

# MITREPLAN PROJECT PLANNER

## Floor polishing and preparation



- An easy-to-follow guide to achieving a perfect result.
- Outlines all the tools you will need for the job.
- Includes a materials checklist.

### PLEASE NOTE:

Before starting this project or buying any materials, it is worth your time to read all steps thoroughly first to be sure you understand what is required.

Mitre 10 is proudly Australian owned.

# #61

[mitre10.com.au](http://mitre10.com.au)

# MIGHTY HELPFUL™ MITRE 10

- Hammer
- Pinch bar
- Nail punch
- Silicone gun
- Utility knife & carpet
- Cutting blades
- Sandpaper
- Sanding block
- Vacuum cleaner
- Safety goggles
- Ear muffs
- Dust mask
- Wood scraper
- Hire a drum sander &
- Sanding belts
- Hire a disc or orbital
- sander and sanding
- discs

[illegible]

**Verbal quotes are indicative only. Written quotes on materials are available upon request from your Mitre 10 store.**

Many home renovators are finding hidden delights in many areas of their houses as they set about removing wall linings, old render and floor coverings. In fact it is most likely that a house built on a timber floor frame prior to 1975 is going to have a pine or hardwood timber floor. In older homes of the 1930's and earlier the flooring could be Baltic pine; while in the 1940's to the later part of the 1950's it could well be Tasmanian Oak or another type of Australian hardwood.

**And the rich natural beauty of timber can be brought back to life to complement selected rooms or passage ways in your home very easily.**

**Investigation is simple. Simply peel back a corner of carpet or vinyl, or where ceramic tiles have been laid remove one or two to view what lays underneath. Alternatively, if there is space and access, have a look under the floor with a torch.**

Carpet can be cumbersome and heavy, so to remove it simply it is best to cut the carpet into manageable squares with a sharp utility knife with a special carpet blade fitted (Fig. 1). Cut squares of approximately 2½ metres by 3 metres and roll them up to make handling easiest. Remove the edge strip around the wall. Be careful here as the tacks in the strip are very sharp.

Vinyl tiles and some vinyl flooring are laid over an underlay. Depending on the age of your house this will most likely be masonite sheet which has been nailed to the floor, or layers of newspaper. If you encounter cement sheet as an underlay do not remove before satisfying yourself fully that it is asbestos free; this can be done through your local council or from an accredited asbestos removalist – refer to your Yellow Pages.


Remove all nails that are protruding above the surface of the flooring, and with a nail punch and hammer, punch each floor fixing nail below the surface of the floor 3-4mm.

In rare instances vinyl is laid direct to the flooring with an adhesive. This is very hard to remove and some research will need to be carried out to find a suitable solvent to break down the glue. Otherwise good old elbow grease with a lot of patience and persistence is the answer. Sanding generally does not work on the glue as it only melts and clogs up the paper.

Squeaks and loose boards can be re-nailed down into the floor frame with 50mm bullet head nails. If this proves unsuccessful you will need to gain access under the floor. Locate over which floor joist the problem is and how far the loose area is along the floor joist. Cut a piece of 42mm x 19mm pine 300mm longer than the area under which the problem is, then apply a thick and generous bead of Liquid Nails to the junction of the joist and flooring and to the flooring and side of the joist (Fig. 2). Press the 42mm x 19mm pine firmly into position ensuring that there is an excess of adhesive to both surfaces. Hold the timber firmly against both surfaces and nail the 42mm x 19mm pine to the floor joist with the 50mm nails at 300mm spacings. Allow the adhesive a day or two to set before commencing any sanding.

Clear all furniture, furnishings and pictures out of the room to be sanded and thoroughly clean the floor; a vacuum is best for this. And either remove items from built-in furniture or protect them by covering and sealing them with drop sheets and duct tape.

**Fig. 1**

A line drawing of a hand saw. The handle is on the left, featuring a cross-hatched pattern for grip. It has a circular hole near the blade. The blade is curved downwards and to the right, with several teeth visible along its edge.

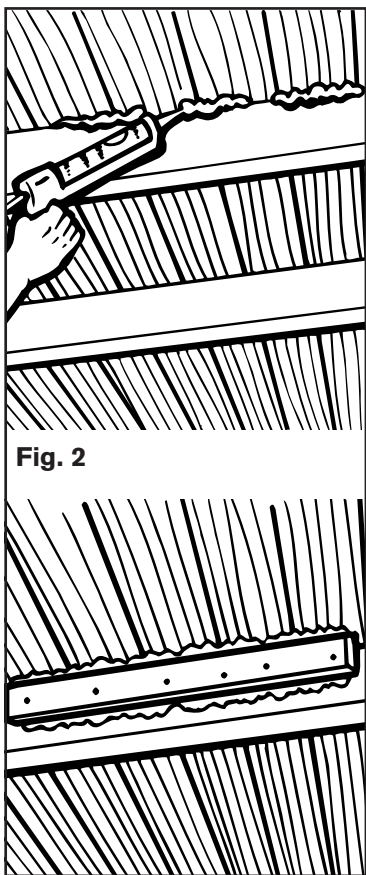


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

### Step 3: Getting ready to sand

Cover all power points, ducted floor and ceiling vents and computer outlets with masking tape as the sanding dust is extremely fine and could cause damage later. Thoroughly clean the floor and finally vacuum the whole area.

Familiarise yourself with the hire equipment, and have the hirer go through all procedures of operation and sandpaper changing with you. The drum sander is a heavy machine on wheels or rollers, and depth of sand cut is generally operated by a hand operated winder near the handles. The sanding machine is operated much like a lawn mower; the sanding is done as the machine is pushed forward only. Sanding contact is broken as you walk back to the starting position.

### Step 4: The first sand, the 'rough' sand

Some first and most important operation tips: do not start the machine with the sand paper belt resting on the flooring; do not stop movement of the machine while the belt is still in contact with the flooring; resist all temptation to speed the job by being heavy handed with the machine. And wear your ear muffs, safety goggle and dust mask. Also provide good ventilation to the room by opening fully any windows or doors to external air.

The rough sand is done diagonally across the floor from one corner to the other, and continued at 45 degrees to the floor boards (Fig. 3). This helps prevent any irregularities or gouges in the flooring boards. Tilt the drum sander so that the sand paper is not in contact with the floor then turn the machine on. Steadily lower the machine while moving forward so the sand paper makes contact with the floor surface. As you approach the opposite end of the run tilt the machine to lift the sanding drum off the floor - do not stop with the drum still sanding the floor surface.

Pull the sander back to the starting position and position the sander so that 70mm or so of the belt overlaps the line already sanded, sand as already instructed and keep going progressively across the floor until completed. The floor may need to be sanded over two or three times, depending on the state of the floor or any other polythene coatings.

There will be an unsanded border around the perimeter of the floor that the drum sander could not reach. This is sanded with a hand-held disc sander fitted with coarse sandpaper by moving the sander in a sideways sweeping manner from left to right (Fig. 4). You will be able to complete the floor surface with the disc sander except for the extreme corners, which are cleaned down by using the hand held wood scraper (Fig. 5) and sandpaper on a sanding block (Fig. 5a).

Carefully vacuum the floor to remove all dust before proceeding any further, taking care not to scratch the floor surface with dirty footwear or any rough treatment.

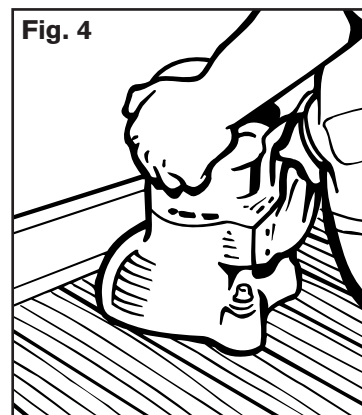


Fig. 4

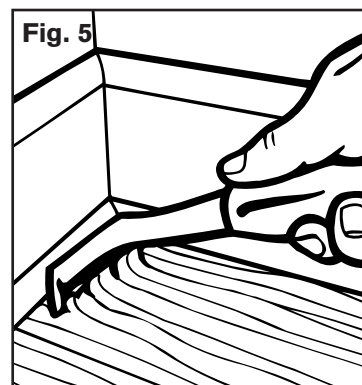


Fig. 5

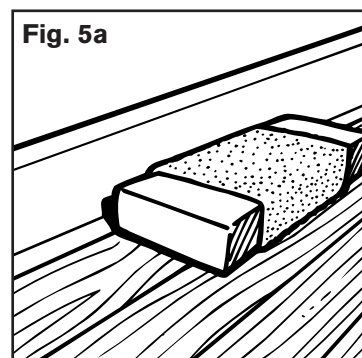


Fig. 5a

### Step 5: Finish sanding

Fill all nail holes, splits and knot holes with a water based putty, and allow it to dry.

The next sanding is done with medium grade sand paper on the drum sander. This is done in the same manner as earlier mentioned but from now on sand along the grain not diagonally. Again finish the border with the hand-held disc sander, scraper and medium sand paper.

The last sand is with fine sand paper fitted to the drum sander, then the disc sander and fine sand paper finishing the edge border and the scraper and fine sand paper for the corners. The finish will be very fine, almost a polished feeling.

### Step 6: Applying the floor finish

You have the choice of either two pack polyurethane finish or water based polyurethane which is low odour and fast drying. The water based polyurethane is the easiest and quickest to apply and provides a good durable finish and allows several coats to be applied in one day. Both finishes will cover approximately 12-14 square metres per litre, and a minimum of three coats is recommended.

Naturally, the application method will be instructed on the container by the manufacturer and must be followed. As a general rule though, methods of application are by brush or lambs wool applicator (Fig. 6). Do not use a paint roller as coverage is not as thorough. It is important that the floor surface is thoroughly cleared of all dust particles; this is completed by vacuuming the floor then wiping over with a water moistened cloth to remove any remnant dust.

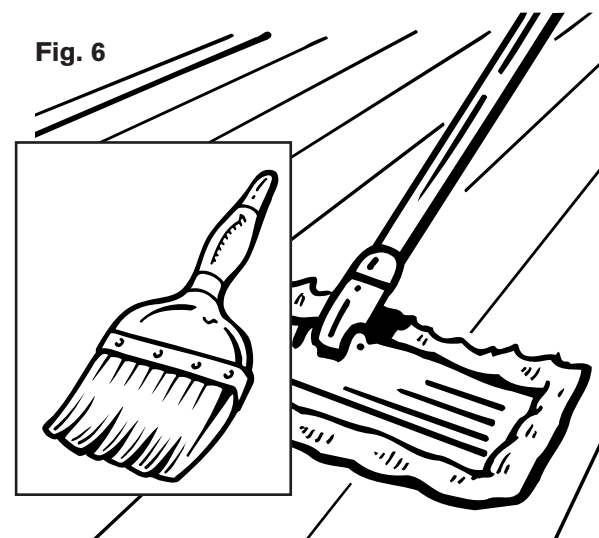


Fig. 6



## MIGHTY HELPFUL HINTS TO MAKE THE JOB EASIER

- Carpet can be heavy and cumbersome, so remove it in manageable squares.
- Clear all furnishings and pictures out of the room to be sanded.
- Do not start or stop the sanding machine with the sand paper belt resting on the floor.
- If insects are caught in the wet finish, wait to remove them until the surface is dry, then sand the insect away and touch up the area.
- Remember, when using any power tool, your eyes should always be protected by wearing suitable goggles.
- It is important that the floor surface is thoroughly cleaned by wiping over with a water moistened cloth to remove any remnant dust, before applying the floor finish.

# Floor polishing and preparation



**IMPORTANT:** This project planner has been produced to provide basic information and our experienced staff are available to answer any questions you may have. However, this information is provided for use on the understanding that Mitre 10 is not liable for any loss or damage which is suffered or incurred (including but not limited to indirect or consequential loss), for any personal injury or damage to property suffered or sustained as a result of using the information contained in this MitrePlan Project Planner. Mitre 10 advises you to call in a qualified tradesperson, such as an electrician or plumber, where expert services are required, and to independently assess any safety precautions that will need to be followed prior to using the information in this MitrePlan Project Planner.

**WARNING:** There may be by laws or regulations of councils or other statutory bodies that you must comply with when following this MitrePlan Project Planner.

**Your local MITRE 10 Store is:**