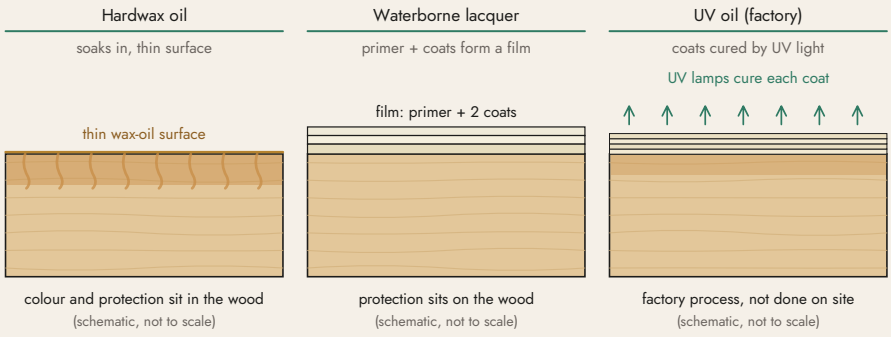
Timber floor finishes *compared*

An oil protects from inside the wood and is refreshed with a thin coat; a lacquer is a film on top and is renewed by cleaning, light abrasion and a new coat; a UV oil is a factory finish. The data sheets give no ranking and no hospitality interval, so write the system, sheen, slip result and care regime into the specification.

AT A GLANCE

Finish	Where it sits	What the data sheets say	Refresh	Emissions note
Hardwax oil	In the wood, with a thin wax-oil surface	One data sheet: 24 m² a litre a coat, 8 to 10 hours between coats, fully cured after 2 to 3 weeks. Claims resistance to wine, beer, cola, coffee, tea, juice, milk and water to DIN 68861-1A.	Maintenance oil in a thin coat, no sanding (maker)	Solvent-based: VOC up to 500 g/l (limit quoted, 2010)
UV oil (factory applied)	In the wood, coats cured by UV light	Data sheet read is for industrial production lines: cures instantly under UV, VOC 30 g/l. A UK floor supplier says it applies seven coats.	Maintained with the maker's maintenance products; no repair method found	Low VOC on the data sheet; no durability data found
Waterborne lacquer, 2-component	On the wood, as a film over a primer	Two sheets: primer plus 2 coats; recoat in about 3 hours; light traffic in 8 hours or full use in 12; pot life 2 to 4 hours; one gives wear loss of 1 to 2 mg per 100 revolutions (SIS 923509).	New coat over a cleaned, lightly abraded floor, no sanding to bare wood (maker); resand if deep	One sheet: VOC up to 52 g/l including hardener

Makers' data sheets for one product of each family, read 7 Nov 2026 (dates 2018 to 2025). Not a ranking: each figure is the maker's, for its own product and conditions.



The two-component waterborne lacquer needs a hardener mixed in; the pot life on the two data sheets read was 2 to 4 hours.

Where each finish sits on the board. Schematic, not to scale: no coat thickness is claimed. The lacquer and oil panels follow the data sheets read; the UV oil panel follows the industrial data sheet and a UK floor supplier's note. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

A CARE SCHEDULE TO AGREE

Task	Oiled floor	Lacquered floor
Daily	Sweep; barely damp mop; mats	Same, microfibre pad
Periodic [interval to agree]	Clean, then thin coat of maintenance oil	Deep clean, abrade lightly, new coat
Major	Sand and re-oil if raw or greyed	Resand to bare wood, full system

SPECIFICATION WORDING

FINISH SYSTEM

Timber floor finish to [room or area]: [hardwax oil / factory UV oil / waterborne 2-component lacquer], applied in [ ] coats [with primer] to the maker's data sheet [reference, version and date], on [timber, finish and texture], to the approved sample. The partner shall name the product, give the current data sheet and safety data sheet, and state whether the finish is applied in the factory or on site.

APPEARANCE

Sheen [ ] gloss units at 60 degrees on the approved sample, measured with [meter]; colour and texture to match the approved sample from the delivery batch. A [ ] m^2 mock-up, finished by the proposed method and cured as the maker states, to be approved before the floor is finished.

SLIP

Pendulum test value of the finished and cured sample, wet, by [BS EN 16165] with [slider], to be issued before approval and again on a sample maintained to the regime below. Result not less than [ ] [HSE low slip potential band].

CARE AND HANDOVER

The partner shall issue a written regime for the finished floor: daily cleaning products and method, the periodic refresh product and method [oil: maintenance oil; lacquer: abrade and overcoat], intervals [ ] agreed with [operator], what must not be used, who may carry out repairs, and the maker's warranty terms [ ]. Leave [ ] spare litres [if agreed] with the batch number.

TERMS USED

Hardwax oil

A penetrating timber finish of oil and wax that sits mostly in the surface fibres, gives a natural low-sheen look and can be spot-repaired.

Fumed oak

Oak darkened by exposure to ammonia vapour or by a reactive treatment that reacts with the tannins, so the colour is within the wood rather than a surface stain.

Pendulum test value (PTV)

The result of a pendulum test: how much a standard rubber slider is slowed crossing a surface, so a lower value is a slipperier surface. HSE reproduces UKSRG (2011) bands: 0 to 24 high, 25 to 35 moderate and 36 or more low slip potential.

VOC

Gases released from paints, lacquers, adhesives and boards that can affect indoor air quality. Project standards such as BREEAM set limits and accept particular test methods.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- Makers' data sheets: a hardwax oil and its maintenance oil; two waterborne 2-component lacquers (one with an overcoating note); a UV oil for industrial use: read 7 Nov 2026; makers named in the notes file, not on the page.
- BS EN 16165:2021 (Current per BSI Knowledge, published 28 Feb 2022; replaces BS 7976); BS 8201:2011 (Current; published 31 Oct 2011): BSI listings, 7 Nov 2026. Named, not read.
- HSE, Assessing the slip resistance of flooring (GEIS2): cited through our slip resistance sheet.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/timber-floor-finishes-compared. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.