

# Make Wood Flooring New Again

**(MS) —** If your wood floors are showing signs of wear and tear from every day family living or if you just want a fresh look for your room, give your floors a spring makeover. These tips on wood floor repair, renewal, or a complete rejuvenation can get you started.

## Quick Fixes

Unlike most other floor covering options, wood is very forgiving, and signs of wear and tear usually can be quickly handled with a little effort.

For repairing scratches on any wood floor, simply use one of the wood finish stain marker pens available from a variety of retail stores. These pens will fill in and color the scratch making it less noticeable. The National Wood Flooring Association (NWF) has instructions on their Web site at [www.woodfloors.org](http://www.woodfloors.org) to help you find the solution you need to repair minor damage such as crayon marks, mild burns, and pet accidents. You also can learn how to remove minor damage like food stains, mold, candle wax, grease stains, heel marks, and much more.

## Refinishing

It takes time, usually 3 to 5 days, the right tools and proper training to refinish a wood floor. Therefore, securing a professional refinisher is highly recommended.

In general, most wood floors can be restored to their original luster with a buff and recoat treatment. The buff and recoat process includes a light sanding that removes surface scratches and then cleans and prepares the floor for a new coat of finish. Typically, you can buff and recoat a floor three times before you reach the cost of a total sand and refinish job. NWF member flooring companies often offer free estimates, so consult with a professional to determine which solution is best for your floor. You can find one in your area online at [www.woodfloors.org](http://www.woodfloors.org) under the

"Find a Professional or Product" link.

## Creative Painting

If you desire a bold statement of color or a checkerboard kitchen floor pattern, decorative painting directly on your wood floor offers a unique and nonpermanent solution.

To paint a wood floor, the floor will need to be sanded and primed. The surface to be painted should be clean, dry, dust-free, and as smooth as possible. Large depressions and cracks should be filled before painting begins. Painted wood floors create unlimited decorating options for formal and informal rooms.

To achieve a unique look, faux painting may appeal to the truly artistic homeowner. The finished patterns can mimic marble, tile, or even exotic wood species. Glazes, texture techniques and finishes can simulate an array of inlays, medallions, or oriental carpets without a permanent commitment. When you tire of the design in five, 10 or 20 years down the road, simply sand off the design and try something new. The final "look" is limited only by your imagination.

## Care and Cleaning

Wood floors are among the easiest floors to keep clean. To keep your wood floors looking like new, they can be maintained with simple, routine cleaning measures such as sweeping with a soft bristle broom or dry-mopping. You can minimize scratches to your floor by using scatter rugs at all doors to catch dirt and debris before they damage your floor, and by putting felt pads on furniture legs that come into contact with your floor.

Vacuums with beater bars can damage or scratch the floor's finish, so avoid using them or simply turn the beater bar off. Also, a wood floor will quickly lose its luster if exposed to excessive water and may even warp with prolonged expo-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL WOOD FLOORING ASSOCIATION  
This floor features distressed solid reclaimed white oak and red oak plank. The installation was nail-down. The floor is job-site finished, using a satin oil-based surface finish. Installation by Enmar Hardwood Flooring in Mesa, Arizona.

sure. Do not wet-mop a wood floor as this can dull the finish or even damage the wood. When spills occur, wipe them up immediately with a slightly dampened towel.

Another concern is ultraviolet radiation in sunlight, which can cause your floors to change color over time. Prolonged exposure to sunlight will change the color of virtually any wood floor, regardless of the species or finish. Some

woods lighten when exposed to sunlight; others, like cherry and oak, tend to darken. Some finishes include sunscreens to block the penetration of ultraviolet rays, helping to protect the floor from color changes.

With today's eco-friendly cleaning products and numerous options for renewal, your wood floors can look like new for years to come, and with a little preventive maintenance, they will last a lifetime.

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## When the Spring Arrives So Do Spring Pests

You may find unwanted visitors in your home when the spring season arrives.

That's because small animals, such as birds, field mice, or even bats may have taken up warm roosts in your home during the colder months. Come spring, when many animals reproduce, you could have a nest of wild pets on your hand.

Take a few moments to shine a light into the eaves of your attic or in the corners of areas in your basement to look for animal nesting materials. Pay attention to any noises you hear in the home that could be a sign of animal life. If you find any animals, be safe and call a professional exterminator or animal removal service to come in and take care of the problem. Some animals can be very protective of their nests.

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