

SUGGESTIONS FOR STAINING PINE DOORS

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How to Finish Pine Doors

Pine is a soft wood with a pleasing, light amber color. It is used in the building industry as structural lumber, but also as an interesting diversion from hardwood for interior decorating as well. It can range from a somewhat benign grain pattern, to a complex pattern of browns and yellows, curving and swirling into interesting shapes with knots and some defects. Pine doors have an appealing, natural look to them when properly finished with or without stain.

Preparation

Place the door flat across two sawhorses. Sand the door lightly on both sides by hand, using 100-grit sandpaper attached to a hand block to remove loose fibers and smooth any rough spots. Even though pine doors come from the factory presanded, they get lightly scratched from handling. They also can swell slightly from changes in humidity, creating a rough feel from wood fibers that have absorbed minute amounts of moisture. Usually all it takes is a light sanding by hand to get the door ready for finishing. For a more glassy finish, sand the door again with 180-grit sandpaper.

Stain

Apply stain if desired. Dip a cotton cloth in an open can of stain. Liberally wipe the door with the stain until wet. Immediately wipe the door dry with a clean cotton cloth. Wait 30 minutes for the stain to dry. Do both sides. Stain is optional on pine. It has the beauty of the defects, knots and grain pattern, but some pine has almost no grain pattern. If your pine doors are somewhat dull or the light color doesn't appeal to you, choose a light walnut stain to bring out the grain. Pine responds to any type of stain with good results.

Spray

Fill a spray gun canister with lacquer. Hold the gun 8 inches from the surface of the door at a 30 degree angle. Spray a wet band of lacquer lengthwise on the door. Spray another band of lacquer overlapping the first by 1 inch. Continue spraying overlapping bands of lacquer on the door until it's completely wet with lacquer. Since the door is lying flat, you don't have to worry too much about dripping or "runs" in the lacquer. If you're not sure how much to use, or how deep to apply the lacquer, spray a small amount on a piece of scrap wood. The lacquer should dry within 15 minutes. If it doesn't, you have sprayed it on too heavily.

Seal

Spray the sides, top and bottom to seal the door completely. The door will remain flat across the sawhorses until you are completely finished. Hold the gun horizontal, 8 inches from the side of the door. Spray an even coat down both sides, the top and bottom. Wait 30 minutes for the lacquer to dry. Flip the door over and spray the other side the same way. Wait 30 minutes for the lacquer to dry. Its imperative that you spray all surfaces of the door to seal it. Make sure to sweep the gun down and along all sides of the door. It's not important that you get a heavy build up on the sides and edges, only that you cover them with lacquer to prevent moisture penetration anywhere on the door.

Sand

Fold a piece of 180-grit sandpaper three times. Sand the surface of the door by hand until it's covered in a fine, white powder. Don't wipe the powder off. It aids in curing subsequent coats. Always sand the door after you spray it with lacquer. Sanding the door knocks off any spray particles that have become airborne and settle back onto the surface of the door. If you rub your bare hand on the door after spraying it, you can feel them. They feel like sand on the door. Rub your hand on the door after sanding it again. It will feel silky smooth.

Second Coat

Spray another coat of lacquer on the surface of the door just as you did the first time. Wait 1 hour for the lacquer to dry. Flip the door over. Repeat spraying the door just as you did before. Try to spray as even as possible, and you can spray a bit heavier on this coat. After the lacquer has dried for at least 30 minutes, flip the door over. If you can't tell if the lacquer is dry, it's okay to lightly touch the lacquer. If you can make a fingerprint on the lacquer, wait another 30 minutes. If the temperature is below 70 degrees Fahrenheit, it may take longer than 30 minutes for the lacquer to dry.

Final

Sand and spray this side of the door just as you did before. You only need to spray two coats on the door to protect it, and make it look good. However, you can spray up to four coats of lacquer on the door if you want a deeper gloss. Make sure to wait at least an hour between coats. As you build more coats of lacquer, they take longer to dry.
