Copper Polishing and buffing are finishing processes for smoothing a workpiece's surface using an abrasive and a work wheel or a leather strop. Technically polishing refers to processes that use an abrasive that is glued to the work wheel, while buffing uses a loose abrasive applied to the work wheel. Polishing is a more aggressive process while buffing is less harsh, which leads to a smoother, brighter finish. A common misconception is that a polished surface has a mirror bright finish, however most mirror bright finishes are actually buffed.