

Simple Tips for Water-Based Users

When using water-based finishes, the thing to keep in mind is that you are working with **water**. Equipment and techniques needs are slightly different. Here are some pointers to remember...

- Grain raise is unavoidable with water-based coating. Don't fret about it, just anticipate it. Sand the floor finer. Do not be worried about over polishing the wood. Screening to 120-grit or finer is a good ending point before applying water-based coating. Water popping the grain before the final screening is also helpful in finishing up with smooth water-based floors.
- Don't spend forever brushing out a water-based coating. They set up much faster than OMU, but water-base usually flows out well on its own. Brushing after the finish starts to set will cause it to ball up and remain that way. Resist the temptation to keep brushing and rebrushing. Fix any flaws after the coat has fully dried. (Just try not to leave any flaws on the last coat.)
- Mix the finish adequately before coating. Not mixing the finish can cause streaking in the final appearance.
- Clean and Tack the floor before coating. It is even a good idea to clean the window sills and counter tops. A clean home provides for a perfect finish.
- Make sure to feather out turns made by the T-bar. While you can use the T-bar to feather out turns, it may be best to use a 10" paint pad to do all the feathering. Also, use the paint pad when backing out of a room. The paint pad has fewer tendencies to leave applicator marks.
- Apply an even pressure or no pressure to the applicator. Different pressures can lead to varying film thicknesses, which could lead to varying sheens. Be consistent with your application across the floor.

[Type text]

- Try to achieve the recommended coverage rates. Finishes are designed to be applied at a specific film thickness. If you apply the finish at the recommended rate it will have a better chance to flow and level.
- Don't use steel wool. Any stray fibers will rust and spot the floor where they lay. Screens or pads are just as effective and will not leave anything behind to rust.
- Make sure to turn off the HVAC system and close all windows and doors while coating. This will keep the finish from drying too quickly. After 30-60 minutes of no airflow the finish will tack over, at this point open the floor to airflow. Use fans to remove the solvent from the room. The off gassed solvent is denser than air and will fall back on the floor unless the room has been properly ventilated. A well ventilated floor makes for a strong finish.