

FINISHING WORKSHOPS

Finishing Fundamentals

Wood finishing for amateurs and small shop professionals can be done with very few tools and materials to achieve good results. Learn the basic steps to a fine finish on your special projects. The most commonly used finishes will be discussed, including varnish, shellac, and oil. We will pay special attention to surface preparation, conservation of materials and labor saving techniques. This will be a great foundation course to advance your skills. Practice materials will be provided for a unique, hands-on experience.

Coloring From Start to Finish

Adding color to fine woods can be much more creative than simply staining before applying a protective finish. Learn simple shading and glazing steps to add color to top coats with readily available dyes and pigments. All finishes from water based to traditional varnish can be enhanced by adding a little color and we will cover all the finishes most commonly used. Touch up techniques will also be discussed. Practice materials will be provided.

Staining, Coloring and Decoration

You can add visual excitement to any wood surface by the addition of color, from wash coats of stain to solid colors of paint. Learn simple staining and glazing steps to add color to top coats with readily available dyes and pigments. We will discuss and practice some of the decorative techniques of highlighting, layering, and antiquing. Practice materials and a full palette of colors will be provided.

Top Coating - Applying the Right Finish

After you have sanded smoothly and stained carefully, what is the best finish to apply to your special project? does it need to be durable, decorative or both? We will examine the commonly used finishes including oils, varnishes, lacquers, water base, and shellac, to help demystify the many choices available. This will be a hands-on class for you to experience the differences in application and develop a personal technique with your favorite finish. Practice materials will be provided.

Finishing with Shellac

Hand application of shellac is straightforward and can be practiced by any woodworker who needs a fine finish on their project. Learn about the types of shellac and their creative uses from sealer coat to final finish. We will practice brush and pad application, with special attention given to the pullover technique, which is the basic motion used in French polishing. Bring any small project or a practice board and your questions.

Finishing the Finish

When the final topcoat has dried, careful polishing can make a good looking finish into a great looking finish. Materials and techniques for rubbing down will be discussed and practiced, including special burnishing techniques. This will be followed by an examination of the unique polishes available including waxes, oils, rubbing compounds, and padding agents. You will leave with a broad knowledge of how to polish and protect all types of woodwork, including antiques, kitchen work surfaces, floors, outdoor furniture and more. Bring your questions and a notepad. Practice materials will be provided.

Wax Finishing

Wax has been used for centuries to protect and enhance the beauty of wood. Modern formulas have extended the versatility and creative uses of wax in the finish process from coloring to final polishing. Learn how to add durability to your wax finish while retaining the soft sheen that makes wax so desirable. Bring your questions, a notepad and an unfinished practice board. Wax will be supplied.

French Polishing

French polishing with shellac is a low-tech approach to the highest quality finish, and very few tools are needed to achieve good results. Learn the basic steps to this time-honored natural finish. The technique is straight forward and can be practiced by any woodworker who needs a fine finish for their special project. Materials will be provided and we will allow plenty of time for questions and discussion.

Finishing for Durability

Is your finish spill-proof or just spill-resistant? How can the plastic look of some finishes be overcome? This is a class for finishing enthusiasts and small shop professionals. We will explore options for creating attractive, hand-applied finishes that are durable using varnishes, oils, lacquers and water based finishes. Learn how to apply modern finishes to large, flat surfaces without creating lap marks. Practice materials will be provided.

Decorative Finishing

The many beautiful woods seen in antiques and fine furniture are often enhanced by eye-catching and colorful finishes. Combinations of clear coatings and painted surfaces can be used together or in layers to create unique effects. We will discuss and practice the techniques for highlighting, antiquing, liming, the “country” look, and even basic faux finishes. Sample boards and finishing materials will be provided.

Finishing at the Lathe

Applying a finish to a bowl or spindle that you have just completed on the lathe can be a rewarding completion to your turning project. A review of surface preparation will include the options for sanding and burnishing bare wood. We will then discuss and practice using a variety of waxes, oils, and hard coatings that are appropriate for turned objects, including “food-safe” finishes. Practice materials will be provided. Bring your questions, ideas and experiences to this interactive worksho

Refinishing and Restoration

Caring for antiques and fine furniture requires special attention to the finish. Learn about the materials and techniques that have been used in the past and learn how to preserve and recreate these traditional finishes with basic hand application of shellac, varnish, wax and natural pigments. We will work with the new category of safer finish removers which make refinishing much more enjoyable and we will learn how to revitalize old finishes without the need for stripping. Bring a small item (even a photo) for show and tell. Practice materials will be provided.

Workshop Descriptions

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