



TILE DOCTOR GUIDE TO: STRIPPING A FLOOR

WHY STRIP A FLOOR BEFORE SEALING?

- So that stains and dirt in or under the old sealer or polish can be removed.
- To enable the new sealer to penetrate into and grip onto the floor.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW BEFORE STARTING?

- The type of sealer or polish being removed.
- The floor type.
- The type of stripper required.

CHECKLIST FOR SEALING A FLOOR:

- Suitable Tile Doctor Sealer and Cleaner
- Scrapper and scrubbing pad
- Masking tape
- Cloth
- Water
- Buckets
- Protective gloves, clothing and appropriate breathing apparatus

HOW TO IDENTIFY THE PREVIOUS SEALER OR POLISH:

Waxes and "Dri-Brite" Types of Polish

These tend to be soft, easily scratched and scuffed. Waxes tend to darken with age, and because they are soft, the dirt often packs into them, especially around the edges of the room. Try to scratch the surface with a coin. If the surface scratches easily, leaving a waxy crystalline residue, it is probably a wax or polish. If a wax or "Dri-Brite" build up is very thick and has darkened with age and dirt entrapment, it is usually easier to carefully remove the top layers with scrapers than to use strippers. Tile Doctor Eezi Strip may then be used to get the floor, particularly vinyl, perfectly clean.

Acrylic Emulsion Sealers

The floor may appear shiny in some patches and dull in others. There may be peeling or flaking on the surface. One can usually identify acrylic emulsion sealers by the fact that they are normally packed in plastic containers and have a "milky" appearance before they dry. If a floor previously sealed with an acrylic emulsion darkens in patches or along scratch-lines when water is poured onto it, then the sealer must be stripped off before re-sealing.

Silicones

These are usually not visible after application, are sold in tins and are clear like water. Certain silicones only repel water, while other silicones have the ability to repel both water and oil.

Other Sealers

Most other sealers, especially those that are solvent-based and packed in metal tins, may yellow from sunlight or show white, easily-scratched patches where they start to delaminate from the surface.

TYPE OF SURFACE TO BE STRIPPED:

It is very important to know what type of floor one is dealing with. A cement-based tile may look like real terracotta or quarry tile, but the two tile types are handled differently. Cement-based tiles, terrazzo, limestone, marble and some other natural stones are adversely affected by any acid products such as Tile Doctor Lift Off and such product should not be used on these surfaces. Cement and Ceramic tiles often

have a thin, smooth layer protecting the underlying aggregate and may be damaged by too much abrasion. Care should be taken not to use too much force or rough implements when stripping these tiles. Slate may be damaged by too much abrasion. Vinyl tiles may be damaged by solvents such as Tile Doctor Ultra Strip, so it is vital to select the right stripper.

STRIPPER SELECTION:

Once one is fairly certain of the type of floor, its previous history and the type of sealer on it, the selection of the correct stripper is a simple matter.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

- Read instructions carefully.
- Use hot water for the dilution of those strippers that require dilution.
- Do a test first to see what the optimum dilution rate will be.
- Apply the stripper to cover the area thoroughly. Allow the stripper time to work before agitating. Do not be impatient and try to scrub the surface immediately because if you do the stripper will not work properly.
- Do not allow the stripper to dry out on the floor.
- After the stripper has softened the sealer, scrub either by hand or by machine until the sealer loosens from the floor.
- Whilst scrubbing, wet the floor with a solution of Tile Doctor Super Power Clean - one part Super Power Clean to ten parts of water, as hot as possible. This will help to emulsify the stripped sealer so that it can be washed away later.
- When the floor has been stripped, the resultant mixture of sealer, stripper, water and Super Power Clean, must be squeegeed away and rinsing must begin immediately with large quantities of water and continual scrubbing.
- Rinse water must be squeegeed away and disposed of, and rinsing must be continued until there is no evidence of foam on the floor. Allow the floor to dry completely and then examine the floor carefully to see whether it has been stripped completely. In the case of most tiles the following test can be performed.
- Any stains that are visible when the tile is dry will be visible after sealing if the tiles are sealed with a surface sealer or a transparent sealer.
- Any stains that are visible when the tile is wiped with a damp cloth will be visible after sealing if the tiles are sealed with a penetrating or colour enhancing sealer.
- Wipe over the floor with a damp cloth or mop. If the floor darkens in some areas and not in others it means those areas where the floor has not darkened have been properly stripped.
- If a complete strip is required, then those areas that have been stripped should be re- stripped.
- After stripping, the floor should also be examined to see if there are any stains that need to be removed prior to re-sealing. An assessment should be made to see whether a wash with Tile Doctor Lift Off is required to remove cement slurry or grout staining. Tile Doctor Lift Off is designed for use on terracotta, quarry tiles, brick, stone or slate, and should never be used on cement tiles, marble, limestone or on terrazzo without prior consultation with a qualified Tile Doctor Applicator.
- Remember that if one has used Tile Doctor Lift Off one should always neutralize afterwards with an application of Tile Doctor Super Power Clean.
- Tile Doctor Ultra Strip should be applied to remove deep-seated oil stains.
- Allow between one and three days for a floor to dry properly before sealing unless a waterbased sealer is being used, when one day should be sufficient.
- Allow the chemicals to do the work. Do not use too much abrasion, especially on cement tiles, which can easily be damaged.

STORAGE:

- Keep product out of the reach of children, pets and uninformed persons.
- Store in a cool, dry place 8°C-25°C away from heat, flames and sparks.
- Keep container closed when not in use, to prevent drying out. Check the product for any leakages.

HEALTH & SAFETY:

- In case of accidental contact with eyes or skin, wash the affected area with plenty of water and seek medical advice.
- This product is harmful if swallowed. Do not induce vomiting; call your local poison centre or doctor.

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