



# Oaklea Woodcrafts

## **Guide to finishing Products**

The biggest mistake made by many is to apply too much finish and end up with streaky or patchy finish, along with poorly executed sanding.

This Guide is offered to try to help those finding it hard to master finishing there items. As with all things we get better with time and practice.

### **Sealers**

This group includes cellulose, acrylic and shellac varieties. The group also includes pre-catalysed melamine lacquer, which is a water resistant sealer. These are used to seal the wood before applying a finish, but they can also be used as a final finish in their own right. Sanding sealers are diluted 50% using the appropriate thinning agent to allow application over larger areas whilst staying wet across the entire piece, also allowing it to flood into details. If undiluted it is often impossible to get an even coverage with the product straight from the tin.

### **Waxes**

These come in different types, such as soft paste waxes, hard stick varieties and can be coloured. These are usually best applied over a sealer, but some new types can be applied to bare wood.

### **Durable hard-wearing finishes**

Lacquers and oils fit this section well. Some can penetrate the timber; others form a surface finish and come in gloss, satin or matt sheen. Oil is deemed to be one of the most durable but not necessarily the best at resisting finger marks and dirt contamination.

### **Decorative finish**

A type of finish that will modify or change the appearance of the wood. On some occasions it may totally cover it to a point where it no longer looks like wood. This complex group includes coloured stains and waxes that are applied to bare wood along with chemicals, such as bleach.

## **Food safe**

If the piece comes into contact with food then it has to be food safe which means it must comply with current government standards

Alternatively, you could use pure beeswax, vegetable/mineral oil or liquid paraffin, all of which are applicable, plus many other manufacturer specific types of finish.

## **Abrasives**

These should be treated as with any other cutting tool and you really do get what you pay for where these are concerned. Good quality abrasives are not cheap; after years of experience the best sanding abrasive for woodturning is OPEN COATED cloth backed and flexible, these do not crack when folded. Usually made of aluminium oxide and are heat resistant and waterproof to some degree. The grades I use are 100 and 150 grit. I invariably start sanding at 100 grit because sharp tooling reduces the need for excessive sanding, this type of abrasive also tends to last longer than paper equivalent, making them better value for money.

## **Polishing cloths**

Mutton cloth is a good all round cloth to use and can be used for applying sanding sealer and polishing waxes, but any off cuts of cloth can be used for friction polish and oils. **NEVER wrap any polishing cloth around your fingers.** Also, never allow loose ends to trail around rotating machinery or work.

## **Wire wool**

0000 wire wool is used for cutting back finishes and sealers.

## **Finishing technique**

Method for finishing is to SAND, SEAL and then apply the FINISH.

## **Sanding**

1. Sand your design, working progressively through the grades. Remember to keep the abrasive moving, never allowing it to stop in one place or there will be scratches in your final finish.
2. With the lathe stationary either by paint brush or mutton cloth and apply a generous coat of sanding sealer,, working rapidly to get the entire surface wet. Do this quickly or one part will dry before another resulting in a patchy finish
3. With the lathe still turned off remove the excess with mutton cloth. When it is dry turn on the lathe and burnish with the cloth
4. Using dry wire wool cut back the surface to remove the raised grain and excess product. Repeat the process for a second coat

5. Sparingly apply a coat of wax and allow to dry. Be patient as drying times can vary
- 6 Turn on the lathe and with a clean cloth burnish the surface. Move to a clean spot on the cloth and polish the bowl

### **Method for applying an oiled finish**

Applying oil takes time but it does give the wood a much greater depth and richness. When sanding with oil the amount of fine dust generated in the workshop is much less, it will also grain fill leaving the wood with a much softer and warmer feel. This is ideal when making items that come into contact with food. Sand as you would normally, ensuring no damage is left on the surface of the bowl.

1. Apply a liberal coat of oil and leave to sit for 10 minutes. During this time the oil will be absorbed into the surface of the timber
2. Using wire wool or fine abrasive turn on the lathe at its slowest setting and proceed lightly burnish.
3. reapply another coat of oil
4. Wipe clean and dry, then run the lathe and burnish with paper. Now set the piece to one side in a dust free area and allow to dry for 24 hours. The following day add another coat of oil by brushing on and leaving to sit for a while, then wipe dry. Continue until you get the desired finish Once the oil is fully dry it may well require a polish using a polishing mop loaded with a cutting compound; wax sometimes is enough to bring the piece to a very good shine

### **Friction polish**

A better finish is usually obtained when your design as been sealed - you can achieve a far superior finish

1. Sand the piece as usual.
2. Using a small piece of mutton cloth, with the lathe running - apply the polish to your design, DO NOT apply too much, little and often is the best
3. Continue to burnish. If you have too much product on the piece, dry wire wool brings it back
4. Using very fine sand paper and be used to cut back the surface or to remove any further residue
5. repeat process until your satisfied with your finish
6. Give the piece a final polish using a wax



Hope you fine this Helpful