



Tips on Applying a Clear Finish

Weather & Workspace

When starting the finish work the first rule is, do not apply the finish in direct sunlight. Your garage, typically, is the best location. Make sure your workspace is well ventilated. Next, check humidity, 85% and below is good, above 85% can sometimes cause white blemishes to appear. How do you check the humidity? You can use www.weather.com.

The best temperature range for finishing work is between 60° and 85°F. If it is too cold the drying time will be too long. Never use these finishes below 40°F. If it is too hot the finish will dry too fast and not have time to smooth out. If the temperature in your garage is not within the ideal working range, place the materials in a suitable room inside your house for a few hours. *(Please note all unfinished wood should have been stored inside already)* This will give the materials time to stabilize to the inside temperature, then you can bring out 1 to 2 pieces at a time and apply the finish. Also don't spend a lot of time applying the finish; going over and over again. Just put on a nice thin even coat. Most small bubbles will come out on their own, or you will fix them when you sand.

What you can expect see while applying the coats.

1st Coat: After applying the first coat the finish will completely soak into the wood and the wood surface will become rough. This is because the finish is going deep into the wood and sealing it. Follow the step by step instructions below for sanding.

2nd Coat: Applying this second coat you will notice that most areas are fairly smooth. Again, don't worry about the small bubbles most will come out on their own, or you will fix them when you sand. This coat will sand very quickly.

3rd Coat: By using the Poly Wipe-On with a staining pad this coat will go on very smooth. Then just follow the final instruction this will give it an amazingly smooth finish!

Care needs to be given in applying the finish.

Doors and drawer fronts need to be finished evenly on all sides at approximately the same time. If you are using a finish that dries slowly you can't just apply a finish to one side of the material and let it dry over night then finish the other side, there is a good chance they will warp. One of the best ways to apply the finish evenly and help to speed up the finishing process is to use small support points to prop up the backs of the doors or drawer fronts. See the instruction on finishing for making these support blocks.

Warnings Before using any of the finishing products read all Label Warnings first! Most of these products give off harmful or volatile vapor. Use only with adequate ventilation.

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1. Making support blocks by using screws supplied with your door hinges and small pieces of wood.



2. With a screw driver, center the screw on the piece of wood and drive all the way through.



3. The support blocks will look like this when finished



4. ***Open the can of Polyurethane and stir only!*** Starting with the back of the door first, apply the polyurethane evenly from the inside out, brushing in the direction of the grain.



5. Lay out 3 support blocks, turn the door over, and gently lay the door on the 3 support blocks.

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6. Apply the polyurethane as you did on the back side making sure not to press too hard. Do not over work the finish, just quickly apply a thin even coat.



7. After allowing the door to dry completely (24 hrs), lay down the sanding mat and sand both sides of the door with a fine sanding sponge block.



8. Go back over the whole door with a scuff pad for a uniformed dullness.



9. Vacuum the door to remove major dust and debris.



10. With a tack cloth, go over the whole door to remove fine dust and debris

For the second coat, repeat steps 4 though 10. Allow to dry thoroughly before continuing on the finishing coat.

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- 11. 3rd and final coat:** With a staining pad, apply Minwax's Poly Wipe-On to the back of the door.



- 12.** Lay out 3 support blocks, turn the door over, and gently lay the door on the 3 support blocks.



- 13.** Apply the polyurethane as you did on the back side making sure not to press too hard.



- 14.** After allowing the door to dry completely, lay down the sanding mat and sand both sides of the door with '0000' steel wool. This will cause the door to become extremely smooth and dull



- 15.** Buffing the finish is done by rubbing the whole door fairly hard with a crumpled piece of the masking paper. Don't worry about any small scratches they will come out in the final step.

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16. Final Step: With a soft, dry cloth, wipe down your finished doors with Pledge furniture polish. **Note:** This product can be used to clean and maintain the finish.

Suggested Finishing Products



Recommend on Maple for a Clearer Finish



Recommend on Red Oak Or Cherry

Minwax® Polycrylic® or Minwax Fast-Drying Polyurethane Clear Semi-Gloss

1QT for every 12' of cabinets



2" foam brushes

8 per can of Polyurethane



Sanding Sponge Block - Fine Grit

3 per Package



3M Wood Scuffing Pad

1 for every 2 cans of Polyurethane

Suggested Finishing Products



Tack Cloth

2 for every can of Polyurethane



Disposable Gloves



Dust Mask



Rubber Sanding Mat

Very important! Damage to the doors will occur when sanding without the use of this product.



Top Coat Kit:

1. Minwax Wipe-on Poly Clear Satin
2. Staining Pad
3. Steel Wool Fine 'OOOO'
4. Masking Paper for Buffing
5. Pledge Furniture Polish
6. Color Putty to Match Wood