

SUGGESTIONS FOR FINISHING BED WOOD

The finish is very important for long-term enjoyment of your wood floor. A quality finish maintained over time will protect the wood for years. Applying a durable and attractive finish for your project will require time and effort but the steps are not difficult and do not require expensive equipment.

There is not a single best finish to use since each person's preferences and resources are different. Local professionals who work with wood products used or installed outdoors may recommend a product suited for your climate. Always select a top quality product and be sure it is designed for outdoor use and provides UV (ultraviolet) protection. Exterior urethane varnish may be applied directly to the bare wood and will provide a natural wood finish with great appearance. These will generally be suitable for bed wood applications that will rarely see severe weather extremes or direct sun exposure. A more durable finish may be obtained by using a two stage coating system. The primer or seal coat is a product such as epoxy whose function is to seal the wood and provide great adhesion to the wood surface. The topcoat product will adhere to the first coat and provide strength and damage protection as well as UV protection from deterioration due to sunlight exposure. Oil furniture finishes are not recommended for bed wood applications as they provide very little protection from damage and may not have good UV absorption to protect the wood. You can find specific wood finish testing information on our website that evaluates different brands and products. Just go to www.mar-k.com/installation_hints.html . Here are a few suggestions that will help you achieve excellent results.



1954 Chevy Long Stepside
Michael Navarro, Adrian, MI

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1. The boards must be clean. Keep your hands clean and be sure tools and work benches are free of grease and dirt.
2. Be sure the bed to frame bolt holes and bedside to bed wood bolt holes are drilled before finishing the wood. Finish the wood before it is installed so that all surfaces are coated.
3. Sand the surface with 120 grit and again with 180 or 220 grit sandpaper. Pine should be sanded enough to remove any planers marks. Always use a flat sanding block when sanding oak or pine to prevent cutting away the softer parts of the wood grains. Remove all sanding dust before applying the finish.
4. Do not use the paint or varnish right out of the can. Always strain the amount you will need into a clean container and put the lid tightly on the original can. Do not return thinned paint or varnish to the original can.
5. Apply a thin coat using a high quality brush or paint spray gun. Be sure to coat all edges and ends of the boards, inside of all drilled holes, as well as the top and bottom surfaces.
6. When using a brush, be sure to clean the brush thoroughly between coats. If a small amount of varnish remains in the brush, it will dry and flow into the next coat of varnish leaving the finished surface rough.
7. After allowing plenty of time for each coat to dry, sand the surface with 220 grit sandpaper and a sanding block. Sand just enough of the area to be re-coated to remove brush marks or "orange peel". Be sure to remove all sanding dust before applying the next coat. It is best to do sanding in a separate room to keep the paint room clean and free of sanding particles.
8. Re-coat the boards on all surfaces following steps four (4) through seven (7) above to obtain at least three (3) full coats covering the boards. Do not sand the boards after the final coat.
9. Inspect the wood regularly after installation and repair or refinish any damages that appear over time. The wood will provide a long life if the finish is maintained and repaired as needed.

If you are not certain how to finish your boards and would like to experiment, ask the sales person for some samples of the type of wood you are planning to purchase. **For a \$15.00 charge, you can receive several short lengths of wood which may be used to check your finishing material and techniques.**