



Standard Practice for Application of Floor Polishes to Maintain Multilayer Composite Tile or Flooring¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers the application of floor polishes to maintain multilayer composite tile or flooring.² Floor polishes are applied to multilayer composite floors for protection and beautification of the floor surface. Cleaning, polish application, removal, and maintenance procedures are important functions in this process.

1.2 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are for information only.

1.3 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Significance and Use

2.1 Multilayer composite tile or flooring may consist of a decorative pattern layer and a transparent wear layer. Some floors may also include a stress absorbing foam layer or a backing layer of other type.

2.2 Included in the composition are vinyl resins, suitably plasticized and stabilized, with or without fortifying fibers, mineral fillers and prime pigments. Metallic accents (chips, pigments, etc.) are frequently used to form the overall design. The transparent wear coating is usually polyurethane, acrylic or vinyl. Although the transparent wear layer provides an extra measure of protection, the surface is subject to the same wear and tear as other types of floors.

3. Initial Treatment, New Floors

3.1 Do not scrub multilayer composite tile floors for about 4 to 5 days after the floor has been installed. This waiting period allows sufficient time for the adhesive to set properly.

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D21 on Polishes and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D21.05 on Specifications.

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² Commonly referred to as “no wax flooring” or “minimum maintenance flooring.”

However, it is good practice to clean the floor lightly as soon as it has been installed. Lightly mop with a dilute floor cleaning solution to remove surface oil (following the cleaner manufacturer’s dilution recommendations for damp mopping). Care should be taken during these operations not to flood the floor.

3.2 Sweep the floor frequently to keep it free of foreign matter, dust, and dirt.

3.2.1 For this purpose, treated mops or dust cloths may be used provided they are treated in such a manner that no deposits of treatment compound are left on the floor.

4. Thorough Cleaning

4.1 After the 4 to 5 day waiting period on new floors or as needed on previously installed floors, scrub thoroughly to remove all dirt, surface soil, temporary floor polish coats, etc.

4.2 Use a suitable floor cleaner diluted with warm water 100 to 120°F (37.8 to 48.9°C) in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

4.2.1 For proper preparation of multilayer composite tile or flooring use a suitable cleaner following dilution instructions as recommended by the manufacturer.

4.3 Apply the cleaner solution without flooding the floor.

4.4 Allow the cleaner solution to remain on the floor undisturbed for a few minutes but not long enough for it to dry.

4.5 Scrub until all dirt and soil is loosened from the floor. Power machines fitted with a scrub brush or a mild scrubbing type of synthetic pad may be used to hasten cleaning action. Avoid coarse grades of synthetic pads to prevent tile damage.

4.6 After scrubbing, take up the cleaner solution using a mop or wet vacuum.

4.7 Rinse the floor thoroughly with clean, cool water but do not flood the floor during this operation. The purpose is to remove all traces of cleaner and soil so that the performance of any subsequent coating is not adversely affected. Take up the rinse water.

4.8 Allow the floor to dry before applying floor polish.

5. Polish Application

5.1 Only floor polishes that are recommended for use on multilayer composite tile or flooring should be used. The floor

polishes should be removable with cleaners recommended for use on the same flooring.

5.2 Apply the polish evenly in a thin, uniform coat with an applicator or mop. If new mops or applicators are used, they should be cleaned by soaking in warm water until the size is removed, rinsed, and squeezed damp dry prior to use.

5.2.1 *Procedure for Application by Mop*—This procedure is essential with surface embossed patterns to prevent polish accumulation in the depressed areas. Dip the mop into the polish and squeeze out the excess with a squeeze-type wringer. Apply to the floor by moving the mop in a side-to-side or figure eight motion across the surface of the floor. Turn the mop frequently to present fresh surfaces of the mop to the floor. Before the mop “works dry” redip it into the polish, squeeze out the excess, and repeat the operation until the entire floor is coated. Avoid excessively heavy coats of polish. However, do not attempt to spread the coating too thinly as streaking or nonuniform gloss may be encountered.

5.3 Allow the polish to dry. Drying usually takes 20 to 30 min, but the time will depend on the air and floor temperature, relative humidity, and airflow.

5.4 Apply a second coat of the polish in the same manner as the first and allow it to dry.

5.5 Some polishes may be improved by buffing with a soft brush or other suitable buffing media after each coat.

5.6 Additional coats may be applied to improve appearance or enhance protective qualities.

6. Maintenance

6.1 Dry mop or sweep the floor as needed to remove surface dirt and foreign matter. For this purpose, use treated mops or treated dust cloths provided that they are treated in such a manner that they leave no deposits of treatment compound on the floor.

6.2 When the appearance of the floor warrants it, damp mop the floor to remove surface dirt and some scuff marks. For this purpose use a clean mop wrung out in clean, cool water or in a very dilute solution of a suitable cleaner. Do not flood the floor. In the case of buffable coatings, periodic buffing will remove smear and scuff marks and improve the appearance.

6.3 Under some types of traffic (where polish film has worn away without noticeable black marking or soil embedment), recoating can be done following the damp mopping in 6.2. Apply one or two thin coats as needed and buff if desired.

6.4 When the floor is noticeably soiled or black marked, scrub lightly with a solution of a suitable cleaner. For this operation, use just enough mechanical action to remove the dirt. It is not necessary or desirable to remove all of the previous coats of floor polish. Thus, a fairly dilute solution of the cleaner will suffice and the manufacturer’s recommendations for this dilution should be followed. Take up the cleaner and rinse the floors as described previously. This operation is

referred to as a light-duty cleaning and not as polish-stripping. If a few stubborn black marks remain after this operation; they can usually be removed on a spot basis with a dry No. 00 steel wool or a fine synthetic pad. Alternatively, spray buff techniques utilizing a power machine, a suitable synthetic pad, and a suitable spray buff cleaning product may be performed to maintain the floor.

6.4.1 Apply one or two thin coats of floor polish as the need arises using the same technique as for the first application except that it is not necessary to coat up against walls, cabinets, or other fixed units where there is no traffic. Staying 6 to 12 in. (152 to 305 mm) away from these objects will prevent problems of polish build-up and will reduce the frequency with which the floors will have to be stripped.

6.5 Spot cleaning and polish application can be done at pivot points, drinking fountains, push doors, or other areas that are subjected to heavy traffic. Separate cleaning and polishing steps may be used or spray buff techniques may be employed wherein emulsion polishes are spray-applied to the localized area and burnished with a fine-grade synthetic pad to loosen dirt, restore the gloss, and provide protection.

7. Stripping

7.1 Continue maintenance as described in Section 6 until obvious build-ups of polish occur at certain areas on the floor. When this occurs strip the floor with a concentrated solution of a suitable stripper using the dilution recommended by the manufacturer.

7.2 Apply the stripping solution liberally, without flooding, to the floor by mop or other suitable means.

7.3 Allow the solution to remain on the floor for a few minutes but not long enough to dry.

7.4 Scrub with a stiff brush until the old polish film is loosened. Synthetic stripping pads may be used to hasten the removal action. Power machines using either a scrub brush or synthetic stripping pad may also be used to hasten the removal action.

NOTE 1—Utilize suitable synthetic stripping pads so that there will be no damage to the floor.

7.5 Take up the cleaning solution with a wet vacuum or mop.

7.6 Rinse the floor well with clear, cool water and take up the water.


7.7 If some polish film remains, repeat stripping operations in those areas.

7.8 Allow sufficient time for floor to dry thoroughly.

7.9 Apply one or more thin coats of polish (as needed) following the procedure outline in Section 5. Maintain as described in Section 6.

8. Keywords

8.1 composite flooring; composite tile; floor polishes

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