

PAINTING STAGE FLOORS:

Usually, basic stage floors are painted flat black in order to reduce shine from stage lighting fixtures and the application should be fairly even and consistent over the entire surface.

How you begin the job depends a little bit with what the beginning stage floor substrate is made out of. Is it an MDF (Medium-Density Fiberboard) material or is it Oak or other hardwood flooring or is it some other material entirely. Does it have initial sealers? What is the desired finished look supposed to be?

New Floors:

First collect all of the tools and items necessary to prepare the surface, paint the floor and seal it.

Tools needed will be: small nap rollers so there is no excess texture when spreading the paint; paint trays matching the width of the rollers; long handles for rollers; paint and sealer; buckets and stir sticks for mixing paint; vacuum and sponge mops.

Typically many new stage floors (first time being painted) would need to have these cleaning and testing steps prior to painting because after initial construction there is residual dust and dirt from sanding.

- 1) Vacuum between boards using a brush attachment in the process.
- 2) Damp sponge mop over the entire floor surface in order to ensure that you will get the best adhesion to the substrate.
- 3) Do a test patch on the new flooring to ensure compatibility. Use a sample slat or paint a small section in an inconspicuous area to be sure that there is not an oil based sealer or other coating already on the wood.
- 4) Paint with Sculptural Arts' Artist's Choice Saturated Paint #7720 Masking Black, a pigment concentrated, flat black paint that is ideal for stage floors. Mixing a proportion of 1 part paint to 1 part water a gallon will cover 600-650 square feet. Some new flooring materials might like a straight application of the paint in full strength. A test area is recommended. When you do future applications over the surface you can extend the paint with 2 or 3 parts of water.
- 5) Seal the black painted floor with Sculptural Arts' Plastic Varnish Flat, a concentrated, fast drying, clear coating. Mixing a proportion of 1 part varnish to 1 part water, a gallon will cover 650 -700 square feet.

To reiterate, the substrate needs to be cleaned thoroughly. Then be sure to use a short nap roller so there is a minimum of texture when laying the paint and sealer over the floor.

Maintaining your painted floor:

Usually, simple damp mopping is required to maintain a floor during a run of a show, but if some scarring happens due to a dragging caster or other dragged scenic unit, it may be necessary to do a touch up of Masking Black and then reseal with a Plastic Varnish Flat and water mixture over the area. Dry fast with a box fan circulating the air.

Previously Painted Floors when you do not know what kind of paint was used before:

Existing floor finishes need to be tested for compatibility because older varieties of lacquer, shellac and certain varnishes could cause reactions with new water based paints. During the test if wrinkling, bubbling or lifting occurs, you will need to remove the finish before you apply fresh paint.

Make repairs to an older floor before repainting it. There could be pieces of boards missing or defects to plug. You may want to use a light weight patching compound, like Durham's wood putty filler and a putty knife for application to fill any voids. I usually mix in a small amount of our "Sculpt or Coat" product for better adhesion in a proportion of 1 part Sculpt or Coat to 7 or 8 parts of wood filler.

This ensures that the material will bond well to the wood and help prevent cracking over time. You will also need a wide blade scraper for cleaning loose paint chips from previously painted floors plus some sandpaper with a medium and fine grit for light sanding if needed.

Once repairs are made you should vacuum the floor to pick up loose paint chips and sanding dust.

Damp sponge mopping is recommended to be sure that the floor is cleaned well after repairs or sanding.

When you are ready to apply the paint we recommend using our Artist's Choice Saturated Paint #7720 Masking Black. Mix a proportion of 1 part paint to 1 part water. It produces no odor and tools can be easily cleaned with soap and water, thereby making it the popular choice.

Once you've painted your floor, we recommend using Sculptural Arts' Plastic Varnish Flat #7601 clear protective coating. In the application coating, be sure to cut with water at least 1 to 1 and apply on top of the dried black floor paint.

Plastic Varnish Flat is compatible water based product and will be easy to paint over it with either Artist's Choice Masking Black at any point in the future or recoat with Plastic Varnish Flat. Both products dry to a dead flat finish that eliminates angle sheen from lighting sources.

We do not recommend other clear coats, poly acrylic products, or polyurethane clear coats as they will be harder to refinish in the future as touch ups and other painting occurs on stage. Also these products cure out yellow and often crack and contribute to adhesion issues in the future. None of these clear coats dry to a flat finish either. All create a troublesome sheen with stage lighting fixtures.

Laminate floors such as linoleum, simulated wood floor products, or vinyl flooring may or may not accept paint – generally, we don't recommend that you paint them. But if you need to paint over these we recommend using our Tough'N White Primers first to create a surface that is paintable. Then apply Artist's Choice Masking Black over the primed surface, then seal with Plastic Varnish Flat.

Maintaining your painted floor:

Usually, simple damp mopping is required to maintain a floor during a run of a show, but if some scarring happens due to a dragging caster or other dragged scenic unit, it may be necessary to do a touch up of Masking Black and then reseal with a Plastic Varnish Flat and water mixture over the area. These products are friendly to use with no odor, touch up easily, and dry fast with a box fan on them.

Great products to ensure an excellent painted floor:

Artist's Choice Saturated Scenic Paints are water based low V.O.C. environmentally friendly vibrant colors that dry to a matte finish. They are available in pints, quarts, gallons and some in 5 gallon pails. All of the colors mix easily for scenic art techniques. Choose Masking Black #7720 for basic flat black stage floors.

Sculptural Arts' Plastic Varnish Flat clear coat sealer protects painted floors and eliminates lighting angle sheen. This concentrated product should be cut with water in a ratio of 1 to 1 for best results on stage floors.

Tough'N White primers can be used over some slick floor materials to create a paintable surface. It dries to a nice white finish that won't dull your top coat colors.

Sculpt or Coat is a versatile texturing and construction material that can be used as an adhesive to create 3 D floor textures; to hold organics in place or mixed with wood putty fillers to extend their durability in floor repairs.