

TYPE OF FINISH CLEAR COATS & URETHANES	PRODUCT DESCRIPTION & METHOD OF APPLICATION	AVERAGE PRODUCT COST	COMMON USES	LEVEL OF DURABILITY
CLEAR POLYURETHANE (FAST - DRYING)	<p>The fast-dry formulation of clear polyurethane products, allows for faster working speeds on projects where time is an issue. This quick-dry feature is also convenient when finishing wood floors – a normally time-consuming project. With proper ventilation, additional coats can be applied after 5 or 6 hours.</p> <p>Apply fast-dry urethane with a foam brush, lambswool applicator, and/or a natural (or china bristle) brush. Clean up with paint thinner or mineral spirits. Be sure to wear the proper protective gear; respirator, safety glasses, and a good pair of rubber gloves.</p> <p>Also, it's important to ventilate the room you're working in – but at the same time, try to maintain a consistent room temperature, because this will affect the drying.</p> <p>Don't use portable fans to help ventilate, because they stir up too much dust.</p>	<p>Typical cost for the fast-dry urethanes are about \$10 to \$12 per quart, and run \$15 to \$18 per gallon.</p>	<p>The fast-drying polyurethane products help make quick work out floor finishing – a job that used to take several days, now takes just one.</p> <p>But this is just one of the many good applications for fast-dry urethane.</p> <p>Use this product over other oil-based finishes, to add depth, gloss, and protection. Fast-dry urethane works well on cabinets, doors, furniture, and other woodworking projects where a quick drying time is desired.</p> <p>Fast-dry urethanes are usually not suited for use outdoors. A product like spar urethane is a better choice for exterior projects.</p> <p>Use fast-dry urethane on finished wood, or on new, unfinished wood</p>	<p>Fast-dry urethane products are designed for indoor use, and they are very durable finishes when applied correctly. You have to consider that, if the product is tough enough for floor applications, it's certainly tough enough for most anything else you'll be using it for.</p> <p>The finishes of this urethane should last for several years, if heavy use or abuse is kept to a minimum.</p> <p>This long-lasting finish will provide years of protection, at a very reasonable price</p>
LACQUER CLEAR WOOD FINISH	<p>Clear lacquer finish provides good protection and gives a brilliant shine to wood surfaces – some say the finish itself is 'like glass'. Many of the finest pieces of woodworking craftsmanship call for a lacquer finish – items like musical instruments – violins and guitars, fine furniture, expensive clocks, and high-end cabinetry.</p> <p>Lacquers dry quickly – spraying the lacquer allows the skilled wood-finisher to build up a striking finish in several layers. This method of applying lacquer is not for beginners. But a novice will find brush-on applications more approachable – projects like furniture refinishing can be practiced by those unfamiliar with the nuances of lacquer – but antique refinishing jobs should be handled by pros.</p> <p>A beginner can brush lacquer on craft-type projects, and practice on old furniture, until a better 'feel' can be realized. Be sure to use good ventilation, and proper protection. Clean up with lacquer thinner.</p> <p>Dry time varies *(see note at far right) -- ½ to 2 hrs.</p>	<p>At the time of this writing, the cost per gallon of clear lacquer wood finish was running between \$45 and \$50.</p> <p>Quarts were ranging between a cost of \$15 and \$18.</p>	<p>As stated previously, lacquer finishes are a first choice, when a glassy, luxurious, high-class finish is desired – and reserved for the finest examples of woodworking craftsmanship. From fine cabinet work and custom book cases, to items like grandfather clocks, this finish is a real standout.</p> <p>Spraying gives the best results – but once again, this is not for beginners.</p> <p>When lacquer is applied by brush, it's important to remember the quick-drying nature of this finish – especially when applying to lathe-turned portions of chairs, tables, and other furniture pieces.</p> <p>Building up numerous coats of lacquer is recommended, and always gives the best results.</p> <p>*(Drying time note: Brushed-on lacquer takes 1 to 2 hours to dry, before re-coating. Lacquer dries in ½ hour when sprayed-on.)</p>	<p>A clear lacquer – when properly applied, creates a finish with a unique combination of toughness and beauty.</p> <p>On furniture, it resists stains and repels alcohol and fruit juices – and over time, it won't 'yellow'.</p> <p>It touches-up easily, and doesn't leave brush-marks.</p> <p>The glass-like, crystal-clear finish of lacquer is actually a tough, transparent coat of dried resins, which are dissolved in the contained solvents.</p> <p>These clear lacquer finishes seal, protect, and enhance fine woods like no other product.</p>
WATER-BASED POLYURETHANES	<p>The water-based polyurethanes of today, are formulated for a number of applications – from floors to furniture, these cutting-edge, clear-coat finishes not only look great – they're inexpensive, and relatively easy to apply.</p> <p>For large jobs, like floors, use one of the many high-quality synthetic pad applicators, or lambswool applicators – and work corners in with a natural bristle brush. For detailed work – or smaller projects, use a 2 to 3 inch china-bristle or natural bristle brush, and be sure to ventilate your work space well.</p> <p>These water-based polyurethanes usually dry in 2 to 3 hours – this allows up to 3 coats to be applied within the course of a day -- making it a time-saving finish to use. Be sure to wear protective gloves and safety glasses. Low odor and simple, warm water clean up make these urethanes a dream to work with.</p>	<p>The water-based polyurethanes aren't exactly cheap – the (reasonably) good quality mixes will run \$12 to \$14 a pint – on average.</p> <p>Quart-sized cans normally run about \$18 to \$22, and gallon jugs will set you back anywhere from \$39 to \$49.</p> <p>Expect to pay more for better quality finishes – as always.</p>	<p>The modern, water based polyurethanes are best suited for interior purposes – items like chairs, dressers, chests, bookcases, mouldings and trim, and other similar woodworking projects.</p> <p>Some water-based mixture are specially formulated for floors, which would lend them to other uses, as well.</p> <p>Be sure to check the container and manufacturer's data, to be certain.</p> <p>Gloss and satin mixtures are the two, usual finish choices. Since the finish itself is virtually transparent, wood grain patterns show through nicely – interesting wood species will benefit, and details shine through.</p>	<p>In terms of durability, water-based polyurethanes rank from good to very good.</p> <p>When applied correctly -- in the recommended 3-coat procedure – these finishes stand up to moderate to high traffic and reasonable contact.</p> <p>On furniture pieces, these finishes will provide years of service.</p> <p>They're resistant to water, scratches, stains, and some chemicals.</p> <p>Being environmentally friendly is yet another bonus.</p>
SPAR URETHANES	<p>The group of urethanes, known as 'spar' urethanes, have been around for years. They're designed for outdoor applications, and are supposed to withstand some of the toughest conditions that Mother Nature can dish out. But this super-strong finish is also great for interior applications – especially in places where there's lots of contact – like kitchens.</p> <p>The special oils contained in Spar urethanes, give this finish some unique qualities – most importantly, when used outdoors, this finish will actually expand and contract with wood surfaces – which helps keep problematic moisture at bay.</p> <p>Apply Spar urethane with either synthetic or natural brush. Dry time is a full 24 hours, but additional coats can be applied after 4 to 6 hours.</p> <p>Three coats of Spar urethane are recommended, for optimum performance. Clean up with mineral spirits.</p>	<p>Spar urethanes are moderately-priced, and right in line with the costs of similar urethane finishes.</p> <p>On average, a quart of Spar will go for about \$10 to \$12, and gallon containers will run about \$24 to \$28.</p>	<p>Spar urethanes provide one of the toughest exterior finishes available out of a can.</p> <p>It's a preferred finish for exterior surfaces, like patio furniture, but it's also an ideal coating for high moisture and contact places indoors.</p> <p>Spar is recommended for items like bar tops, bathroom cabinets, kitchen woodwork, windows, and trim.</p> <p>However, spar urethane is not recommended for floor finishing.</p>	<p>The protective properties of Spar urethanes, are well-known.</p> <p>There are few finishes equal to Spar's rugged qualities – and in the matter of fade-protection, Spar is a clear winner.</p> <p>The special formulation of this tough coating, includes strong UV protectors – effectively reducing damaging rays caused by direct sunlight.</p> <p>This important feature, combined with Spar's unique flexibility, proves that this finish is one that's hard to beat.</p>