



## Know the woods you are working with

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Many contractors apply the same sand and finish procedures regardless of the type of wood they are working with. When this happens they may experience dimpling, or “dive down” in cracks or soft grains of the denser woods.

Certain dense hardwoods, like cherry, maple, or Australian cypress, because of their tight-grained nature, show surface scratches (sanding marks, screen marks) much more so than open-grained woods like oak or ash, and are generally sanded finer to minimize these marks. When the finish is applied in multiple, or too heavy coats to these dense types of woods, the finish will not penetrate the extra smooth floor, and this “dive down” characteristic may be seen. It may also be more noticeable in rooms with natural light from large windows.

To avoid these finish irregularities, a contractor may have to modify his finishing techniques according to the type of wood he is working with. The more open-grained woods are generally



more forgiving and will accept heavier, multiple coats of finish, while dense woods require thinner and possibly fewer coats of finish. Special care should be taken to follow the manufacturer's recommended coverage rates. The homeowner should also be educated to the characteristics of the species chosen and what to realistically expect from the wood and finish being used in his or her home.