



Wet Sanding

This guide will cover how to smooth the surface of 3D printed objects using the wet sanding technique to avoid plastic melting into your sandpaper.

Written By: John Vincent Fitzell

Introduction

This guide will cover how to smooth the surface of 3D printed objects using the wet sanding technique to avoid plastic melting into your sandpaper.

Step 1 — Preparing your workspace



- Grab several grits of sandpaper. You will want to start around 200 grit or so and work up to higher grits
- Fill a small paint mixing cup with water. These are in the cabinets in the AFL. If you are in another lab, ask your LC if they know where some are.
- Lay some paper towels down on the table so you don't get water everywhere

Step 2 — Sanding FDM prints



- Pour a splash of the water on to your lowest grit sandpaper and gently rub it into the paper.
- Lightly sand your model. Use a circular motion and go slowly. If you sand quickly, the plastic will melt and ruin your sandpaper.
- If your sandpaper starts to dry out, add some more water.
- Once you have sanded across the entire surface of your model with the lowest grit, start the process over again with the next highest grit you have prepared.

Step 3 — Sanding resin prints



- Resin prints do not melt when sanded fast, but wet sanding will still give you a better surface finish.
 - You can use dry sandpaper for the lower grits to quickly remove material and support bumps on Formlabs parts.
 - Use wet sanding for when you are smoothing the surfaces and want a high level of polish. Grits higher than 1000 should only be used with wet sanding unless the packaging says otherwise.
-