

**Create a  
Classic Finish  
with**



**Bulls Eye<sup>®</sup>  
Shellac**

**Traditional Finish & Sealer**

A Beautifully Natural Finish  
for Naturally Beautiful Wood.

# What is Bulls Eye® Shellac?



Bulls Eye® Shellac is an alcohol-based solution of pure lac, a natural resin secreted by tiny insects on certain trees, found mainly in Southeast Asia and India. After it is harvested, the dark, reddish-brown resin is crushed into granules, rinsed to remove the natural dye and then dried. This lac is processed into flakes that are mixed with denatured alcohol to create Bulls Eye Amber Shellac, a deep amber color finish that gives woodwork and furniture a rich, antique appearance.

Clear Bulls Eye Shellac is made by bleaching seedlac granules to remove the color. Clear Shellac is not waterclear - it has a faint, golden cast that is much lighter than oil-base finishes but lends a warm color to wood that water-base finishes cannot.

Both Clear and Amber Bulls Eye Shellac contain natural shellac wax, which gives a somewhat milky appearance in the container but does not affect the clarity of the finish film.

## Why Use Shellac?

Shellac beautifies wood surfaces in a way that no other finish can duplicate. It brings out the rich warmth of wood grain so that finished surfaces look soft and natural, not plastic-coated. It also has features and benefits not found in any other clear finish:

**Easy to use** - Shellac is user-friendly and virtually goof proof. It can be applied with a brush, pad, sprayer or wiping cloth.

**Super fast dry time** - Shellac dries to the touch in MINUTES, and usually, can be sanded or recoated in little over half an hour.



**Fleeting alcohol odor** - Shellac is dissolved in denatured ethyl alcohol. It has a mild antiseptic odor that dissipates very quickly as the product dries.

**Non-yellowing/non-darkening** - Shellac is UV-resistant and won't darken with age - unlike oil-base finishes.

## Tinting and Coloring Shellac

An infinite palette of shades and tones can be achieved by tinting Clear or Amber Bulls Eye Shellac with alcohol-base stain, aniline dye, trans-tints or universal colorants, or by mixing B-I-N® Primer-Sealer into tinted shellac.

## Mixing Clear and Amber Shellac

Clear Shellac may be mixed with Amber Shellac to create any desired intermediate tone. Simply add small quantities of Amber to Clear or Clear to Amber. After each addition, brush out the mixture on a piece of scrap material to be sure you have the color you want. Woodworkers and floor finishers often mix Clear and Amber when using new shellac to match older shellacked surfaces.

## How to Apply Shellac

Shellac is a beautiful finish over every kind of wood imaginable, including oak, pine, cherry, mahogany, birch, chestnut, maple as well as exotic and tropical woods such as Ipe, Cocobolo, Australian Cypress and many others. Shellac is easy to apply, and with just a little practice, you can get professional looking results quickly and easily (both Clear and Amber Shellac may be used directly from the container). For certain applications, best results can be obtained if the shellac is thinned with alcohol. Refer to the label for thinning directions.

### Brushing

- For best results, use a 2" or 3" wide china bristle brush or a high-quality synthetic bristle brush.
- For crevices and intricate areas, use a small (1" or 2" wide) angled sash brush.
- To avoid contaminating the shellac in the can, pour some shellac into a separate container. Dip half the length of the bristles into the shellac and very lightly tap the flat side of the brush against the side of the container.
- Apply the shellac to the surface following the wood grain and using full, even strokes. When applying to vertical surfaces, avoid drips and runs by loading the brush with a little less shellac. Work quickly and evenly and do not over-brush.



- If you discover a missed spot, do not attempt to touch it up. Wait for the next coat before covering areas that may have been missed. Subsequent coats will blend any touch-ups into the overall finish.

## Wiping

- Use a lint-free cloth, folded to form a pad that can easily fit into the palm of your hand.
- Pour a small quantity of shellac onto the cloth and wipe smoothly and evenly into the wood in the direction of the grain.
- Stop wiping when surface is evenly coated and begins to feel tacky.

## Surface Preparation

### Woodwork, trim, furniture, cabinets, etc.

- Sand bare wood with a fine grade of sandpaper or sanding block (120 to 220 grit). The smoother you sand the surface, the smoother your finish will appear.
- Remove sanding dust with a vacuum or tack cloth.
- Fill holes and gouges with a wood filler that will closely match the color of the wood.

### Floors

- Sand smooth using a floor sander. On first pass use 80 grit followed by 100 grit sandpaper for the final pass.
- Remove dust with a vacuum cleaner.
- After the final sanding, wipe the floor clean with a rag dampened with mineral spirits and let dry.

## Staining Wood Before Finishing

Fir, pine and other softwoods do not absorb stain evenly and often appear blotchy. For a more even stain appearance over these woods, apply shellac as a wash coat by diluting it with alcohol according to the label directions and brushing quickly and evenly over the surfaces to be stained. The wash coat seals the wood pores to give controlled penetration of the stain for a more uniform appearance. After 10 minutes, rub the surface lightly with 220 grit sandpaper or steel wool. Remove all dust before applying the stain according to the manufacturer's directions. Let dry overnight.

## Woodwork, Trim, Doors & Paneling

For most interior woodwork, two or three coats of Bulls Eye Shellac give a beautiful, velvety sheen that is unmatched by any other finish.

- Thin shellac to a 2-lb. cut and apply by brush or wiping rag. Let dry one hour.
- Hand-sand lightly with 220 grit sandpaper and remove the dust.
- Apply second coat of shellac. Allow to dry three hours before lightly sanding. Apply the final coat and let dry overnight.



# Furniture and Cabinets

Shellac is regarded by craftsmen and finishers as the premier finish for fine wood furniture. But you do not have to be a craftsman to get professional-looking results.

## New furniture and cabinets

- The procedure for staining and/or finishing new furniture and cabinets is basically the same as that for woodwork.
- Apply the finish to recessed and vertical surfaces first, saving the largest areas and horizontal surfaces for last.



## Previously shellacked furniture and cabinets

- Clean the surfaces thoroughly with mild detergent and remove any wax by wiping with a rag soaked in mineral spirits or paint thinner. Change rags frequently as they become loaded with grime and wax.
- After the surface has dried, brush apply 2 lb. cut Clear or Amber Shellac. In most cases just one coat will be enough to restore the beauty of the original finish.
- If the old finish is cracked, soak a rag in denatured alcohol and wipe the surface gently until the shellac melts back together and the cracking disappears. Apply the new shellac. If the finish is badly cracked and flaking, it should be removed by gently scraping and sanding. If this is too difficult or if the piece is intricately detailed, try washing the finish off with alcohol or ammonia. Any shellac that remains will blend into the new finish.

**NOTE:** A shellac finish may not be suitable for kitchen cabinets, bar tops, kitchen floors and furniture or cabinets in high-humidity areas such as bathrooms that are subject to frequent contact with water, alcohol or ammonia detergents.

## Finishing Floors with Bulls Eye Shellac

- Thin shellac to a 2-lb. cut and apply using a brush to cut in corners and edges. Apply shellac to main body of the floor using a lambswool applicator following the grain of the wood.
- Apply shellac to two or three board widths at a time, laying the product down in a smooth, even brushing motion. Avoid excessive brushing or wiping with the applicator.



- Let the first coat dry two hours. Sand lightly using a machine sander or sanding pole with 180 grit sandpaper and vacuum surface to remove dust.
- Apply second coat of shellac to the floor. In four hours the second coat will be hard enough to walk on.
- For heavy wear areas, a third coat is recommended. Apply three hours after second coat, and in this case, allow overnight drying before subjecting to traffic.

## Wax-Over-Shellac Finish

Many floor finishers believe this is the most beautiful floor finish in the world.

- Apply the shellac directly from the container and let dry for two hours.
- Sand the floor with 120 to 200 grit paper and remove all dust.
- Apply two to three coats of paste wax and buff between coats to a deep gloss. Note that you can wax any shellacked floor for a deeper shine and added wear resistance.

## Touching Up Shellacked Floors

- Prepare the surface by lightly sanding worn spots with 220 grit sandpaper.
- Using a natural bristle brush, apply a small amount of shellac in the center of the worn area and feather it out to the edges, overlapping slightly.
- Finish off with the brush in the direction of the grain. If the area is badly worn, a second coat may be necessary to achieve a proper color match.
- Two or more coats are recommended; allow at least an hour of dry time between coats. Allow four hours after final coat before subjecting to heavy traffic.

## Using Shellac Around the House

Shellac is a marvelous sealer and finish for crafts and hobby projects and other household items. For objects or surfaces that are too small, intricate or delicate to brush, use Bulls Eye Clear Shellac Spray.



*Small Objects & Intricate Surfaces -* Shellac is a fast and easy sealer/finish for picture frames, models, etc. Spray Shellac is commonly used to apply a fast, beautiful finish to louvered doors, wicker, cane, bamboo and other hard-to-finish materials.

*Arts & Crafts Projects -* Shellac is a great all-purpose sealer for arts & crafts projects because it is easy to use and provides a protective finish.

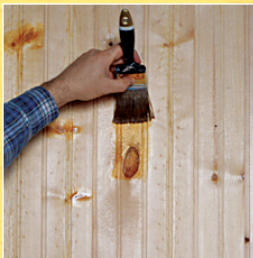






**Tools and Metalwork -** Shellac protects tools and similar items from dust, dirt and corrosion. It's an ideal protective sealer and finish for wrought iron, copper, brass, bronze, etc.

**Sealing Knots -** Nothing seals off knots and sap in new wood like shellac. Depending on how new the wood is, one or two coats of Amber Shellac will seal them off so they can't bleed into the paint finish coat. For especially tough knots, use multiple coats of Amber Shellac.



**Sealing Damaged Asphalt -** Prior to patching asphalt, apply three to four coats of 3-lb. cut shellac to seal off residual oil and gasoline to prevent it from dissolving the new surfacing material.

## Cleanup

- Clean up spills and drips with a rag soaked in denatured alcohol or ammoniated detergent.
- Always clean natural bristle brushes and lambswool applicator/rollers with denatured alcohol.
- Synthetic brushes and applicators may be cleaned with either denatured alcohol or a solution of one part ammonia and two parts warm water.
- If shellac dries hard in the applicator pad, brush or roller, simply leave it overnight in the appropriate solution (alcohol for natural bristle and ammonia/water for synthetic) and finish rinsing in the morning.

## Caring for a Shellac Finish

- A shellac finish is easily cleaned using a damp rag and a mild, non-caustic soap.
- If there are water spots or white rings in the finish, the discoloration can usually be removed by rubbing gently with an alcohol-dampened rag.
- If damage is too severe for correction by this remedy, or where the spot is the result of a cigarette burn or other physical damage, remove the old film in the affected area by sanding. Then apply two or more coats, using either Bulls Eye Clear Shellac Spray or liquid shellac thinned to a 2-lb. cut.

# Bulls Eye® Shellac

## Traditional Finish & Sealer



You can learn more about Bulls Eye® Shellac  
and how it is used at [zinsser.com](http://zinsser.com).

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