

Festool Surfix Oiling System

What is it?

The Surfix oiler system is a complete finishing solution in the one box. It is an unusual product for a power tool company to offer but it certainly falls well within Festool's policy of unique and innovative product design.

This product gives both the amateur and professional woodworker a durable and easy to use oil finish which is quite different to the oils that are currently available on the Australian market.



What's in the box?

Packed into a sys 2 T lock Systainer, the Surfix oiling system consists of the following components: 1 bottle of heavy duty, outdoor and one step oils, 10 sheets of 180 grit rubin paper, 10 sheets of 240 grit brilliant paper, 5 green vlies pads, 5 white vlies pads, the oiling applicator with a total of 6 sponges and a tin to store an applicator and oil bottle in.

The oils included in the Surfix system have quite a different feel to the oils that we currently have available in Australia. They are wax rich oils and have a distinctly 'greasy' feel to them.

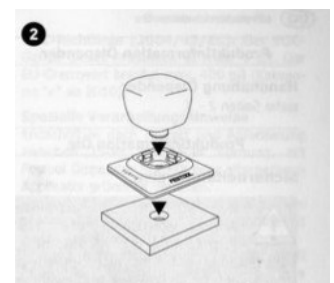
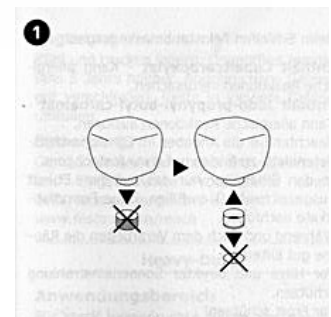


The oils also have a semi opaque appearance and a slight tint to them which I found, while testing, to enhance the appearance of the timber.

Using the oil applicator

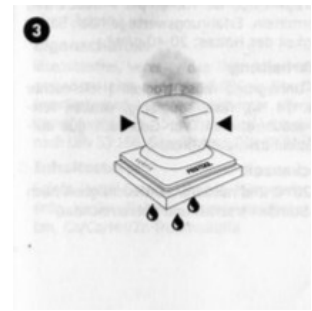
The oil applicator that comes with the Surfix oiling is quite a good idea and once you get the knack of it, it's quite easy to get an even coat of oil over the surface. I strongly advise that, while your getting used to it that you have a piece of scrap timber slightly wider than the sponge pads handy, so you have somewhere to prime the pads and so you don't end up with big oily patches on your bench top.

- The first step is to give the container a good shake: I mean a really good shake. There is a lot of wax in the oil mix as you'll probably notice if you unscrew the white cap and have a look in the bottle. You'll need to shake it for at least two to three minutes to get the oil mixed properly.



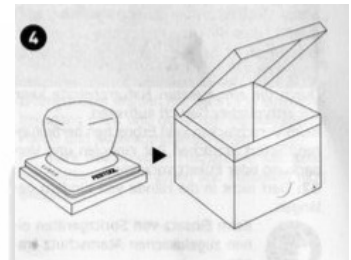
1). Once its mixed you need to remove the white lid and replace it with the two part green lid. Now if you follow the Festool instructions to the letter you'll hold the bottle upside down to change the lids over. I wouldn't recommend you try this as I can pretty much guess the result. (Gravity must work differently in Germany)

- Place the oil bottle so it's sitting on its label, unscrew the white lid and replace it with the two part green lid. Leave the top section on the green lid at this stage.



2). Place a sponge on the applicator and then push the applicator plate down on to the oil bottle. Check that everything's attached properly.

3). Remove the top of the green lid, place the applicator pad on your work piece, or test piece and *gently* squeeze. I must stress gently at this stage as I squeezed a tad too hard and ended up with a small oily lake on my workbench.

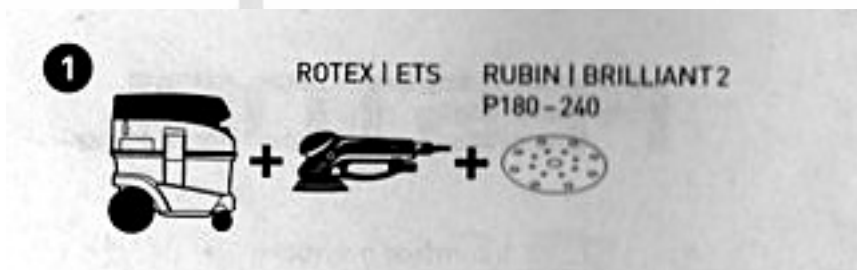


4). Use the applicator on your workpiece ensuring that when you've finished that you re cap the bottle.

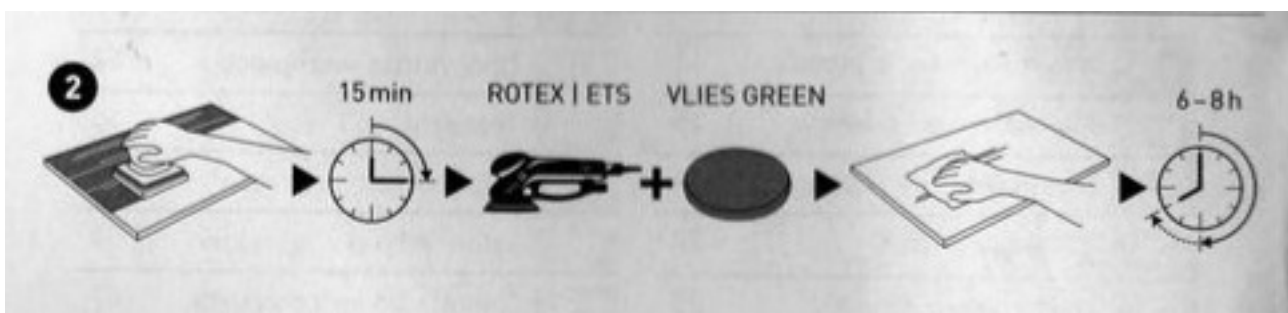
The metal tin that comes in the systainer is intended to store the used foam pads once you've used them. It's your choice whether to use it or not . I'm always a bit wary of the risk of oily pads or cloths self combusting, so at the end of my days work with this system the rags I used were soaked in water and disposed of and the pads were rinsed in warm water with a small amount of soap in it, then left to dry on the applicator so they wouldn't distort.

The kit also includes a very basic set of pictograms style instructions which give you a outline of how to use the system. I've broken the down to a series of steps and expanded them to make them a bit easier to follow.

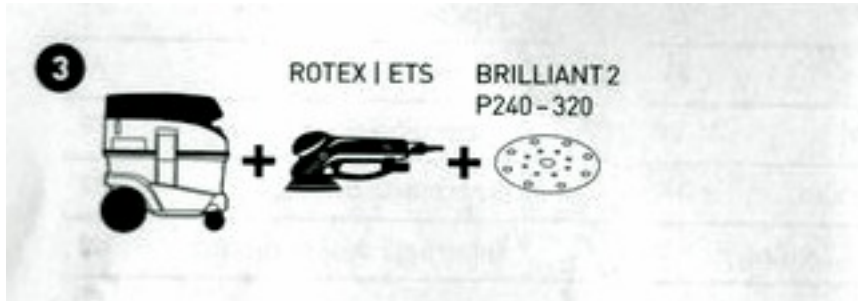
1. Using either a Rotex or Ets 150 sander with dust collection, sand your workpiece to 180 grit then to 240 grit using the papers supplied in the kit.



2. Apply the first coat of oil with the applicator.

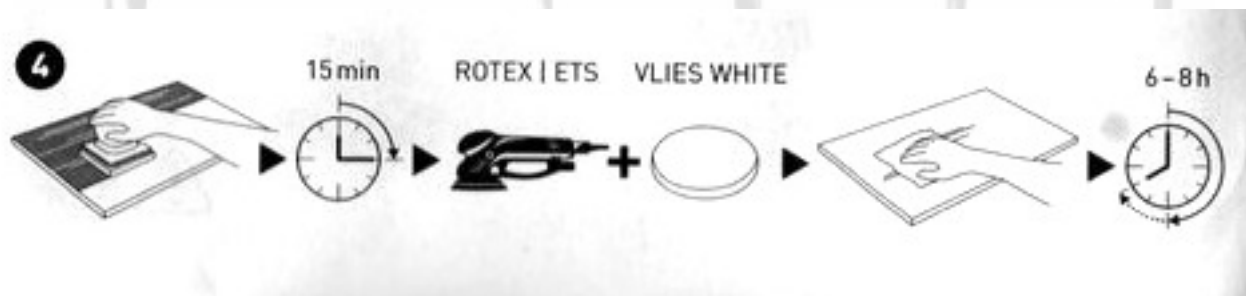


- Wait 15 minutes
- Fit a green Vlies pad to your sander and sand your work piece again, (stop when you've removed all the excess residue.)
- Apply another coat of the oil, this time wiping the oil on by hand with a soft cloth.
- Wait for 6 to 8 hours



3). Using either your ETS or Rotex Sander, sand workpiece with 240 grit paper, then with 320 grit paper

4). Apply a second coat of oil with the applicator



- Wait 15 minutes
- Using either your ETS or Rotex, sand the entire surface of the workpiece using the white vlies pad.
- Apply another coat of the oil, this time wiping the oil on by hand with a soft cloth.
- Leave for 6 to 8 hours

The instructions finish there but it's logical to assume that you repeat the steps until you've achieved the finish you want.

For the maximum surface protection I'd recommend a minimum of two coats of any of the oils with at least four coats of the heavy duty or outdoor oils.

As with any of the techniques I write about on this site, I always recommend that you take the time to test it out, to "play" and adapt the technique if you need to. Make the technique your own before you try it on an important piece.

Cheers,

Bryan