

Our Hardwood Floor Refinishing Process

- The 19 Steps

By Tadas Sadunas

You may be interested to know how we'll go about restoring your hardwood floors. Below is our detailed 19 Step procedure we use:

(This assumes existing carpets are removed and any repairs needed are already completed by us or another competent tradesman.)

1 Seal off all areas and set up the dustless equipment. Whether you choose to use our 101% Dust Free System or not, we always seal off the surrounding areas with plastic sheeting and cover any wall or floor vents. This not only protects the other rooms from dust... it also protects our work area from any contamination.

2 Sweep and vacuum your floor. We like to start off with a clean area so we can see what we have to work with. This greatly helps us to do the next step properly.

3 Inspect your floor carefully looking for any protruding nails, splinters etc. Most older floors we work on in the Naperville area usually have something small we need to repair before starting the sanding process so they don't do damage to our equipment or your floor.

4 Remove the existing finish. The purpose of the first sanding is to remove the old existing finish or waxes and get down to the bare wood. We use two different machines in this process. The big belt sander sands in a straight line, up and down the length of the room. The smaller sander – called an edger - sands in a circular motion around the perimeter of the room.

The number of sanding passes required will be largely determined by the condition of the floor and the type of finish you have.

If the surface is in *very good* shape (some lightly worn through areas and small scratches) and has an easily sanded finish with no wax, one pass with a medium grit paper may be sufficient for this step. Most floors will need at least two sanding passes in this step though, with a coarse grit paper and then a medium grit paper.

The majority of floors we work on have been sanded previously – a few are so thin they're at their very last sand. Because of this, we try extremely hard to remove as little wood as possible from the floor during this step.

Extra Step:

If there is a huge build-up of wax, finish or tar paper, or the floor has been badly abused or damaged, we may need to do more cuts with coarse paper. Depending on how bad the floors are, we may need to go through many coarse belts and discs as they gum up or dull. The extra labor and materials will be included in your estimate so you'll know ahead of time exactly how much it will cost.

5 Vacuum. This is the second of many vacuums to come.

6 Final cut with the belt sander and edger. This final sand is done with fine grit sandpaper and eliminates the coarser sanding scratches from the previous sanding.

7 Hand scrape and hand sand all the corners. The belt sander and edger aren't able to get right into the corners, around the door jams or under and around the radiators so we need to do this by hand. The time spent in this step is one of the factors separating a good refinishing job from a great refinishing job.

One of my big pet peeves in this industry is the guys that quickly rush through this step... and for obvious reasons - it's hard, painstaking, tedious work. We spend a lot of time in this step as we believe a great quality job is in the details. The extra effort is always worth it.

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8 Vacuum. We thoroughly remove all of the shavings created from hand-scraping so they don't interfere with the next step.

9 Buff and flatten the floor. We use a special machine called a TRIO to blend the difference between the belt sander's straight sanding marks and the edger's circular marks. If this is done properly, when the finish is applied the difference in sanding patterns are barely visible and you'll also have a wonderfully flat and smooth floor.

Extra Step:

If you want to change the color of your floors, you will need to stain them. This adds quite a few extra steps to the process from this point forward that you can read about in our Information Sheet titled: "Staining Hardwood Floors - What's Involved?"

10 Walk through to completely check every inch of the floor. We carefully examine the floor for anything we may have missed during the last few steps. If anything needs attention it's looked after.

11 Vacuum. This is the final vacuum before the first coat is applied so it needs to be done extremely thoroughly.

Your floors are now ready to be coated!

12 First coat. We now apply the first coat of the finish system you've decided to use. The first coat always looks ugly for either system (unless you choose the one coat Rubio Monocoat system in which Steps 13 to 18 don't apply) so don't let that worry you if you happen to see it before the second coat is applied.

13 Buff and hand sand. Once the first coat is dry we return to prepare the floor for its second coat. We use the buffer with an abrasive screen to lightly abrade the main area of the floor and we hand sand the perimeter of the rooms where it can't reach.

14 Vacuum and tack. Again we thoroughly vacuum the floor to ensure no contaminants are left between coats and this time we also tack the floor to make sure we've removed absolutely everything.

15 Second coat. The second coat is now applied and left to dry.

16 Buff and hand sand. We return to prepare the floor for its third and final finish coat. Same procedure as in Step 13.

17 Vacuum and tack. This is the final and very thorough vacuum and tack. By this time we've vacuumed your floors at least six times. As you can tell, we like to keep an extremely clean jobsite.

18 Third and final coat. We carefully apply the final coat and then ask that nobody walks on them for at least 24 hours.

19 Final walk through. We like to come back the following day to make sure everything looks great and the floors meet up to our high standards. (We're very picky with ourselves so if we're happy, you'll be ecstatic)

If you've invested in the 101% Dust Free System you'll be informed on how to contact the professional cleaner so you can schedule the final cleaning immediately. During this time, we'll also go through the floor cleaning and care procedures and leave you with some goodies, including a supply of felt pads, a bottle of cleaning solution and a detailed cleaning guide for future reference.

We square up the remaining balance and leave you absolutely ecstatic about your brand new beautifully restored hardwood floors.

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Visit us online at <http://napervillehardwood.com>