

DC031 How to...

Apply WoCa Wood Lye to a wood floor then oil it mechanically.

Novices: Please check our website for the most up to date instructions then test the process to understand the results before proceeding to larger areas.

These instructions are most likely to be used for hardwood or for finishing Douglas Fir. Most softwoods are prepared with Softwood Lye unless they show a negative reaction to the caustic level of that product.

Use Wood Lye White and Extra White oil for the whitest floor, normal white oil for a pale floor, natural oil for oaky look. Wood Lye Grey can be used in conjunction with white, grey or natural oils. Since there are no particular rules for which oil goes on which preparation then test ahead of undertaking large surfaces.

Application of Wood Lye is essentially a manual process, but removing the excess is best done with a polishing machine and wet vacuum.

The oil application method shown in this picture series is for commercial workers and makes use of polishing machines to give the smoother finish demanded in higher traffic residential properties and commercial properties such as restaurants, sports halls, museums etc.

This technique is also recommended for any larger projects i.e. greater than 40m², since the machines will take a great deal of the effort out of the work and the time-saving will outweigh the expense of hiring them.

Cleaning away excess oil is the most demanding part of any oiling process. Read how to do this and be equipped with enough cloths. Only apply oil to an area that you know you will be able to buff and clean away within the time available.

The Process:

Ensure your floor is correctly sanded.

Stage 1 involves soaking the wood with Wood Lye then after an hour washing off the excess. The wood must be allowed to dry overnight.

Stage 2 involves application of your choice of oil. Probably this will be a white oil, either Master Oil White (which has 5% pigment mix) or Extra White 118 (which has 13% mix). The choice of whiteness depends on your design requirement. Excess oil is then removed and the floor is left to cure overnight.

Stage 3 follows the next day and involves a 2nd application of oil buffed in to hone the wood surface. It is optional to use fine grade patina disks at this stage to smooth the surface although this may remove some colour. Stage 3 can be left till later in the building process assuming the floor is sufficiently protected, but must then be preceded by a wet clean before the oiling

Stage 4 cover O & M cleaning instructions for this type of floor finish. Since Lye treated floors are normally pale then the recommended soap is the white version.

You will need:

Machines: for best and most economic results

I recommend the following machines:

a 16" rotary single disk polisher 150 rpm ie. HSS Floor Scrubber/Polisher. Code 58611

a solution tank for the polisher

a wet / dry vacuum ie. HSS Wet Vacuum. Code 58211

Preparation with Wood Lye: Day 1 / Stage 1

It is our assumption that your wood is correctly sanded before you start the finishing process.

Wood Lye is a pigmented alkali that ensures the floor will remain light after it is finished and will further lighten as it is exposed to sunlight.

Ensure the pigments are correctly mixed up into the solution before starting work. The application equipment you require for Wood Lye is limited to a nylon pad under our Flat-Mop and perhaps a cloth for getting into tight corners.

1) On the original WoCa instructions you will see they wish you to wash the floor with a solution of IWC 8 hours prior to the application of Lye. This opens the wood grain to the alkali and helps achieve a more even colour. It is not entirely necessary to do this and you can simply prepare the floor by cleaning dust from the floor using a vacuum.

2) Stir thoroughly.

3) Apply a generous coat to the floor. Spread with the White Pad under the Doodlebug at a rate of 10 m2 per litre. Brush along the grain and check that all the wood is saturated with solution.



4) Again WoCa instructions refer to another wash with IWC solution prior to finishing with oil. The objective is to wash from the surface any excess Lye and further improve colour evenness. Dane Care regard this as important as otherwise you may find it difficult to dissolve this Lye off the surface with only the finishing oil. Do not dry abrade the surface or dry buff it with nylon pads.

If the equipment is available use the disk polisher with a green pad and dispense your



solution of Intensive Wood Cleaner from the polisher's tank. If there is no tank then apply using a Flat-Mop. Work over the floor allowing the weight of the machine to evenly clean the floor. Remove dirty water using a specialist wet vacuum or with cloths. The damp floor should start to dry within 5 minutes.

5) Before moving onto Stage 2 ensure the floor is thoroughly dry: 8 hours at 20 deg,C or overnight, in other words.



If this equipment is not available then use the Doodlebug with Scrub Pad to mop the surface. Continue to rinse the mop as you proceed since the objective is to remove excess Lye solution.

Stage 2: 1st oil application

Oiling

Mix the oil well. Apply your choice of oil to the dry wood surface using a doughnut assembly under the buffing machine. 1 litre of oil should cover at least 15 m².

A 'doughnut' is cut out of 1 green nylon pad. Don't forget to trim the central section.



A cloth is folded into a smaller size and sits inside the doughnut.



Always protect areas outside the room where you are working.



When you apply white oil use a different drive-plate from when you do natural work. Don't be over-ambitious – do maximum 30m² at a time.



This is a nice even application of oil.

Where necessary, apply up to room edges by hand. Allow the oil 30 minutes to absorb and during this period buff it into the wood using an olive nylon pad under your buffing machine



Look how much oil there is on the wall!

The skirtings have not been fitted so machine work has continued right up to the edges. If skirting boards are in place then you have to be **MUCH MORE CAREFUL!!!!**

Cleaning away all excess oil

Use cleaning cloths held in place under the buffing machine to wipe the excess oil from the wood. The result is a smooth matt surface from which all 'liquid' oil is removed.



Dry the oil so that it is even. Leave overnight.

Warning! Remove all oil-saturated cloths, pads etc. from the property and place in a metal container filled with water. These can spontaneously combust if left to dry!

Stage 3: 2nd oil application – if done the next day



Day 2 oiling of the white floors on day 2 uses much less product.



Buff the floor twice with a nylon pad under which is placed 2 orange, fine grade patina disks. This is optional – whilst Patina disks give a smoother feel to the floor they can strip an amount of colour from the wood surface – its important to test the process in advance. An alternative is to oil without patina disks to get a particular colour then allow smoothness to come through time and cleaning.



Drying with cloths removes all excess oil from the surface.



The final dry should leave a very even finish.

Again, leave overnight to cure.

Do not forget this warning! Remove all oil-saturated cloths, pads etc. from the property and place in a metal container filled with water. These can spontaneously combust if left to dry!

Alternative to Stage 3: 2nd oil application – if done much later in the project.

Ensure the floors are properly protected whilst decorating works continue. To me this means clean dust sheets and then hardboard. Any sort of plastic film could create a moisture trap and cause discolouration from mould.

Before any oiling work the floors will need to be washed.

Remove dry dirt with a normal vacuum.

Use the disk polisher with a green pad. Dispense your solution of Intensive Wood Cleaner from the polisher's tank. If there is no tank then apply using a sponge. Work over the floor allowing the weight of the machine to evenly clean the floor.



Remove dirty water using a specialist vacuum or with cloths. The damp floor should appear dry within 5 minutes. If the floor was very dirty then repeat the process with clean water.

Work around the room edges by hand.

Check the floor for any marks that remain as the floor dries. These will normally have resulted from:

- 1) building chemical spills, burns, rust marks etc. which are normally in the wood surface. These can be removed by application of Oxalic acid.
- 2) paint or other building products dropped onto the wood surface can be removed by scraping with something as fine as a Stanley knife blade.



Allow the floor to thoroughly dry before starting re-oiling. If the floor has been well oiled before then it will dry very quickly, perhaps in one hour.

Reoil in the same manner described in the original Stage 3.

Cleaning Wood Lye treated wood floors

1. Floors are simply cleaned with a solution of white soap and a flat-mop.
2. Allow the finish 24 hours to cure. If there is any sign after that of oil seeping back to the surface, particularly from joints then contact Dane Care immediately for further advice. Furniture should be carefully lifted into position never dragged or pushed. Furniture rests should be placed beneath castors and felt pads attached to the bottom of furniture legs. Solutions should be found for the feet of gym equipment that may abrade the surface as the equipment is used. Metal table / chair / furniture legs are particularly important to protect. It is assumed that all other trades have left site before your final finishing has been completed.
3. Wood floors will not withstand sharp objects, paints, chemical cleaners or solvent based products.

REGULAR CLEANING

1. Regularly damp clean with a solution of white **Natural Soap**, which will not only remove dirt from your floor, but build the classic, light appearance of a soaped floor.
2. Ideal for everyday cleaning is the **Flat-Mop**, it can be used to damp or dry clean the floor. Sweep with a Flat-Mop or a regular brush. If you vacuum, ensure that **vacuum head brushes** are engaged to avoid unnecessary scratches. Spillages, dirt and food should always be wiped away as soon as possible (before they dry into the wood) with a cloth dampened with soap solution. An idea is to keep ready a spray 'misting' bottle with prepared solution.
3. To clean the floor with Natural Soap, dilute **2 capfuls of soap per 1 litre** of warm water. Soak the Flat-Mop head in the soap solution, wring it out, re-attach it, then mop the floor. When the **mop head becomes dirty** rinse away the worst of the dirt, re-soak and then carry on. When very dirty the mop heads should be washed in a washing machine.
4. If your flooring area is large you may find it convenient to have at least one mop head per 10m². Soak all the mop heads you need in advance, use them in turn and then machine wash them all afterwards ready for the next clean.

TOUGH DIRT, STAINS AND SCRATCHES

1. **Tough dirt** should be removed by damp cleaning with a solution of **Intense Wood Cleaner (IWC)**. Dilute 2 capfuls or more of IWC per **litre** of warm water, then clean the relevant area. Wipe excess solution off the floor. When dry, re-soap the area manually by rubbing in Natural Soap diluted 1 part to 4 parts water. Do not scour or abrade the area.
2. **It is best NOT to try sanding out stains** that cannot be removed by Intense Cleaner. You may try **Trip-Trap Spot Remover** aerosol, but otherwise try the test of time. Remarkably many stains will fade out of the floor as it is repeatedly cleaned over a period measurable in months.
3. **Scratches** should have concentrated Soap manually rubbed into them with a 100% lint free cotton rag.

WOOD FLOOR RENOVATING

1. A soaped floor can be renovated at a time when it is free of furniture. This may be when the property is being taken over by a new owner or tenant and they want to strip-back ingrained soap and start with a fresh floor. This is best done professionally using heavier machines.

2. Renovating is not as intense as you may think. **100sqm can be done in half a day;** no noise, no mess and no fumes.

Re-stock your cleaning products from www.danecare.co.uk Tel: 01952 727899.

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nb! Dane Care Ltd can provide professional assistance with your works should you run into problems with either sanding or finishing elements of the project.