

FLOOR FINISHES 101

Floor finishes are an excellent example of compromise. They must be **durable**, yet easily removed; **glossy**, yet slip resistant; **buffable**, yet mark resistant. While finishes are complex, they include the following desirable features:

Gloss or Shine

The "Specular" gloss of a product is a measure of the refractive index of the percent of light reflected from the floor surface. Generally, the higher the gloss, the more likely your product will be judged as a quality finish. However, some people prefer a lower gloss or a "Satin Sheen" finish.

Resistance to Black Heel Marking & Scuffing

Based on the leveling and film hardness characteristics. Harder finishes are generally less likely to show scuffs or heel marks. Another important characteristic in a floor finish is the ability to resist penetration of scuffs and black marks into the film itself, thus allowing easy heel mark removal.

Resistance to Soiling

Resistance of the finish to penetration by dirt, dust, etc. Daily soil loads should remain on the top of the finish to allow easy removal by dust mopping, sweeping, or damp mopping. This helps the finish film remain clear and not dull or turn yellowish/brown. In addition, soil resistance adds to finish durability.

Resistance to Penetration by Detergents & Water During Daily Maintenance Procedures

Finishes should not be dulled, softened, or removed by damp mopping procedures with "neutral" soaps or detergents. If water is allowed to "sit" for extended periods of time (several hours), a quality finish will dry to its natural state and be unaffected.

Selective Removability

A finish must have exceptional resistance to soiling, water, and detergents, be buffable, etc. The finish must also be able to be easily removed, when necessary, with a minimum of effort.

Slip Resistance

A floor coating of any type must exhibit a resistance to slipping as people walk. To be judged as having acceptable slip resistance, a finish must have static co-efficient of friction greater than 0.5, passing UL standards.

Recoatability

A finish must be easily recoated without dulling or damaging the underlying coats of seal/finish. Future layers of finish should adhere completely and firmly to prior coats of finish, ensuring maximum gloss and durability.

Film Clarity

Finishes should dry to a colorless and transparent film on the floor. This enhances the natural beauty of the floor and actually helps brighten the room.

Nondiscoloration

Exhibits resistance to discoloration by the natural effects of oxidation, ultraviolet rays, etc. Good finishes will remain clear for indefinite periods of time, extending the interval between stripping/recoating procedures. Certain plastics/acrylics will yellow. These are generally found in lesser grade finishes.

Resistance to Powdering

"Powdering" occurs when a finish breaks down and/or dries out, becoming brittle. This generally occurs with lesser grade finishes during buffing or burnishing.

Proper Leveling

When applied, a finish must exhibit proper leveling and dry without streaking, ridging, or showing mop marks.

Adaptability to Buffing/Burnish Programs

A good quality finish will be able to adapt to almost any building care procedures such as spray buffing, high-speed burnishing, etc. with no breakdown in the preceding characteristics and features.