

TOPCOAT APPLICATION

Jim Heavey

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Overview: | <p>As every woodworker knows, it's the final finish that we see, and we feel. A poor finish greatly detracts from all the elements that went into the project. Not only is it necessary to produce a smooth finish, but it is also very important to provide the correct finish. A finish or topcoat should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Control moisture absorption• Enhance natural beauty• Provide protection for the intended use of the project |
| Finish Facts | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drying/curing times based on 70 degrees and 70% humidity• Finishes will not keep wood from experiencing seasonal humidity movement• All sides of a project should have the same number of coats• Fresh finish dries quicker, spreads easier and levels easier• Finishes are non-toxic when cured |
| Danish Oil Finish | <p>A Danish oil finish may be fine for a decorative piece or a turning, but it is poorly suited to the potential abuses of a kitchen tabletop. Danish oil provides a very soft, natural look but with very little protective ability. Very easy to rejuvenate and repair, it is one of the easiest finishes to apply. It comes in a variety of tints. It is a combination of boiled linseed oil, varnish or poly and mineral spirits. This is considered to be a penetrating finish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perfect for picture frames, turnings.• Flood the surface using a pure china bristle brush and replenish as necessary for approximately 45 minutes then wipe dry• Check open pored woods for bleeding• Allow to dry for 24 hours and repeat as necessary Finished sheen is satin to almost semi-gloss |
| Shellac | <p>Shellac, once a very popular standalone finish, is now used mainly as a sealer and conditioner. Though a beautiful finish, it offers very little protection. It is an evaporative finish. Cured sheen is high gloss.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Made from the Lac beetle• Available as flakes and in suspension Waxed and dewaxed• Colors from garnet to super blonde (clear)• High sheen (can be softened with 0000 steel wool) Can be applied with brush, rag (padded) or spray• Excellent for sealing non compatible surfaces |

TOPCOAT APPLICATION

Jim Heavey

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| <p>Lacquer</p> | <p>Long considered a professional finish and a mainstay of the furniture manufacturers, lacquer is a well-used finish prized for its appearance, quick drying time, tint ability and relative durability. Lacquer can be used to coat a variety of projects that are not subjected to serious abuse. Fine furniture, cabinets, jewelry boxes, and picture frames will show off the beauty of the woods used in their construction when lacquer is used as a finish. The natural color of the wood is enhanced without the yellowing of poly or varnish finishing. Lacquer is available in Gloss, Semi -gloss and Satin. This is done with flattening agents.</p> <p>Lacquer is very easily repaired and is brushed or sprayed on. Since it is an evaporative finish, sanding between coats is not necessary because each subsequent coat partially dissolves the previous coat resulting in a well bonded smooth finish.</p> <p>All these benefits come with some cautions. Lacquer vapors can be toxic and they are very flammable. Good ventilation, explosion proof motors where appropriate and respirators are necessary to reduce the potential for problems when applying this finish.</p> <p>For those projects that beg to be touched, lacquer is a great choice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Typical applications• Precoat and postcoat lacquers• Brush and spray techniques• Lacquer retarder• Safety considerations |
| <p>Polyurethane</p> | <p>Polyurethane is the most widely used finish by woodworkers because it goes on easily and is very durable. This makes it a great choice for projects that will be subjected to a lot of hard use. A polyurethane finish on kitchen cabinets, dining room tables and cocktail tables will last for years without showing the signs of degradation so often seen with other finishes.</p> <p>Polyurethane finishes are available in all three sheens (satin, semi-gloss and gloss) in both oil base and water base. Poly can be wiped on, brushed and sprayed.</p> <p>Sanding between coats is necessary to improve adherence. Oil based formulations add a yellow cast to a finished project that leaves a 11 war mer11 look. Water based poly leaves no discernable color change making it a good choice for woods like maple and birch.</p> <p>Brush choices should fit the topcoat chosen. Generally, use a natural bristle brush with oil-based finishes and poly brushes or foam applicators with water-based finishes. Money spent on a good brush that is well cared for will make finish application markedly more successful.</p> <p>A wiping varnish finish is just a varnish or poly that has been thinned with mineral spirits. This thinning allows the finish to be brushed or wiped on with reduced brush marks for an almost flawless finish but requires many coats to provide needed protection. A wiping varnish dries quickly and thus reduces the potential for excessive dust nibs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self leveling• Long "skin" time• Protection while drying• Thinning to reduce bubbles• Sanding between coats• Using gloss as base coats• Storage and safety concern |