

CLEAN IS CHANGING

Let's build a brighter,
cleaner future together

5 Steps to Refinishing School Floors Faster

A guide to making the toughest job of your school year
a whole lot easier, faster and more effective





Refinishing Floors is a Big, Challenging Job

It would be safe to say that no one enjoys refinishing floors. Traditional methods are time consuming and labor intensive, require harsh and dangerous stripping chemicals and neutralizers, potentially resulting in safety issues, including slip-and-fall incidents, with workers and building occupants. If chemicals are slopped onto your baseboards or adjacent areas, the process can actually have a negative impact on the appearance of your facility. And it's expensive, with the costs of materials, labor and safety precautions.

But there's another way to maintain the clean, beautiful and glossy floors that your students, staff and visitors expect. This guide will show you how.



Step 1:

Get Rid of Your Stripping Chemicals, Neutralizers and Safety Equipment

Sometimes, the first step towards improving a process is to take a step back and really look at what you're doing. Traditional methods of finish removal represent one of the most time and labor intensive activities of the school year for your maintenance staff.

- Traditional methods of floor finishing start with harsh and dangerous stripping chemicals
- Stripping a typical room can take an average of 1-2 hours, and can tie up 3 or even 4 workers
- Costs for stripping chemicals and neutralizers can add up fast
- The chemicals are hazardous and contribute to pollution when they're disposed of down your drains
- Safety for both your workers and building occupants is an issue, as the process can contribute to slip-and-fall accidents
- Stripping floors when your facilities are occupied — an increasingly common occurrence for schools trying to expand their usability by opening their facilities to other uses — is an added challenge



Step 2: Test Drive an Orbital Scrubber

Orbital floor scrubbing technologies are far more efficient and user-friendly for removing floor finish than traditional methods. In fact, they can strip floor finish using only water — revolutionizing the entire process of refinishing floors.

With orbital scrubbers, you can virtually eliminate one of the most time-consuming, hazardous, and labor intensive aspects of school maintenance, while actually improving your sustainability and decreasing your environmental footprint.

- 3 to 4 person scrub crews can be reduced to a single person
- Water and chemical usage can be cut by 50-70% from wet stripping methods
- Trips to dump water are greatly reduced, boosting productivity
- Harsh and dangerous chemicals that pose a hazard to workers and contribute to your facility's negative environmental footprint are eliminated.

A man in a light-colored short-sleeved shirt and dark pants is operating a blue floor scrubber on a polished wooden gymnasium floor. The scrubber is a ride-on model with a large blue tank and a handle. The background shows wooden bleachers and a wall with a sign that says "Gift From Class of 2001".

Step 3:

Let Orbital Technology Do the Work

Orbital scrubbing technology is completely different from conventional disc scrubbing. Engineered to operate much like a palm sander, orbital scrubbers are simply a far more efficient way to get floors clean — and remove old floor finish.

- Conventional disc machines with their round, dual pads scrub in a one-way direction across the floor, missing areas in between and at the edges of the pads
- Orbital scrubbers feature either rectangular pads that scrub in many directions at once, or circular pads on our REV Random Orbital Scrubbing Technology — both delivering a far more consistent, efficient and uniform scrubbing action across the floor surface
- REV Random Orbital Scrubbing Technology is the first and only round scrubbing system that utilizes distinct orbital and rotational motions, delivering a consistent, non-swirled floor surface while using far less water and chemicals
- Orbital scrubbers also operate at far higher rpms than disc scrubbers — sometimes as high as 3500 orbits/minute or more — versus disc scrubbers that operate at just 175 to 300 rpms
- BOOST® Orbital scrubbers with rectangular pads can reach into corners much easier, eliminating follow-up cleaning steps and further increasing the efficiency of their action

Step 4:

Start Stripping Your Floors



Removing old floor finish with an orbital scrubber is as easy as putting on a specially designed stripping pad (usually a maroon pad) and “turning on the machine”.

- Start by placing a Red Pad on your orbital scrubber and then a Maroon Pad (Surface Prep Pad) on top. Lightly wet the Surface Prep Pad before installing it.
- Make sure the machine is in full pad pressure mode when removing floor finish.
- No stripper or chemical is required when removing floor finish with either REV™ or BOOST™.
- To achieve the best results, travel at low speed when using Rev or BOOST to remove floor finish.
- When your floor is dry, you’re ready to apply the new finish



Step 5: Apply the New Finish

Once you've removed the old finish from your floors, applying new finish is simple.

- An orbital scrubber is designed to remove up to 80% – 90% of existing finish in a single pass, which is usually enough to take off the accumulated dirt and create a base for your new finish
- If you need to completely remove the rest of the old finish, a light application of stripping chemical can now quickly remove it without going through the entire wet-stripping process
- If you're not doing a complete strip of the old finish, you can just apply the new finish immediately on the floor
- That's it! Step back and admire your newly finished floor!

What Schools are Saying about Orbital Scrubbers



"We view orbital scrubbing technology as a major budget savings for the district: no stripper costs; no neutralizer; no safety equipment to protect staff from exposure to chemi-cals; extra productivity to get other tasks done that might otherwise have been uncompleted."

—Pennsylvania middle school

"In the past, it required two days to prep the floor and another day to coat the floor. With orbital scrubbing technology we were able to complete the prep work in hours and coated the same day—that's a 67% reduction in time."

—New Jersey middle school

"We really like orbital scrubbing for the enhanced worker safety benefits. We have experienced a number of slip-and-fall incidents due to stripping chemicals over the years, [and] orbital scrubbing removes a great deal of these risks for us."

—Pennsylvania high school

"In the past we required a staff of 3-4 people to perform our floor stripping operation. With orbital scrubbing we have reduced it to one person."

—New Jersey elementary school

Who we are

With a global presence and more than 110 years of experience as a leader in the floor cleaning industry, Nilfisk delivers innovative, effective, sustainable cleaning solutions that help deliver the highest levels of cleanliness and improve quality of life for the people who use your facilities.

We're committed to understanding our customers' needs and innovation drives our complete range of products, which include the Advance® and Clarke® brands of floor cleaning equipment.

- Commercial and Industrial cleaning equipment, Industrial Vacuums, and Power Washers
- Products that deliver high quality cleaning, multi-tasking flexibility and easy maintenance
- A complete line of advanced, intelligent products, including the Combination Sweeper-Scrubbers with fuel-cell technology, and our revolutionary Ecoflex™ System.

Because at Nilfisk, we design solutions that help you achieve your cleaning goals. Whether in a hospital or office, heavy industry or school, airport or library, no job is too big or too small for Nilfisk products. We ensure customer satisfaction and world-class service through our global sales and support network.

At Nilfisk we don't see a world of cleaning problems ... we see a future brimming with cleaning opportunities.

Outshine Industry Standards with Nilfisk

To learn more about our cleaning solutions, request a demo or for pricing and ordering information, please contact us today at:

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