

Ultimate Guide To Having Your Bathtub Or Tile Refinished



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Hi my name is Paul Burns, I am a consultant, trainer and product developer for the bath refinishing industry. A practicing refinisher myself since 1983. I've been interviewed by the Washington Post, Chicago Tribune and Angies list Pod Cast on bath refinishing.

I'm the CEO & Founder of Porcelain Tub Restorations since 1990 at BathRenovationHQ.com and lead developer at TubPotions Labs.

I decided to write the Ultimate Guide to Bathtub and Tile Refinishing so folks could make an informed decision when choosing to have their bathrooms or even countertops refinished, because finding a reputable company using quality products and proper surface preparations can be daunting.

Here I will break it down into easy to understand content so you'll find a legitimate company and get a great job at a reasonable price.

Bath Refinishing Done “Correctly” Is An Efficient – Affordable – & Effective Means Of Updating & Repair Of An Outdated Or Damaged Bathroom Fixtures.



Follow Along As We Take a Look Into The Secretive World Of Bath Refinishing So You Can Be An Informed Consumer And Get A Great Job.



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So You're Thinking About Having Your Outdated Or Worn Out Bathtub Or Tile Refinished?

Congratulations! When done properly it is an effective and cost-saving procedure that not only will make your bathroom more enjoyable for your family, but will also make it a breeze to keep sparkling clean.

Unfortunately the horror stories and complaints about refinishing jobs gone badly by unethical refinishing contractors outnumber the successful one. Shoddy workmanship, lingering odors, premature peeling of the coatings, damaging overspray to homes, sadly are common complaints.

We were shocked and embarrassed to find out that, according to the Better Business Bureau statistics, bathroom refinishing contractors are in the top 1% most complained about industries – right up there with vinyl siding, auto repair and airlines.

We've always done a good job and treated our customer right – and we've been able to build a nice business because of it. However, over the years we've noticed that some consumers will choose less-than-reputable companies to do jobs for them... usually because they shop by price alone.

Don't get us wrong: we're all for good, honest competition, but it pains us to see good folks risk their hard-earned money with contractors who don't have their best interest at heart. You deserve a great value for your money—which includes an honest contractor who uses high quality products, who are truly skilled in this trade and actually stands behind their work in both word and deed.

There Are NO Industry Standards For Bath Refinishing!

We wanted to find a way to educate consumers about how to choose a good, honest bathroom refinishing contractor, just about anybody with a roller, spray-gun and a pickup truck can advertise or have a pretty website and call themselves a bathtub refinisher. Whether they have the appropriate licensing, insurance, training, use proper surface preparation and good coating chemical chemistry for a lasting job is another story.

That's why we've pioneered a set of standards called the Code of Ethics & Competency for Bathtub & Tile Refinishing Contractors. The code calls for contractors to uphold a high set of standards that will allow you to judge BEFORE hand whether or not a contractor is likely to be a legitimate business and will do the job right. This guide specifies those standards.

Before you hire any 'company' to work in or around your home, make sure you consult this guide and INSIST that the company comply with EVERY SINGLE STANDARD in this book. If you do, chances are excellent you'll get exactly what you want out of your project.

Sincerely, *Paul Burns*



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STABILITY

You need to make sure that any contractor you do business with has a proven themselves in the past and will be there if you need them in the future. Don't just ASK the contractor or believe what you see on their website.

Get tangible proof of their time in business, proof of longevity and stability by asking for the items listed on the next few pages.

What To Look For: Proof Of Establishment

Why it's important: Believe it or not most refinishing contractors use a fake business address, call forwarding to their cell phones and use a closet for inventory and a pickup truck for their office and showroom. [In this video I'll show you how to find the shysters...Deceptive Bath Refinishing](#)

Make sure that any contractor you're dealing with is substantial enough to have a real office with normal business functions accounting, inventory, estimators, showroom, etc.

Do you really want to hire some dude living in a rented apartment, who has a closet for inventory, is using a fake business address and lying about their time in business with the possibility of having no insurance or under insured? If they are deceitful about this, what should you expect about their work?

You owe it to yourself to investigate the claims of any contractor. Ease your burden and make the contractor prove their claims with proof.

You can visit the contractor or better yet ask them to produce the following...

- Can they supply an image of their business?
- Proof they carry the appropriate inventory?
- Have the staff to meet your needs?
- Supply their first & last business license?
- Supply a Certificate of Insurance?
- Earned a Home Improvement License?
- Spelled out performance guarantee?
- Offer a money back satisfaction guarantee?
- Details of their refinishing process?
- Type of chemistry used for adhesion and coatings



Our 5000 ft. Facility Office, Showroom, Warehouse, Inventory and Training Center.



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What To Look For: Contractors License

Why it's important: Make sure they have been operating under the same name for a minimum of 5 years.

Many contractors open and close their doors multiple times to avoid past customer complaints.

Naturally, some business will be legitimately new—if so, will they be honest about it on their website and advertising? If so get a 10 year work history of the owner and ASK questions!

A company with a proud history should be glad to send you a copy of the first and last business license.

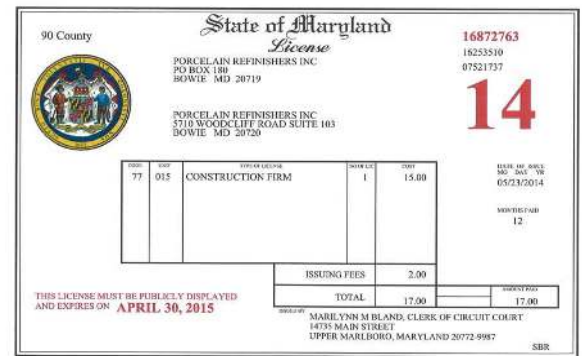
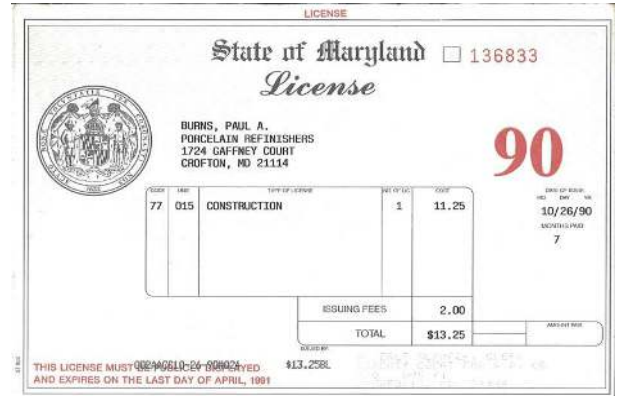
Those with something to hide will not, simple.

What To Look For: Home Improvement License

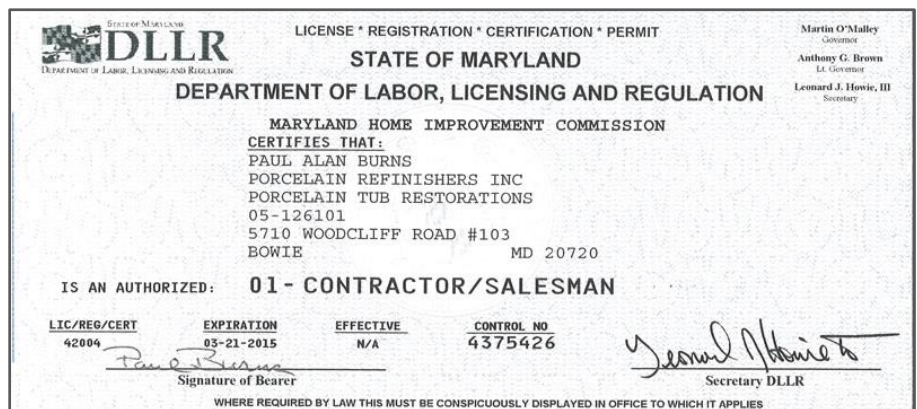
Why It's important: Whether or not a Home Improvement License is required or not for this type of work. It shows the contractor has gone the extra mile.

Hiring a licensed home improvement contractor gives you additional resources and protection from the states licensing and regulation, for complaints and provides you access to the states guaranty fund for damages to your property not covered by insurance.

When you hire a contractor without this license you will have NO recourse from the states authority... period. Often companies will use a FAKE license number to gain trust... Always ask for a current copy.



**Porcelain Refinishers Est. 1990 Incorporated in 1995
DBA: Porcelain Tub Restorations**



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What To Look For: Certificate Of Insurance

Why It's important: It protects your family and home from UN-insured or UNDER-insured contractors.

Sole proprietors are not required to have workman's comp on themselves!

Should they become injured on your property you will be held liable as the employer!

General liability protects your home from damages that may occur.

It will also reveal the referral sites posing as a local company who hire sub-contractors to do the work while collecting a commission. Is the sub properly licensed and insured? Do you really want to hire a deceptive company?

Here's what to look for:

- Does the NAME match and does it have a local address?
- Carry General Liability of at least \$500,000.?
- Show that they are not excluded from Workman's Comp?
- Is the policy current?
- You can easily have your name and property added as 'Insured' for complete protection.

Insured Matches the Company

General Liability

Auto

Workmen's Comp. **NO**
Not Excluded

Additionally Insured Your Name Property

Amount of Insurance

Effective Date

ACORD		CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE		DATE MODIFIED: 8/15/2014	
<p>THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OR NEGATIVELY AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW. THIS CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ISSUING INSURE(S), AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PRODUCER, AND THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER.</p> <p>IMPORTANT: If the certificate holder is an ADDITIONAL INSURED, the policy(ies) must be endorsed. If SUBROGATION IS WAIVED, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy, certain policies may require an endorsement. A statement on this certificate does not confer rights to the certificate holder in lieu of such endorsement(s).</p>					
<p>PRODUCER SOUTHERN MARYLAND INSURANCE 2905 Mitchellville Road # 112 Bowie, MD 20716</p>			<p>CONTACT NAME: [] PHONE: [] FAX: [] E-MAIL: [] INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE: [] NAIC# []</p>		
<p>INSURED: Porcelain Tub Restoration P.O. BOX 180 Bowie, MD 20719</p>			<p>INSURANCE CO. [] ACCIDENT FUND []</p>		
COVERAGES		CERTIFICATE NUMBER:		REVISION NUMBER:	
<p>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.</p>					
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DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS / LOCATIONS / VEHICLES: (ACORD 101, Additional Remarks Schedule, may be attached if more space is required)					
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Bathtub Tile Refinishing Project Assessment Guide.

A common problem we see folks having when calling about a price quote. They get some jive about a special price without any questions asked about the problem you're trying to solve. This alone is a sure sign you're dealing with an UN-professional contractor.

I once called a competitor and asked this simple question: How much to refinish my tub and tile?

He came back with "I've got a special going on... both for \$700.00 would you'd like to schedule?

Why this is a problem: Not one single question was asked about my problem or my situation. The following are the types of concerns and questions a pro would need to know before quoting a price.

Tub Refinishing Questions They Should Ask	Tile Refinishing Questions They Should Ask
What type of tub is it? (Could be a one piece tub & surround, clawfoot, 2 person Jacuzzi, 4x4 garden style or just a standard 5' tub.)	How many square feet do you need refinished? And do you need help with the measurement?
Has it been refinished before and require chemical stripping?	Are any tiles cracked or broken that need repair – replacement?
Is the tub damaged? Chipped up or erosion damage?	Does the toilet tank need to be removed to spray behind it? When tile goes around the room.
Do you have a rust problem around or under the drain?	Will the tile be the same color as the tub?
What condition is the chrome drain-overflow? Should it be replaced?	Do you have trim tile you'd like in a different color?
Do you have a shower door installed? Should it be removed first?	Do you have boarder tile that meets the floor going around the room? Does it need to be done?
Are you doing any other renovations to the bathroom? What order should the tub be done?	
Is there a cabinet or toilet up close to the tub that would interfere with the refinishing?	
Do you have a tub liner installed that needs removal?	

When they don't ask any questions, you can count on one of two things happening! Bait and switch pricing or they are simply going to come in mask up around your bath and blast on a coat and go. It will last long enough to cash your check.

Continue on next page.



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Continued:

If they've taken the time to properly address your problems and give you a good job assessment, it's your turn to ask them a few important questions along with the ones in the beginning of this book on licensing & insurance.

Question You Should Ask For Tub Refinishing?

Will you color match to my other fixtures if needed?

Do you etch the tubs surface?

Will you remove the old caulk before refinishing?

Will you re-caulk after refinishing?

Will you remove the overflow plate before refinishing?

How will you protect the drain if left in?

Is non-slip textured included? See & feel a sample?

Is minor damage included, like a few chips?

Will you chemically strip a previous refinishing?

Do you use Silane adhesion promoter?

How will you ventilate the odors? 8" or 12" system?

Will you mask the entire bathroom?

Is tub drain-overflow replacement offered?

How long will the job take? 3 to 4 hours is normal

How long before it is ready for use?

Question You Should Ask For Tile Refinishing

Tile Refinishing can become complicated – are they willing to come out for an in-home-estimate?

Re-grouting the tiles before refinishing service offered? This insures pinholes and missing grout are properly filled in.

If cracked tiles are repaired will you restore grout lines?

Will you remove escutcheon plates from shower knobs? So the coating can get behind them.

How long will it take? Standard tub and tile surround should take a full day. Should your tile go around the room, may add another half day. Tub and tile in different colors will have to be done on different days.

If tile goes around the entire bathroom will they remove the toilet tank to spray behind it?

If you have a tile trim color different then the tile you'd like to keep, can they mask it off?

I would like to mention when getting a tub and tile refinished, the job becomes complicated enough, with tile or grout repair, boarder tile considerations, base board tile, measuring for square footage, possible drain overflow replacement and more, that **we generally insist on giving you an in-home-estimate** to be sure your concerns are being addressed.

Any refinisher worth their weight should be willing to do the same.

[To see the full post on types of tub damage... Click here](#)

[To see our pricing packages and repair charges... Click here.](#)



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What is Bathtub Refinishing? It's More Complex Than You Might Think.

First let me say, if anyone tells you they are going to re-porcelain your tub or tile move on, they are complete liars. Porcelain requires 1630 F. to 1730 F. degrees of heat, just like pottery, enough said.

Bathtub Refinishing – Reglazing – Resurfacing are words used in the trade to describe applying a new finish on worn out damage tubs and tile.

A few companies offer a no-spray process called 'Restoration' this process uses water-borne floor sealers to apply a shine to a dull tub. I really don't recommend this process for home owners as it barely will last a year or so before needing a re-coat of sealer.

Refinishing is not a product, but a process. Which entails a multi-step preparation that prepares the surface for adhesion and removes unwanted damage and blemishes. The coating will not hide damage to your tub, it will magnify the damage. This is why chips, scratches, pinholes, rust or erosion damage must be addressed during the prep stage.

The prep stage is very important as it provides the foundation for the new coatings and takes the longest to complete. It is also the easiest part to cheat on. (This is a big problem in the industry even by the big franchises which don't ETCH the surface for mechanical adhesion, but rely on chemical adhesion only?)

A quality prep takes around 1 ½ to 2 hours on a basic tub job without extra repair work and for tile refinishing should take at least a couple hours with cleaning and re-grouting. All before ever picking up a spray gun.

An important note for those that have a tub that has been refinished before. I highly recommend that the old finish be completely removed using chemical paint stripper. Many refinisher will not strip the coating but merely sand the old coating. My problem with this is if the old coating has failed and not completely removed you're getting a new coating over a bad foundation.

This is equal to putting a new roof on your home, over rotting wood. And yet we see refinishers doing this day in and day out. Chemical stripper is expensive, adds 1 to 2 hours to the job and requires protective gear to protect the technician, this is why so many skip this step. Especially the contractors quoting a price without a job assessment will not strip the old finish.

Once the prep stage is complete, the surface must be made hospital clean, with a solvent wipe down and tacked with a tack cloth for any remaining particles. The technician should be in a Tyvek spray suit, professional ventilation equipment set up. Now is when the application skill comes into play. The same skills required to be an automotive car painter are needed. I'm sorry to say, these skills are sorely lacking in this trade. Application skills are responsible for the aesthetic quality of the job.



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How to Prevent Your Home From Getting Stunk Up! The Answer Is Simple.

Besides peeling, the odor problem is the next biggest complaint we hear about.

Refinishing contractors if they even use ventilation, often use inadequate equipment such as a box fan in a window, which certainly is not rated for flammable solvent extraction.

Others use an 8 inch ventilator with cheap Mylar foil hose. This ventilator is not very strong rated at 1200 CFM (Cubic foot per minute). The cheap Mylar foil hose tears and crimps easily, causing poor ventilation and pollutes your home.

To solve the problem you'll want a 12 inch 3000 CFM ventilator and a heavy duty vinyl coated poly hose. We'll run this to a window in a room near the project and exhaust the majority of the odors. We've had folks watching the TV right next to us working without a complaint.

I don't like to ventilate out of the bathroom window. By having the bathroom window open your inviting dust, pollen and debris blowing into your refinished tub during the application. We carry 64 feet of hose, which should be enough for any home.

We rarely have complaints about odors using the Vortex 3000.



A competitor using 8" ventilator with crimped and torn hose, which polluted this home.



You'll love the vortex 12 inch 3000 CFM ventilator that rapidly clears the air. Smart choice over the inadequate 8" ventilator.



Professional Ventilation Equipment Removes Refinishing Odors



Exhaust To A Window Away From The Bathroom



Protect Your Home & Family With Professional Equipment.



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Does Drain Overflow Removal—Replacement Provide A Better Job When Refinishing?

Before refinishing it's the perfect time to replace your drain overflow. You'll get three advantages when you do.

- Makes your refinished tub look like you replaced it with a brand new tub.
- Has a cleaner look around the drain with no tape edge.
- You'll get a longer lasting job by having a seamless coating locked in under the drain.

Note - Access panel to tubs plumbing is required, to check for any leakage after installation and in case of old or poorly installed plumbing does occasionally break and requires having the drain shoe to be replaced as well.

Note -Your plumbing should be up to code. Should the assembly break you'll need a plumber to correct it.

Note - If you don't have an access panel one may be able to be installed.

Glue on drain covers can be installed too provide a nicer look. Thou I do recommend the drain be replaced so the coating is sealed under the drain. It is not always practical.

The drain is left in during the prep stage. Once prepped the drain is removed and then prepped underneath it, before refinishing.

A return trip the next day is required to re-install the new chrome drain and overflow once the coatings have cured.



Drain Replacement Makes Your Refinished Tub Look Brand New. Plus The Coating Is Locked In Under The Drain.



A Worn out Drain Will Be An Eye Sore Once The Tub Is Refinished.



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Is Acid Etching The Bathtub A Good Idea?

First we need to discuss why hydrofluoric acid or HF Acid is needed at all for etching bathtubs during refinishing.

When refinishing porcelain over cast iron or enamel over steel tubs we use HF acid to abrade “Etching” the surface.

This part of the process abrades the surface, as the kiln-fired surface is too hard to abrade by sanding.

This is not the case for acrylic fiberglass bathtubs, which we can easily abrade by sanding.

Just like refinishing furniture, painting a home or even an automobile. The best practice before painting is to abrade the surface, **allowing the new coating to mechanically attach**. Known as “**Mechanical Adhesion**”

Hydrofluoric Acid or HF Acid is commonly used in the electronics industry, aluminum cleaning and processing and for etching decorative glass. They even sell a mild version at craft stores.

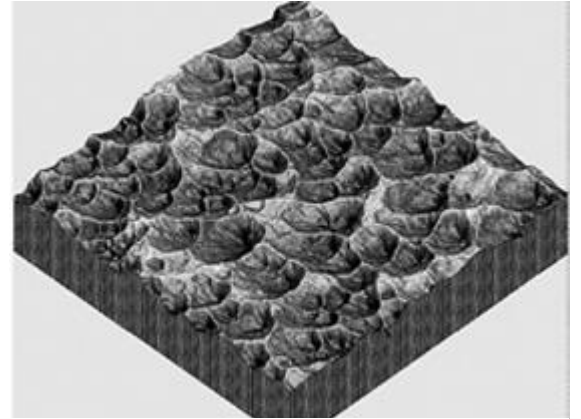
Bath refinishers use it to etch porcelain and enamel tubs. Since these surfaces are not porous unless they are extremely worn out and these surfaces are far too hard to etch by sanding.

The HF Acid is used to create a porous surface for MECHANICAL ADHESION allowing the coating a place to grab onto.

With the advent of Silane chemistry etching is not as critical as it once was, thou I’m all in favor of providing as much adhesion as possible. So in my humble opinion, YES etching is a good idea.

Refinishers who are looking to skip this important step, will use anti-logic to convince you that those who are using it are doing you a disservice. When in reality it is them who are doing you the disservice. If you choose a company that doesn’t etch be sure they at least use a silane adhesion promoter, like our TubPotion #8 Anchor Grip Silane adhesion promoter.

[Click here to see HF Acid Demo Video where we answer the questions.](#)



Microscope view of hf acid used to etch bathtub porcelain surfaces providing “mechanical adhesion”.

- Does HF Acid harm your plumbing?
- Is HF Acid safe?
- Does HF Acid improve adhesion?

After watching the video you’ll be able to make an informed decision based on proof and not propaganda.



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Will Your Investment Include Fixing These Problems?

Bathtub and tile can have an array of problems that exceed a basic refinishing. The following images covers the majority of problems we see when folks are getting their bath fixtures refinished. These would not be included in a base job, and you will not be happy if these problems are not addressed.



Cabinet/toilet to close would need removal



Excessive chipping damaging



Failed refinishing requires chemical stripping



Erosion damage & rust under the drain



Tub holding water not fully draining



Drain overflow replacement



Bathmat damage



Cracked hole fiberglass tub



Heavily damaged bottom & rail rebuild

Continue:



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Continued from page 13.



Overflow - drain rust out



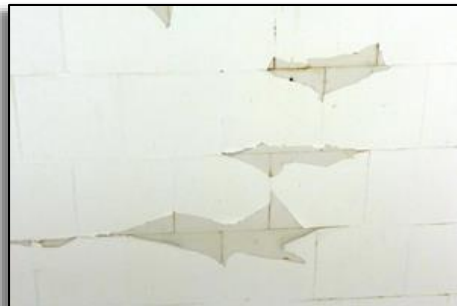
Tile repair loose - broken - cracked



Tile repair wet wall damage



Grout problems where not addressed before refinishing



Improper prep caused job to fail & needs Stripping



Clawfoot tubs often require extra repair work in the bottom and suffer rail damage.



Rusted clawfoot tub will need sandblasting before refinishing. These have often been painted many times and probably have lead paint from the early 1900's



Tile refinishing, will you be needing the trim tile color left? Toilet tank removed or help with measuring the square footage?



Custom color needed for your job? You'll need a glossy color sample to match too. Few refinishers will color match. Standard colors are white, biscuit, bone, almond and black.

As you can see there are many concerns and problems that need to be assessed before getting a price quote, and the refinishers who don't ask any questions should be considered suspect. Yet day in and day out when customers call these guys and ask "How much to refinish my...?" They get a price quote without any job assessment.



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What Order Do I Have My Tub Refinished During A Remodel?

If you're gutting the bathroom, I often recommend going ahead and replace the tub. The exception to this is if you're looking to save a high quality cast iron tub that's simply worn out or lightly damaged.

If you are taking the tub surround walls down, you'll need you to have the drywall back up. And would prefer that you finish any tile work above or around the tub being refinished. We'll protect the tile job with masking.

Chances are pretty good something will get dropped or ground into our coating causing damage and a repair charge.

Floor tile is best installed after refinishing the tub, thou this one is your call.

We prefer that you call us in near the end of the project. You can wait to install the vanity or toilet and that you do any painting after the refinishing. **If you do paint clean & scuff the walls!**

Avoid putting a ladder in the refinished tub and protect from paint drips.

If you do paint your bathroom before calling a refinisher, be sure to clean and scuff the old paint, especially where the drywall meets the tub surround. When you don't and the walls are masked, tape will peel your poorly prepared wall paint and you'll blame the refinisher. Always clean and scuff old paint before painting.

Have any plumbing repairs done prior. Plumbers are notorious for damaging a refinished tub with their tools.

Don't have other construction projects going on the same day that would create vibrations or dusty conditions.

Have the room clean and free of any drywall dust or construction debris.

Remove all personal items shower curtains and clear the room before the refinisher arrives.

Have water and electric available.



This creates a dusty condition for refinishing plus chances are really good you'll damage the new coating installing the wall & tile.



If you're planning on painting your bathroom walls before refinishing, be sure you scuff and sand the walls especially where they meet at the tile or our masking tape will pull your paint off.



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Is Having A Non-Slip Added To Your Bathtub Refinishing A Good Idea?

Not all refinishers offer it, some charge extra for it. And you should know that non-slip additives are not created equal. Always ask to see and feel a sample. Some are very sharp and aggressive.

Whether you and your family prefer bathing or shower, having some protection when getting in and out of the bathtub is important. Far too many injuries occur getting in and out of the tub.

Since 1990 the A.D.A. (Americans with Disability Act) mandates that all new bathtubs have a non-slip bottom equal to .06 coefficient of friction (sidewalk cement is .08).

Refinishing your bathtub or shower covers and removes this safety feature. Yes you can use a bathmat at least if you've hired us. Many refinishers will not allow its use. We only ask that you remove it after use, by placing it upside down over your tub rail to dry each day. Left down for long periods will eventually damage any bathtub refinished or not.

If opting for this service, you should ask to see a finished sample. Some refinishers use marine non-slip which is sharp and will not feel so good on your feet or back-side. Even the bath refinishing supply houses offer an angular grit that far too many clients have complained about.

So I do recommend you check it out first hand by looking at it and feeling it before having it applied. I believe in offering this service free of charge. **One** because the A.D.A. mandates it. **Two** I believe it's a good service to offer, I want my clients healthy, happy and wise and to live a long time without injury.

I got so frustrated with the complaints about the products out there that I took on the challenge of fixing this problem. Instead of using a grit I found after an extensive search a perfectly round micro-granule that provides the protection you'll want without the sharpness. We offer this at no extra charge, because I believe in protecting our clients.

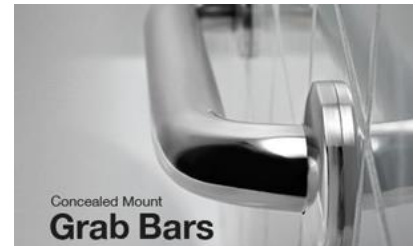
I also developed TubPotion #9. I'm really proud of this product as it took over a year of R&D to bring to the market. It has become a favorite of our clients as a premium add on.

It offers a safe and secure feeling while getting into or out of the bath, as well feels great under foot and on your backside when bathing. It prevents you from sliding under the water, but is easy to move around the tub when you want a deep soak.

Both products have eliminated the complaints. I may one day offer these too the market so others outside of my service area can enjoy the benefits they provide.



Don't Let This Happen To You.



**Consider Having Us Install Grab Bars.
There Not Just For The Elderly.**



TubPotion #9 Provides A Factory Looking Anti-Slip Texture Without Grit. Exclusive Product Of Porcelain Tub Restorations



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What Refinishing Coatings Are Best To Use?

Here is where chemistry comes into play and is an important component of the PROCESS for aesthetics and good looks for years to come.

First; let's discuss Silane A.K.A. Adhesion promoters (think super-glue). There are several that are used in the industry, with some being a bit better than others, regardless I absolutely recommend there use.

In our testing at TubPotion Labs the application of the right Silane adds a tremendous benefit to you in adding chemical adhesion. Along with a quality prep stage and the addition of Silane has eliminated the peeling problem of tub refinishing.



[Click To Go To TubPotions Coatings Page & Video on Coatings Performance, Adhesion and Aesthetics.](#)

The use a primer/sealer coat is highly recommended. A quality primer should also be catalyzed/activated. The primer coat is needed for additional adhesion, it also provides some filling for very minor surface imperfection. Primer also provides an even color coat covering repaired areas preventing the possibility of having blotchy looking finished product.

As for coating choices used in bathtub and tile refinishing range from poor to excellent. Any coating to be even considered should be a 2 component activated/catalyzed coating. The catalyzed part causes the coating resins to become hard among other properties that are needed, such as water repellency, scratch resistant and chemical resistance.

Protective Top Coats For Bathtub & Tile Refinishing From Poor To Excellent Ask Your Refinisher For Their Spec. Sheets On Primer & Top Coat To Determine Their Coatings System	
Any coating that is not catalyzed/activated	Poor
Activated epoxy primer & top coat in one	Poor not recommended
Automotive primer (red oxide) activated epoxy or urethane top coat	Poor not recommended
Activated epoxy primer & activated epoxy top coat	Better but not recommended
Activated epoxy primer & activated acrylic polyurethane top coat	Even Better common
Activated epoxy primer & activated aliphatic acrylic polyurethane top coat	Good - most common
Silane treatment – activated epoxy primer & activated aliphatic acrylic polyurethane top coat	Good recommended
TubPotion #8 Silane treatment– TubPotion #10 activated polyester bonding primer & TubPotion #12 activated aliphatic polyester-polyurethane hybrid top coat.	Excellent – highly recommended



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Common Refinishing Terms & Definitions For Bathtub & Tile Refinishing: To Help You Navigate The Confusing Terminology Used In The Industry.

- **Isocyanates:** Are not to be confused with cyanide. Isocyanates are needed for curing & crosslinking polyurethanes, allowing them cure faster at ambient temperatures, increasing chemical and scratch resistance. Improving the coating properties. Hundreds of home products rely on isocyanates including pantyhose and foam insulation.
- **Aliphatic:** Aliphatic isocyanates are used are to make coatings UV stable preventing them from yellowing over time.
- **Etching HF Hydrofluoric Acid:** Used to abrade or de-gloss ceramic, glass and porcelain surfaces. Provides and improves 'MECHANICAL ADHESION' by making the non-porous surface porous, which cannot be done by sanding. Many refinishers choose not to use this product due to expense, handling, training, storage and shipping. By choosing not to use this product they sacrifice some performance value. The real shame is they try and make it appear as those who are using it are doing a disservice to their customers, when the truth of the matter, it is them who are doing the disservice by confusing the consumer with misleading information.
- **Epoxy Coating:** Are generally used as a primer coat due to their tendency to yellow over time. Uses a polyamine or amine as a hardener or catalyst vs. isocyanate. Can be waterborne or solvent borne, epoxy can become chalky and brittle over time. Epoxy often requires long cure times of 48 hours or more.
- **Urethane Coating:** UR resins or Polyurethane and urethane coatings mean the same thing. Acrylic urethanes are less pliable and crack easier. 2 component catalyzed polyurethanes are better for surfaces that will be expose to water, hold their color during their lifespan and are more flexible providing better impact resistance than epoxy. Adding a aliphatic isocyanate will ensure color stability vs. non-aliphatic acrylic polyurethane or epoxy.
- **Polyester Urethane Coating:** PUR resins, these are hybrid coatings, by adding polyester component to a urethane increases chemical and scratch resistance. Improves durability, abrasion and gloss. Used in high demanding application that require absolute protection from environmental and physically harsh conditions. Provides superior performance over all other coatings for bath refinishing.
- **Silane:** Adhesion promoter or coupling agent, are used to couple organic polymer coatings to inorganic materials such as composites, glass and ceramics. Due to their small molecular size offer deep penetration into inorganic surfaces. Silane adds a high performance component to coatings either as a pre-surface conditioner primer or added to a polyurethane coating. In our testing TubPotion #8 makes a near permanent bond, surpassing the other silanes on the market.
- **Soloxane:** Are often added to epoxy coatings to improve adhesion. Due to their long molecular chain do not penetrate as deeply as Silane.
- **Submersion Coating:** Generally are epoxy based, often used by refinishers. These coatings are used in application that require the coating to withstand consist immersion, such as water tanks. They are not made for aesthetics-gloss nor are they able to handle friction in cleaning or impact loads. Due to these limitations are not recommended in my opinion for refinishing of bathroom fixtures.
- **Accelerator:** Used to speed up the cure of urethane coatings i.e. From 48 hours up to 4 hours. They tend to make the coatings brittle and increase cracking especially when over applied with thick film build up. 4 hour cure very brittle not recommended.



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- **One & Two Component Coatings:** Defines whether or not the coating is activated and chemically hardened or is air dried.
- **Clear Coat:** Applied over a color coat to provide additional gloss and protection from being discolored. Recommended for hard water problems in well water and refinishing kitchen sinks where discoloration is an issue from water stains and or food-beverage staining from red wine, coffee, grape juice, etc.
- **VOC:** Volatile Organic Compounds the amount of solvents in a coating by weight. Many states regulate the amount of VOC's for pollution control. Low or no VOC indicates a coating is more environmentally friendly. TubPotion coatings are below the mandated levels and considered to be environmentally green.
- **Reducer:** Used as a deliver vehicle in applying coatings. Reduces the viscosity during spray out then evaporates as VOC's leaving behind the polymer coating.
- **Lacquer Thinner:** Used to reduce the viscosity of lacquer paints. Often misused by refinishers who use it to cut cost. Should not be used in urethane systems under any circumstance.
- **HVLP:** High volume low pressure, professional equipment used to spray coatings. Improves transfer rate and reduces overspray and VOC's.
- **1 to 6 Stage Turbine:** Describes the air supply to feed the HVLP spray gun. A 3 stage turbine or better is recommended for better atomization of the coating, which creates a better looking finished product. Many refinishers use a small 1 stage turbine for their connivance and sacrifice the aesthetic quality.
- **Solvent Borne:** Indicates the resins base and the type of solvent required to reduce the viscosity for spray out. Distinct and pungent smell. Thou the painting industry is being forced to reduce VOC's by going to waterborne more and more. Waterborne has yet to match the performance value of solvent borne in my opinion.
- **Water borne:** Indicates the resins base and the type of solvent required to reduce the viscosity for spray out. Waterborne has it application, especially in sealing applications for mortar and wood. Latex paint is water based. As of this report waterborne polyurethane and epoxy coating have not matched the performance value of solvent borne.
- **100% Solids Coating:** Whether solvent or water borne based. These coatings do not use solvents during the application. They use other additives such as surfactants and levelers to allow the coating to lay a humongous film. These are very environmentally friendly whether they maintain high performance durability and aesthetic beauty should be determined prior to application.
- **Hydrophilic Coating:** Water loving, hydrophilic coatings have low resistance to moisture causing the water to film over the coating in a continuous sheet.
- **Hydrophobic Coating:** Water hating, hydrophobic coating have a high resistance to moisture causing the moisture to bead off. Super hydrophobic coatings repel water with a force. Used in SMART coatings creating a virtual self-cleaning surface to some degree as in TubPotion Coatings.



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Bathtub Refinishing Guarantee & Workmanship.

Do you believe you can get the best job, longest guarantee for the cheapest price?...

Your right the world doesn't work like that. Yet I see UN-scrupulous refinishers advertising just that. Why I'm I telling you what you already know deep down inside. Because day in and day out folks fall prey to a false believe that it might--just be possible.

You should consider the price you're paying in conjunction to the guarantee being offered. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Bath refinishing skills are equal to painting a car, and I'm sorry to say, few have really master the application skills needed. I see it all the time when hiring. I have them do a test shoot in our training station, to see their skills sets. I have not had one come thru that didn't require re-training.

Unless the refinisher comes from an automotive painting trade as I have, they have been taught by a 2 day class or by another refinisher who didn't know what they were doing. **Either way you lose.**

You're concerned with two things: **One**, how long the job will last, is based on the quality of the prep, and the chemistry used in the coatings.

Two, the aesthetic look of the finished product. This is what you'll see after they've finished and have to live with. Will the finished product be grainy, dry looking, grit and debris in the finish or have runs or puddles? It should look just like a brand new tub. Now anyone can have a bad day or equipment problems which might cause a problem.

The question is will they or can they fix it, in a timely manner?

If a refinisher believes in their skills, would they be willing to offer a Money Back Satisfaction Guarantee? I would and do, if I can't provide what I'm advertising I don't think you should pay.

We've had a few situations where we dropped the ball and the frustrated customer invoke my guarantee. We cheerfully did not charge them and chalked it up to lessons learned.

Would your refinisher be willing to put their money where their mouth is? Why not... You should ask. This part of the guarantee will ensure that the aesthetics of the job will be right from the beginning.

Continue on the next page.



"Someone calling themselves a customer says they want something called service."



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The Second Part Of The Guarantee Covers The Long Term Performance Of The Job.

But first; for a refinished bathtub or tile job to last, you may need to adjust some of your habits. The same things that caused the tub to become damaged in the first place, need to be addressed and avoided.

Now maybe you're a saint and it was just plain old age that did your tub in? Or maybe you've just bought a home and someone else did the dirty deed? Anyway here are the problems you'll want to avoid so you are not the cause of premature failure.

- Repair dripping faucets, ASAP. Running water made the Grand Canyon and it will damage a refinished tub.
- Remove bathmats after use and hang upside down over the tub rail to dry. I've seen bathmats destroy a tub when left down for long periods. They will damage a refinished tub too.
- Put your wet soap bar on an elevated soap dish or hanging shelf basket to dry. Soap is alkaline product and like acid can mar or damage the finish with repeated exposure.
- Once refinished you won't need the harsh and abrasive cleaners any longer as you once did before being refinished. Mild cleaners and a sponge or wash cloth will be all you need. Dish soap works great.
- Drain Cleaners, Hydrogen Peroxide, Bleach, Hard water removers if used should be rinsed immediately after use.
- Don't let little Johnny play with hard toys in the tub as when banged against the edges can chip up the new coating. Supply soft rubbery toys not hard plastic for them to play with.
- Washing your dog? Put down a mat for them to stand on and put a towel over the rail, so they won't dig in when trying to get out, which could scratch up the finish.
- When working over or around your tub, put some padding down in case you accidentally drop a tool.

With that said, your performance guarantee covers the DE-lamination or peeling of the coating from the tub.

When refinishing is properly done, peeling should not ever happen from normal use. A quality job should last 12 to 18 years before the coating needs some attention or be re-done.

The average guarantee for a refinished tub is 1 to 5 years and if you're going to have a problem, you'll experience it long before your guarantee is up.

A few clients have asked; then why won't you guarantee it for 12 or 18 years. Your new car is guaranteed for 7 years, but you expect it to last for a couple of decades, if taken care of, right? Same thing here.



If Poorly Done... Your Refinishing Will Peel. This Is What Your Guarantee Should Cover, Not Abuse.



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What To Look For: Real Job Photos Not Stock Images



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Frequently Asked Questions.

Q. Are there any other things I should look for or watch out for that aren't listed in this guide?

A. Look for some of these telltale signs of contractors who shouldn't be trusted.

- Main phone numbers that ring to cell phones. Google the number to see if it comes up "Reverse Phone Look Up"
- Main phone numbers that aren't answered by a receptionists.
- Trucks without signage on them.
- No company logo on work cloths/uniform.
- Few if any customer reviews.
- Unresolved BBB complaints or not A+ Accredited Rated.
- Prices that are unusually low compared to established companies.
- Poor or non-transparent website on needed information.
- Unwillingness to give any information but merely quote a special.

Q. Are you saying that you are the only company in the area that can uphold these standards?

A. Most companies cannot uphold them, but there are several good, honest contractors to be found. Just be sure to take the time and utilize this guide to make sure before you hire anyone.

Q. Can a contractor just "FAKE" these standards?

A. Not likely. Most shady contractors who don't put any effort into making their businesses good are unlikely to fake these standards. It's a lot easier for them to just move on to the next unsuspecting victim.

Q. What if a contractor SAYS they can do all these things, but can't show the proof?

A. Don't settle for lip service. Demand to see the documentation for every single standard on the checklist at the end of this guide.

If you reside in the Washington DC - N. Va. - Baltimore Metro Area and if all this makes sense, and you are curious about our approach to bath refinishing, please give us a call. We'll be happy to answer all your questions for free.

An Ounce Of Prevention... It's been said that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. When the stakes are high—your home and wallet—that saying is even truer. We hope that by reading this guide you feel more prepared to evaluate bath refinishing contractors and make the best decision for your family and home.



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**Use This Form When Contacting A Refinisher For Your Project.**

	Check List For Bathtub Refinishing Contractor	Porcelain Tub Restoration	COMPANY A	COMPANY B
1.	Ask questions about your project - Job assessment?			
2.	Proof of establishment			
3.	Provide first and last business license?			
4.	Provide current home improvement license?			
5.	Provide certificate of insurance?			
6.	Have a showroom with examples of their work?			
7.	Staff to provide customer service?			
8.	Offer free in home estimates?			
9.	Spelled out guarantee?			
10.	Offer money back satisfaction guarantee?			
11.	Describe their process in detail?			
12.	Offer spec. sheets on their coatings?			
13.	Offer color matching?			
14.	High powered 12 " 3000 Cubic Feet Per. Minute ventilation used to remove odors?			
15.	Been refinished before, do they chemically strip if needed (good) or just sand the affected area (bad)?			
16.	Do they ETCH during the prep stage?			
17.	Do they use Silane adhesion promoter? Like TubPotion #8			
18.	Do they offer non-slip free and can provide a sample?			
19.	Transparent about their rates and repair charges?			
20.	Use polyester bonding primer and polyester top coat?			

NOTES:

