

## **Parquet wood floor sanding , polishing & varnish**

hardwood floor sanding and refinishing from a veteran floor refinisher to achieve a smooth, professional-quality finish.

### **Floor-sanding expert process**

Sanding hardwood floors might seem like a pros-only project. It's a big job that creates big disruptions in your household. And then there's that big, scary sanding machine...

Preparing the room

Seal off ducts

Tape plastic over ducts to keep sanding dust out.

Some of the preparation work is obvious, like removing all the furniture and covering doorways with plastic.

Cover or plug air grilles to keep dust out of ducts. Remove all window coverings and any art on the walls

Remove doors that open *into* the room. You can't completely sand under doors, even by opening and closing them.

Nail down any loose boards with finish nails.

Good sander choice

A drum sander with continuous belts and a lift-lower lever for better control.

You'll need two machines: a drum sander to sand most of the floor and an edger to sand along baseboards.

Choosing a sander that has a lever to raise and lower the sanding drum. That makes graceful stops and starts easier—and reduces gouging.

### **Scraping a corner**

Using a carbide scraper to remove finish from corners

When the sanding is done, using a paint scraper to attack spots that the machines can't reach. A sharp scraper will leave a super-smooth glazed surface that won't take finish the same as the surrounding wood. So rough up scraped areas with 80- or 100-grit paper.

### **Floor edging tool**

A floor edger sands right up close to the baseboard

The edger is basically a sanding disc mounted on a big, powerful motor. A simple tool, but not so simple to use.

Here are some tips to help you master the edger and minimize the inevitable swirls left by the spinning disc:

Follow up each phase of drum sanding with edging. After drum-sanded at 36-grit, for example, edge with 36-grit.

Place a nylon pad under the sandpaper. This cushion minimizes gouges and deep swirls. Get pads at the rental store.

Replace the sandpaper when it's dull. Dull paper won't remove swirls left by the previous grit.

At the end of the job, lay a flashlight on the floor to highlight any leftover swirls. Then hand-sand them out with 80- or 100-grit paper.

A warning for woodworkers tempted to edge with your belt sander, but even the biggest belt sander can't cut half as fast as an edger. You'll also be tempted to polish out swirls with a random orbit sander. But beware: That can over polish the wood so it won't take finish the same as the surrounding wood. Hand-sanding is safer. "Edging with a belt sander is like digging a ditch with a trowel. You can do it, but it will take forever."

### **Sanding out scratches**

Although the finish is gone, scratches remain that must be gradually sanded out

The initial coarse grits remove the finish and flatten the wood. But that's not enough. You need to progress through *every* grit to polish off the scratches left by the previous grit. On most of my jobs, the sequence is 24-36-60-80 for coarse-grained wood like oak. Scratches are more visible on fine-grained wood like birch or maple, so I go to 100-grit.

Sweep or vacuum the floor before you move up to the next grit. Even the best abrasives throw off a few granules while sanding. And a 36-grit granule caught under a 60-grit belt will leave an ugly gash in the floor. Wrap the vacuum nozzle with tape to avoid marring the floor.

### **Buff with a screen**

Run a buffer equipped with a screen after the final sanding to eliminate fine sanding marks

After we have finished with the sanders, the floor will look so good that you'll be tempted to skip this step. But don't. "Screening" blends the edge-sanded perimeter with the drum-sanded field and polishes away sanding scratches. You can do it with a rented buffing machine or with a sanding pole (like the one used for sanding drywall). Either way, the abrasive to use is 120- or 150-grit sanding screen

Parquet flooring is a hardwood floor that is noted for its geometric pattern. Often referred to as patterned flooring, caring for parquet is easy. If the homeowner chooses to varnish their floor, it will add a protective coating that will keep it from being damaged by abrasive elements and actions. While varnishing a hardwood floor will take some preparation and labor, the effect it will have on the life and appearance of the floor far outweighs any work that has to be undertaken to apply the protective coating. Varnishing, along with proper care, will result in an attractive and well-maintained floor that will last for years.

1 Sweeping & vacuuming the floor to remove any dirt and debris. Hammering in any nails that are sticking up above the surface of the floor, or out of the baseboards.

2 Putting on safety goggles and a respirator mask and use an orbital floor sander and 100-grit to 120-grit sandpaper to completely sand the floor. Sweeping the floor thoroughly, and wiping down the baseboards with a dust cloth, if needed. Vacuum up any excess sanding dust.

3 Using a paint roller and pan to apply the first coat of polyurethane, water-based or acrylic varnish to the floor. Following the instructions for application. Allowing the varnish to dry for the recommended drying time.

4 Sanding the floor with the orbital sander and fine-grit sandpaper to smooth the finish. Sweep and vacuum all remaining dust.

5 Using the paint roller and pan to apply a second coat of varnish. Follow the instructions for application and drying time.

6 Repeating Steps 4 and 5 until a gloss shine is enhanced.