

INDUSTRY  
RECOMMENDATIONS

*for*

SANDING,  
SEALING,  
COURT LINING,  
FINISHING

*and*

RESURFACING

*of*

MAPLE GYM FLOORS



## ABOUT MFMA

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The Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association (MFMA) is the authoritative source of technical and general information about maple flooring and related sports flooring systems. MFMA's membership consists of manufacturers, installation contractors, distributors and allied product manufacturers who subscribe to established quality guidelines. Through cooperative member programs, MFMA establishes product quality, performance and installation guidelines; educates end users about safety, performance and maintenance issues; and promotes the use of maple flooring products worldwide.

## INTRODUCTION

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These recommendations are general in nature and are intended to guide architects, engineers, contractors, and wood flooring owners. It is hoped that these recommendations will be of particular value to those who do not have a detailed knowledge of wood flooring, and that they will aid in maintaining high performance and safety standards. The Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association, its members and employees do not warrant these recommendations as proper under all conditions. As with any product, please consult the manufacturers' guidelines before use.

## PROCEDURES FOR SANDING A NEW MAPLE FLOOR

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All unfinished maple gym floors should be sanded with a minimum of three cuts using coarse, medium, and fine sandpapers. Final sanding of pattern floors should be performed with a screen and disk sander. This final sanding should provide a smooth and even surface, free from scratches, drum stop marks or gouges. After sanding, the contractor should thoroughly vacuum the maple surface with a heavy-duty commercial type vacuum to remove sanding dust and grit prior to sealing and finishing.

## PROCEDURES FOR SEALING, COURT LINING AND FINISHING A NEW MAPLE FLOOR

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There are two basic methods for application of seal and finish for new wood athletic floors — both are four-coat specifications. The first uses one coat of seal and three coats of finish (a “1-3” specification), and the second uses two coats of seal and two coats of finish (a “2-2” specification). The number of coats required may change with the use of a water-based urethane product versus an oil-modified urethane product. **Always follow your material manufacturers’ guidelines for application of sealer and finish, as procedures may vary from product to product.** The MFMA has authorized an independent testing laboratory to test floor sealer and finish products in accordance with strict industry standards. Contact the MFMA at 847/480-9138 or go to our website ([www.maplefloor.org](http://www.maplefloor.org)) to obtain the current *Floor Finish List*, and be sure to specify that your floor finish products meet the MFMA standards.

## ***Sealing***

All unfinished maple gym floors should be sealed as soon as possible after final sanding is completed. Thoroughly clean the floor surface prior to applying the first coat of sealer. Using a clean lambswool applicator, apply a liberal and uniform coat of penetrating sealer with at least the minimum coverage per the manufacturers' instructions. Allow to dry completely. If using a "2-2" specification, buff with steel wool, screenback disk, pad or as recommended by your finish manufacturer and thoroughly clean. Do not use steel wool if applying a water-based product. Apply the second coat of penetrating sealer in the same manner as the first. The entire surface should then be lightly machine disked with #100 or #120 grit screenback under a buffing or polishing pad, and finally vacuumed and tack ragged in preparation for court layout and painting.

***Caution:*** Follow your manufacturers' recommendations for providing adequate ventilation during the entire sealing and finishing process.

## ***Court Lining***

The project architect or specifier should furnish game line drawings with complete color selections prior to the commencement of floor sanding and finishing. Apply game markings using paint that is compatible with the chosen sealer and finish. Mask and paint game lines with proper colors according to the architect's or specifier's blueprints and with the aid of precision taping machines or striping tools. When using masking tape, pull it up as soon as the paint begins to dry or set. After the game markings have thoroughly dried, lightly abrade using steel wool or a pad recommended by the finish manufacturer, then clean the floor surface.

## ***Finishing***

Immediately before applying the first coat of finish, maple gym floors should be thoroughly tack ragged, giving particular attention to edges and corners. Apply an even coat of finish in accordance with your finish manufacturers' instructions. Allow to dry completely.

Lightly abrade with #2 steel wool or screen to break the surface tension for bonding with the next coat. Do not use steel wool if applying a water-based urethane finish product. Vacuum, then double tack rag the floor. Subsequent coats should be applied in accordance with the finish manufacturers' specifications. Do not abrade the final coat of finish. After applying the final coat, do not use the floor until finish manufacturers' recommended cure time has elapsed. Avoid heavy traffic on the floor surface for at least one week.

**Note:** During finishing and drying time, the floor surface must be free of dust and dirt. Avoid air currents that carry dust and dirt. Indoor temperatures and all sealers, paints and finishes should be approximately 65 degrees Fahrenheit or higher during application. Allow adequate ventilation for proper drying. Maintain normal humidity conditions inside the facility to avoid blistering, flaking and abnormally long drying and cure times.

## DAILY CARE

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Follow MFMA recommendations in *Caring For Your MFMA Maple Floor*. Always keep your floor free of dust, dirt, abrasive particles, and debris. **NEVER USE WATER TO CLEAN YOUR FLOOR**, and never use dust mops treated with silicone, wax, or acrylic-based products. Your floor finish manufacturer has dust mop treatments specifically designed for compatibility with the finish used on your maple floor.

## ANNUAL MAINTENANCE/ REFINISHING

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To preserve the beauty and life of your maple floor, the MFMA recommends that recreational surfaces receive periodic refinishing. Facility use, abuse, and maintenance will determine the appropriate refinishing schedule. Most gymnasium floors should be annually recoated.

Using a properly treated dust mop, thoroughly clean the floor. Before abrading the maple surface, walk the entire area to ensure that all foreign matter has been removed. Disk the floor with a fine-grit screenback or steel wool to abrade the top layer of old finish. Do not use steel wool if applying a water-based urethane product. Touch up any game line paint or markings if necessary, and lightly abrade those areas when dry. Tack rag the entire surface until it is thoroughly clean, paying particular attention to edges and corners. Apply an even coat of finish in accordance with the finish manufacturers' instructions. Allow to thoroughly dry.

**Note:** If recoating your maple floor on a biannual schedule, application of additional coats of finish may be necessary. See notation under "Finishing" for other precautions to assure long-life and excellent performance.

## COMPLETE RESURFACING OF EXISTING MAPLE GYMNASIUM FLOORS

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From time to time, even the most meticulously cared-for maple gymnasium floor should receive a complete resurfacing. Resurfacing restores the luster in an older gymnasium surface, and assures long life and excellent performance. The frequency of complete resurfacing depends on numerous factors, but typically is performed about every eight to ten years.

A complete resurfacing is accomplished by first removing all layers of finish and game lines down to raw wood. Next, repair/replace any split boards or seriously damaged areas of the surface or subfloor. The maple surface is then ready to be lightly sanded to remove accumulated minor dents and scratches. Once the sanding process is completed, the resurfacing process follows the same general sealing, court lining and finishing procedures used during the initial installation of the maple flooring system.

As subfloor designs are significantly different from floor to floor, MFMA strongly recommends consultation with an MFMA Associate Member contractor prior to the initiation of any complete resurfacing project. Contact MFMA for a current list of Associate Member contractors when considering a complete resurfacing of your facility's floor.



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