

Floor Care

Recommended Floor Care Procedures

Preface

To achieve optimum appearance and proper film protection for your floor coverings, it is extremely important to use the right equipment for each task. The best floor finishes in the world will look bad and be less likely to hold up if laid with a dirty mop or applied from a bucket that has other chemical residue in it. There are many different kinds of equipment to maintain floors and it is critical that your equipment match the maintenance program you have established.

Floor finishes are applied to floor coverings for three reasons:

1. To protect the floor covering from wear, stains, and daily abuse.
2. For ease of maintenance, allows spills and normal soil to be easily removed.
3. Appearance, well maintained floors provide an image-enhancing aspect

Stripping

Procedure #1 Stripping the floor of any old finishes.

1. Plan the job and check the area to be stripped outlining what will be needed to totally clean and remove old finish from all areas. Note edges and corners where build up may have occurred and require extra attention. There are no short cuts in the stripping procedure, when you are finished stripping the floor must be clean and spotless before applying new coats of seal and / or finish.
2. Gather all the necessary equipment for the stripping job and check to insure that all tools are in proper working order.
3. Remove all furniture, equipment, or free standing items that exist on the area to be stripped. Draw a diagram prior to removal to aid in putting everything back in its proper position when the floor is finished.
4. Sweep the area if large debris is evident, otherwise a thorough pass with a dust mop treated with a water-based dust mop treatment is recommended to remove soil and dirt.
5. Remove stubborn stains and chewing gum, as noted in your pre-inspection, prior to stripping the floor.
6. Pre-spray baseboards and corners where build up is visible with a heavy duty mixture of stripping compound or a product designed specifically for this job. These are powerful stripping compounds – be careful to control their application.
7. Have the appropriate “Wet Floor” signs placed strategically throughout the area to be stripped.
8. Mix your stripping solution according to the manufacturer’s directions and apply liberally to the area. Work according to your plan for stripping, depending on the number of people in your crew.
9. The steps for stripping include:
 - Mixing the stripper
 - Applying the stripper
 - Letting the stripper sit for 5-10 minutes
 - Physically agitating the floor with a floor machine
 - Removal of the stripping slurry
 - Rinsing the floor at least twice if using an alkaline stripper

Procedure #2 Rinsing the floor of any alkaline residue.

1. Pick up all stripping solution with a wet vacuum before laying the rinsing solution down.
2. Using a rinse mop, dip mop into clean, warm rinse water. Do not ring out the mop. Lay the rinse water over the entire area that was stripped. A neutralizer may be added to the first rinse.
3. Pick up with wet vacuum or mop.
4. Apply second rinse using clean water, pick up with wet vacuum or mop. Be sure to go over the entire area that was rinsed with a well rung out rinse mop to pick up any streaks or footprints.
5. After the floor has dried from rinsing, check the floor for any residue or white film. This can be done by wiping your hand over the floor. If a film is still evident then additional rinsing is required – even the world’s greatest floor finish will not adhere to a floor covered with an alkaline film.
6. If a “Rinse Free” stripper is used, a light detail mopping is all that will be required.
7. Allow the floor to dry fully before applying seal for your first coat of finish.

Sealing / Finishing

Procedure #1 Applying floor finish or seal with a mop

1. Always use a clean mop head designed for applying floor finishes and mark the mop handle appropriately so that this mop is not used for any other purpose!
2. Soak mop head in warm water and wring out thoroughly. Water will fill the mop fibers, thus saving finish.
3. Put a plastic garbage can liner in your mop bucket to assure that your finish will not become contaminated from previous chemicals which may have been used in the mop bucket. This will also assist you in faster cleanup later.
4. Dip mop in the bucket of finish and tamp the mop head lightly in the wringer. You want the mop to be full of finish but never dripping. A gentle twisting of the mop handle will also cause excess finish to be removed.
5. Start applying the finish in a corner of the area furthest from your exit point and begin by outlining along baseboards. When doing larger areas where the finish may have an opportunity to dry before you can return for a parallel run – seek to establish an outline that will be consistent with the floor tiles.
6. Fill in the area between the outlined edges, applying finish with a smooth overlapping stroke. We recommend that all finishes be applied in medium to thin coatings. Re-wet the mop with finish as necessary and make sure that the finish is being applied evenly.
7. Continue applying finish, covering each area before the adjoining area is dry. A smooth and even application will assure that all the pores in the floor are properly filled for lasting protection.
8. After the first coat has dried (normally 15 - 25 minutes, but this will depend heavily on the humidity and air flow) apply a second coat in the opposite direction, following the procedure outlined above.
9. Subsequent coatings should be applied as above. Be sure to allow proper drying time between coats. If multiple coats are to be applied at one time, the first two coats should be applied to the entire floor.

Daily Maintenance

During all daily maintenance procedures it will be important to watch the floor for developing traffic patterns and respond to these situations accordingly.

Procedure #1 Cleaning the floor (with a wet mop).

1. Sweep the area if large debris is evident, otherwise a thorough pass with a dust mop treated with a water-based dust mop treatment is recommended to remove dry soil and dirt.
2. Always use a neutral detergent mixture according to the manufacturer's directions when cleaning highly finished floors. Alkaline cleaners can soften, damage, and create an unsightly film causing additional maintenance.
3. When wet mopping a floor it is important to change the mopping solution when visible contamination occurs. There is nothing worse than mopping a floor with dirty water or using a soiled mop head!! Start with clean equipment and be sure to clean it when you are done.
4. Apply mopping solution liberally (do not floor) allowing the solution to contact the floor for approximately 2-3 minutes and pick up excess with mop. Physical agitation with the mop may be necessary in badly soiled areas.
5. If using an alkaline cleaner, "Rinsing" is required.

Procedure #2 Cleaning the floor (with an automatic scrubber).

1. Sweep the area if large debris is evident, otherwise a thorough pass with a dust mop treated with a water-based dust mop treatment is recommended to remove dry soil and dirt.
2. Perform pre-operation checks on the scrubber as described by the manufacturer or recommended by the distributor (batteries, brushes / pads, squeegee blades, etc.).
3. Always use a neutral detergent mixed according to the manufacturer's directions when cleaning highly finished floors. Alkaline cleaners can soften, damage, and create an unsightly film, which is even more apparent when using an automatic scrubber. By causing more agitation than a mop, an automatic scrubber can leave side trails of solution.
4. Fill the scrubber solution tank with water first, and then add the proper amount of chemical.
5. Choose an appropriate pattern that will assure full coverage and lie down, scrub, and pick up the mopping solution using the automatic scrubber. Be sure to use a damp mop to pick up any trails that may be left.

Periodic Maintenance

Procedure #1 Dry burnishing, high speed and ultra high speed maintenance.

1. Accomplish only after sweeping, dust mopping, damp mopping and / or automatic scrubbing the floor. All buffing programs are actually "controlled abrasion processes", therefore it is necessary to remove all soil prior to burnishing or you will run the risk of embedding soil into the finish film causing unsightly yellowing.
2. Follow distributor recommendations as to the proper pad for your machine and floor finish you have selected.
3. After dry burnishing, run a clean dust mop over the floor.
4. Do not use this procedure if tile is asbestos.

Procedure # 2 Spray buffing, conventional machine and high speed maintenance.

1. Follow steps outlined for "Cleaning".
2. Using a spray buff compound, lightly mist the product through a trigger sprayer directly onto the floor ahead of the buffer. Spray buff compounds may vary, however, their purpose is all the same – to provide lubricity to the pad surface, assist in working out heavy marks from the floor surface, and to facilitate better blending in scratched areas.
3. Buffing the area where the spray buff has been applied until dry (this will vary with the speed of your equipment and type of pad being used). Be careful to notice areas of wear and pay particular attention to the depth of gloss (this will indicate when recoating is necessary, especially in traffic patterns).
4. Dust mop the entire floor after spray buffing.

Procedure #3 Restoring, high speed and ultra high speed maintenance.

1. Follow steps outlined for "Cleaning"
2. Follow the dilution recommendations of the manufacturer for the restoring compound and always use a clean mop and bucket to apply.
3. Put a plastic garbage can liner in your mop bucket to assure that your restorer will not become contaminated from previous chemicals which may have been used in the mop bucket. This will also assist you in faster clean up later.
4. Dip mop in the bucket of restorer and tamp the mop head lightly in the wringer. You want the mop to be full of product but never dripping. Apply evenly to all areas and allow to air dry.
5. Once dry follow the steps as outlined in the procedure for "Dry Burnishing"

Restorative Maintenance

Procedure #1 Top scrub and Recoat (with a single disc machine).

1. Sweep the area if large debris is evident, otherwise a thorough pass with a dust mop treated with a water-based dust mop treatment is recommended to remove dry soil and dirt.
2. Depending upon the depth you wish to penetrate into the finish film during the top scrub procedure – use wither an all purpose cleaner (for deeper penetration) or a neutral detergent (for light penetration) and a green pad for light scrubbing or a blue pad for deep scrubbing. Always mix chemicals according to the manufacturer's directions.
3. Apply solution liberally (do not flood) allowing the solution to contact the floor for approximately 2-3 minutes and thoroughly scrub using the single disc machine.
4. Pick up solution with mop or wet vacuum. Use a detail mop with clean water to remove any trails or footprints.
5. (Optional). Dry Buff the clean floor to knock off nay edges and smooth the surface prior to applying a new coat of finish. This step will enhance the appearance level of the floor noticeable.
6. Apply one coat of floor finish in the traffic areas as described in the "Apply Floor Finish" procedure. For appearance sake this coat must be applied evenly and if necessary feathered at the edges. If lines are apparent where new finish has been applied, wait at least one hour and dry buff edges.

Procedure # 2 Top Scrub and Recoat (with an automatic scrubber).

1. Follow the same procedures for "Cleaning" with the automatic scrubber using the double scrub method. Double scrubbing provides two passes with the automatic before the solution is picked up and normally utilizes a more aggressive pad or brush.
2. Lay solution down on the first pass with squeegee in the up position. Make a return pass along the same path with solution turned off and squeegee down.
3. Be sure to have a clean detail mop available to pick up any trials which may be left from the automatic.
4. Using a neutral detergent in this process will alleviate the need to rinse, however if you are performing a more aggressive top scrub with an all purpose cleaner, then rinsing is necessary prior to recoating.
5. (Optional). Dry buffing the clean floor to knock off any edges and smooth the surface prior to applying a new coat of finish. This step will enhance the appearance level of the floor noticeable.
6. Apply one coat of floor finish in the traffic areas as described in the "Applying Floor Finish" procedure. For appearance sake this coat must be applied evenly and if necessary feathered at the edges. If lines are apparent where new finish has been applied, wait at least one hour and dry buff edges.