.
- **Use an interior finish for an exterior surface.** Exterior finishes are specially formulated to block UV rays and to protect the wood from weather changes.

# WOOD REPAIR & MAINTENANCE

Certain spaces in the home can be high traffic areas. Floors, furniture, doors and cabinets take a great deal of abuse. Keeping them as beautiful as they looked when they were first finished is now easier than ever! Minwax® has a full line of repair and maintenance products that offer easy solutions to restore and maintain the beauty of wood in your home.

## Disguise Nicks and Scratches

Minwax® Wood Finish™ Stain Markers aren't just great for doing furniture touch-ups. Use them to repair minor scratches on hardwood floors, stairs, railings, moldings, kitchen cabinet doors and drawers. Available in eight Wood Finish™ stain colors.



## Fill Scratches

Minwax® Blend-Fil® Pencils are colored pencils designed to repair scratches and nail holes in stained and finished wood. They are available in a variety of colors to match specific Minwax® Wood Finish™ stain colors and many other wood stains.



## Fix Nail Holes

Nail holes left in furniture, wood moldings and trim are easy to disguise using Minwax® Wood Putty®. This tinted putty is available in the most popular Minwax® Wood Finish™ stain colors. Applied using either the tip of your finger or a screwdriver, it remains pliable and does not require any sanding.



## Repair Damaged Wood

Minwax® High Performance Wood Filler is a super-strength wood filler that is ideal for interior and exterior repair projects - from small cracks to major repairs. It goes on like putty and hardens into a tough surface. When working with rotted wood, first remove any loose material and apply Minwax® Wood Hardener.



## Renew and Clean Hardwood Floors

To give worn hardwood floors a new lease on life, first clean using Minwax® Hardwood Floor Cleaner. Then follow with Minwax® Hardwood Floor Reviver. Simply squirt it on the floor and spread it out using a painter's pad or a synthetic applicator on a long handle and let it dry. No sanding, no mess, no fumes. This water-based topcoat dries in approximately two hours and gives your floor three to six months of beautiful protection.



For regular cleaning, try the convenient Minwax® Hardwood Floor Care System. It is an all in one kit that provides you with everything you need to keep your floors looking beautiful: a bottle of Minwax® Hardwood Floor Cleaner, a special cleaning pad and a long-handle pole for easy application.



## Clean Kitchen Cabinets and Wood Furniture

Kitchen cabinets seem to be a magnet for cooking oils, grease and food, especially around knobs and hardware. Over time, these deposits will soften and damage even the strongest of wood finishes. To protect that from happening, clean your cabinets on a regular basis with Minwax® Wood Cleaner, available in a convenient to use trigger-spray bottle.



Dirt, grime and perspiration on our hands does the same thing to the wooden arms of our chairs as cooking oils do to the knobs on our cabinets. Dusting products aren't strong enough to remove this gradual build-up, so make it a point to clean your wood furniture regularly using Minwax® Wood Cleaner.

**Note:** This not for use on waxed, oiled or unfinished wood or wood finished with shellac.

## SIMPLE DO'S & DON'TS TO PROTECT YOUR WOOD

### Do...

- Vacuum or sweep hardwood floors regularly to remove dirt and grit, which will wear down the finish.
- Place rugs both inside and outside exterior doors for people to wipe their shoes.
- Clean the outside surfaces of your kitchen cabinets often, as the grease and oils that accumulate around knobs and pulls will eventually soften and damage the wood's finish.

### Don't...

- Delay making needed repairs. Left unchecked, small problems can soon become large ones.
- Allow water to remain in contact with wood for extended periods of time, as it may penetrate the finish and leave permanent stains in the wood.
- Under-estimate the bleaching power of the sun. Close your window coverings during peak sunlight periods.

### Make Your Own Maintenance & Repair Kit

To make caring for your wood furniture, cabinets, trim and floors easier and faster, assemble your own Maintenance & Repair Kit in a plastic dishpan or caddy. Start with the Minwax® repair and maintenance products mentioned here, and then add an assortment of fine grit sandpaper sheets, a few screwdrivers, a pair of pliers, some clean cloths, disposable gloves and a small can of Minwax® Wipe-On Poly for additional protection for your furniture. Keep your Repair Kit under your kitchen sink or in a nearby closet to simplify those last-minute repairs.

## SAFETY INFORMATION

**Wood Finishing** can be fun and rewarding if you follow simple safety guidelines. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for the Minwax® products you are using.

**WARNING!** If you scrape, sand or remove old paint, you may release lead dust. LEAD IS TOXIC. Contact the National Lead Information Hotline at 1-800-424-LEAD or log on to [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead).

**FIRST AID:** If swallowed, do not induce vomiting. Call physician immediately. For skin contact: Wash thoroughly with soap and water. If irritation persists, get medical attention. If affected by inhalation, immediately remove to fresh air. If symptoms persist, call physician.

**FOR EYE CONTACT:** Immediately flush eyes thoroughly with water, then remove contact lenses. Continue to flush eyes with water for at least 15 minutes. If irritation persists, get medical attention.

**DANGER:** Contains mineral spirits. Harmful or fatal if swallowed. Do not take internally. Skin irritant. Avoid contact with skin and eyes. Wear rubber gloves and safety glasses when handling. Combustible. Do not use or store near heat, sparks, flame or other source of ignition. Close container after each use. Avoid inhalation. If using indoors, open all windows and doors to make sure there is fresh air movement. Keep out of reach of children.

**DANGER:** Rags, steel wool and other waste soaked with oil-based finishes and sanding residue may spontaneously catch fire if improperly discarded. Immediately place rags, steel wool and other waste soaked with oil-based finishes and sanding residue in a sealed, water-filled metal container. Dispose of in accordance with local fire regulations.

# MINWAX®



Wood finishing is a great way to update the look and feel of your home. This Application Techniques and Product Selection booklet features expert tips, techniques and so much more!

- Learn how to pick the best products for any wood finishing project.
- Tips on how to repair & maintain wood surfaces.
- Advice from Bruce Johnson on the basics of the wood finishing process including preparation, staining and protection.

Regardless of your wood finishing project, Minwax® helps you bring the beauty of wood into your home in a way that complements your lifestyle. For beautiful results, use Minwax® conditioners, stains and clear protective finishes together, following label instructions. Using more than one brand may yield unsatisfactory results.

**For more ideas and inspiration visit [minwax.com](http://minwax.com).**

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