

Revive Hardwood Stairs, Step by Step

Your hardwood floors are beautiful, but what about your stairs? Are they covered with dingy carpet? Is the exposed wood worn and tired? If so, take heart. Reviving a staircase is easy if you take it step by step. First, assess the state of your stairs. If you are lucky enough to find hardwood under the carpet, you or a professional floor refinisher can sand and refinish it to give it new life. If not, a new hardwood staircase can be installed and stained to match the finish of your floors. Either way, your efforts will pay off. A hardwood staircase, like hardwood flooring, adds character, beauty and resale value to any home, according to the Hardwood Information Center. And, the durability of hardwood is a real plus when it comes to stairs.

"You're talking about something that's going to take a beating, something children might be running up and down," says Dale Mitchell, president of Custom Hardwoods, a supplier of stair parts and fully assembled staircases. "Hardwood is going to hold up and not show nicks and dings."

"More and more people are spending money on their staircase," Mitchell says. It's the focal point of many homes. You walk in, and — bang! It's there." Mitchell estimates installing an

elaborate, curved staircase (think "Gone With the Wind") could cost as much as \$20,000. However, a more typical straight staircase might be closer to \$6,000, he says. Homeowners can save by ordering stair kits and installing the steps themselves, but only those with some carpentry experience should tackle the job, Mitchell says. Others are better off hiring carpenters or stair builders, he says.

If your wood stairs need a face-lift, start by checking for any needed repairs. Squeaks, a common problem, often are caused by loose or rubbing parts. Stop the squeak by nailing or screwing down a part that has separated or by inserting a wedge underneath it. Sanding and refinishing stairs requires special equipment and a lot of patience, however. "It's not hard. A homeowner can do it," says Danny Krienke, a partner in Floors Etcetera Inc., a hardwood floor installer and restorer. "It's going to take some time, though."

Floor-refinishing companies typically get most of the job done in a day. If you decide to do it yourself, rent a floor-edger sanding machine. Run the sander over the steps. For rough or painted boards, start with 20- or 30-grit sandpaper, then proceed with 50-grit

and finally 80-grit. Start with 36-grit paper for varnished floors. Next, use a hand scraper on the spots the sander missed and, if desired, hand-sand with fine paper to remove small scratches. Vacuum to remove the dust. Stain with a clear finish or one custom-blended to match your floors. For a final protective glaze, top that with three coats of polyurethane, which is available with a water or oil base.

"Everybody likes the look of oil," says Chris Eads, owner of Above All Floor Refinishing. "It brings out the grain." Each coat of oil-based polyurethane must dry overnight. Water-based sealers usually dry within a couple of hours and are safer to handle. Take some precautions to avoid trouble. Sanding produces highly flammable dust, so seal the doorways into your work area with plastic and ventilate the area with a fan. Wear goggles, ear protection and a dust mask while sanding. When applying the sealer, put on goggles, rubber gloves, long pants and a long-sleeve shirt. Eads asks homeowners to avoid fumes altogether by staying somewhere else for a night while the first coat of oil-based polyurethane dries. Once the stairs are restored, consider having a carpet com-

pany install a runner to add style and provide padding and protection. To keep stairs free of dust, wipe with a cloth or use a dust mop or hand vacuum. One way to remove caked-on grime from a handrail is to lightly rub with very fine screen sandpaper and top with a new coat of varnish.

For free information on selecting and caring for solid hardwood, write to the Hardwood Information Center, 400 Penn Center Boulevard, Suite 530, Dept. NR-399, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15235; or visit www.hardwood.org on the Internet.

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Retirement Announcement

Barb Job's Last Day, Fri, April 28/00

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485 Main Street East, Milton 878-8109

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CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT Reconstruction of Ninth Line from 400m south of Britannia Road to 400m south of Eglinton Avenue Notice of Completion of Environmental Study Report

As a requirement under the Class Environmental Assessment for Municipal Road Projects, the City of Mississauga hereby notifies all interested individuals and parties that the Environmental Study Report (ESR) for the above-mentioned project has been completed. Subject to the comments received as a result of this notice and the receipt of other approvals as necessary, the City of Mississauga will proceed with the construction of the above-mentioned project.

The study recommendation is to reconstruct Ninth Line to a two (2) lane road with a continuous left turn lane from 400m south of Britannia Road to 400m south of Eglinton Avenue, including storm sewer improvement, intersection modifications and asphalt pavement resurfacing.

We welcome public comments on the ESR which is available for review at the following location and times:

City of Mississauga

Office of the City Clerk City of Mississauga Mississauga Civic Center 300 City Center Drive Mississauga, ON L5B 3C1 Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.	Information Desk Fourth Floor Business Department Mississauga Central Library 301 Burnhamthorpe Road West Mississauga ON L5B 3Y3 Hours: Mon - Fri 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sat 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sun 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
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Town of Milton

The Corporation of the Town of Milton
Office of the Town Clerk
Ms. Helen Lisi
43 Brown Street, Milton ON L9T 5H2
Hours: Mon-Fri: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Interested individuals and parties have thirty (30) calendar days from the date this notice was made public within which to comment on the proposal. Comments must be in writing and must be received by:

City of Mississauga, Transportation and Works Department
3185 Mavis Road, Mississauga ON L5C 1T7
c/o W. Scott Anderson, P. Eng.
Phone: (905) 615-4399 Fax: (905) 615-3060

If concerns regarding this project cannot be resolved in discussion with the City of Mississauga, any person or party may request that the Minister of Environment "bump-up" this project to an individual environmental assessment. "Bump-up" requests must be received by the Minister at the address below within thirty (30) calendar days of this notice. A copy of the "bump-up" request shall be forwarded to the City of Mississauga Transportation and Works Department. If there are no concerns expressed by May 22, 2000, the City of Mississauga will proceed with this project as presented in the ESR.

Minister of Environment
135 St. Clair Avenue, 15th Floor
Toronto ON M4V 1P5
This notice issued April 18, 2000

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