

# How to Stain Wood-Grain Textured Fiberglass Doors

Factory finished door units do not require additional field finishing. See maintenance steps for proper care.

## Requirements

Find a well-lit staining location that is dust-free, well ventilated and within the climate conditions recommended by the stain/top-coat manufacturer.

## You will need the following:

### Coatings and accessories:

- Mineral spirits or acetone
- One pair of rubber gloves
- Lint-free rags or cheese cloth (recommended)
- Stir sticks
- 2" wide foam brush
- Masking tape
- Safety razor blades
- Stain
  - High-quality, opaque (non-transparent), heavily pigmented, oil-based stain (recommended)
  - Gel stains can also be used
  - Semi-transparent stains are not recommended
- High-quality, exterior grade, UV stabilized polyurethane sealant (satin or low gloss)
- 2-1/2" wide china bristle brush

### Tools:

- Hammer
- Center punch
- Screwdriver with arrangement of screw bits
- Pliers
- Safety glasses

Please read and understand the entire staining procedure before attempting to finish the door. Be sure to follow the (stain and top-coat) manufacturers detailed application instructions on the product label.

## A. How to start

Doors can be stained either hanging in the opening or removed from the frame (recommended). Should you remove the door, take care to protect it from damage. Sidelites will need to be finished vertically. To remove the door from the frame, use a center punch and hammer. Strike the hinge pin from the bottom until it pops up (for outswing units – hinge leaf must be removed from the door). Drive the hinge pin as far as possible with the punch. Using a pair of pliers, grasp the hinge pin and, while twisting, pull the pin out. Remove all door hardware.

## B. Preparing the door surface

**IMPORTANT:** Dust, debris and other surface contaminants can accumulate on the surface of the door. Therefore, to achieve best results and maximum coating adhesion, wipe/clean all surfaces of the door panel(s) and sidelite(s) thoroughly with acetone or mineral spirits. Mask (tape) off all surfaces that will not be stained.

## C. Staining the Door

Use a high quality, heavily pigmented, oil-based stain (recommended).

Gel stains can also be used. Before starting, and occasionally throughout the project, stir the stain until the texture is creamy. We recommend that before starting, you try staining a small inconspicuous area of the door to achieve the desired color. One coat of stain is required with the recommended (per manufacturer's instructions) dry time needed between sides. The stain should be applied in the following order working on one small section of the door at a time.

### Finishing Order:

1. Panels and sticking (moulding profiles)
2. Vertical center areas (mullions)
3. Horizontal areas (rails)
4. Outside vertical areas (stiles)
5. Edge of door (includes both sides and top of door)

### Staining:

1. Put on gloves and prepare your materials.
2. Stir stain thoroughly using smooth strokes, avoid creating bubbles and do not shake the stain container.
3. Working in the specified order and individual section, dip the foam brush into the stain then use the rim of the container to release any excess. Use the foam brush to apply the stain onto the section. Using a cloth, rub the stain into the embossed wood-grain ensuring complete and even coverage. Stop between sections to tidy up the perimeter with a rag and mineral spirits. Clean edges will help define the individual components of the door. If preferred, the subtle color variation found in wood can be replicated by selective removal of the stain. Using a rag or cheese cloth, gently rub the surface removing very small amounts of stain. Apply varying levels of pressure and work in the direction of the grain. Excessive pressure will remove too much stain.
4. Once the door has been completely stained, check for any drips. While the stain is still wet, lightly brush the entire surface of the door with a china bristle brush. Use long strokes and work in the direction of the grain to even out color and achieve consistency.
5. Let the first stained surface dry, per the stain manufacturer's recommended drying time, before proceeding to the second side.
6. If you prefer a darker appearance, repeat staining steps one through five only after first coat is completely dry. Do not sand between staining coats.

## D. Sealing or applying the top-coat

The top-coat or sealant for your door is very important and required for weatherability. It protects the stained door from the elements and makes the door surface washable. Be sure that the stain coating is completely dry and then apply a high-quality, UV stabilized, clear exterior polyurethane coating (satin or low gloss) – used for any normal exterior wood application.

**Note:** We recommend that all 6 sides (front and back faces plus all four edges) be sealed to eliminate moisture absorption. The bottom of your door panel(s) may contain a factory installed weatherstripping (sweep) which is sealed prior to installation. Failure to observe this recommendation may void the warranty.

1. Stir top coat thoroughly using smooth strokes, avoid creating bubbles and do not shake the top coat container.
2. Do not overload the brush. Dip the end of the brush into the coating and gently slide the flat side of the brush against the edge of the container to remove the excess.
3. Apply with even gentle strokes. Press hard enough to flex the bristles just a little and then pull the brush gently along the door's surface.
4. As you apply the sealant, pull the brush quickly along the area two or three times lightly to even out the brush strokes.
5. Allow the first coat to dry completely (follow manufacturer's recommendations) and apply at least one more coat using the same steps as above. A minimum of two coats is required for complete protection and the door should be resealed annually to ensure lasting protection of the finish.
6. After both sides of the door have been top-coated (twice) and are completely dry, remove the paper and tape from the glass and protected surfaces.
7. Clean the glass with window cleaner and remove any finishing materials from the glass with a safety razor.
8. Replace door back into frame.

## Maintenance

1. In the event that the door is scratched after finishing, the damaged area can be lightly sanded using 400-grit sandpaper (do not over-sand the surface). Follow the staining and top-coat procedures.
2. Dirt and watermarks can build up on the surface of your finished door over time. Extend the life of the stain and top-coat by cleaning the door several times a year. Clean with warm soapy water, rinse and towel dry.
3. A minimum of two coats of top-coat are initially required for complete protection. The door system should be resealed every 1 to 7 years depending upon weather exposure.

## How to Paint Exterior Doors

Factory finished door units do not require any additional field finishing.

## Requirements

Find a well-lit finishing location that is dust-free, well ventilated and within the climate conditions recommended by the coating manufacturer. Recommended temperature should be between 50° - 90°F degrees Fahrenheit.

## You will need the following:

### Coatings and accessories:

- Mineral spirits or acetone
- Soapy water (mild detergent in warm water)
- One pair of rubber gloves
- Stir sticks
- Masking tape
- Safety razor blades
- 220-grit sandpaper
- Paint

High-quality, oil-base or 100% acrylic water-based latex paint of desired color

Lacquer paints are not recommended

- 2-1/2" wide brush appropriate for type of paint (A natural bristle brush should be used with oil-based paint and a synthetic bristle brush should be used with latex paint.)

## **Tools:**

- Hammer
- Center punch
- Phillips screwdriver
- Pliers
- Safety glasses
- Air-less sprayer (optional)

**Note:** Painting instructions specifically refer to the door and sidelite panels. Oil-based paint should not be used on wood frame components (jambs & brickmould). Please read and understand the entire painting procedures before attempting to finish the door. Be sure to follow the paint manufacturer's detailed application instructions on the product label.

## **A. How to start**

Doors can be painted either hanging in the opening or removed from the frame (recommended). Should you remove the door, take care to protect it from damage. Sidelites will need to be finished vertically. To remove the door from the frame, use a center punch and hammer. Strike the hinge pin from the bottom until it pops up (for outswing & self closing units – hinge leaf must be removed from the door). Drive the hinge pin as far as possible with the punch. Using a pair of pliers, grasp the hinge pin and, while twisting, pull the pin out. Remove all door hardware.

## **B. Preparing the door surface**

**IMPORTANT:** For adequate paint adhesion the door surface must be free of dust, debris and other surface contaminants. Steel doors should be wiped clean with a solvent such as acetone or mineral spirits. Allow the cleaning solvent to dry completely – until there is no residual odor. Once wiped clean, the door must be lightly sanded with a 220-grit sandpaper. After sanding, the door must be washed with a mild detergent in warm soapy water, rinsed and then dried. Fiberglass doors should be wiped clean with a solvent such as acetone or mineral spirits. Allow the cleaning solvent to dry completely – until there is no residual odor. Next, the door must be washed with a mild detergent in warm soapy water, rinsed and then dried. Mask (tape) off all surfaces that will not be painted including all glass.

## **C. Preparing the lite surround (window frame)**

For adequate paint adhesion a bonding primer is recommended to be applied to the lite surround. Before applying the bonding primer, glass should be masked to protect from abrasives, bonding primer and paint. Lightly sand frame surface using a scouring pad or 220 grit or finer sandpaper. Wipe surface clean with a lint free cloth using a small amount of denatured alcohol or acetone. Apply bonding primer (examples include SWT Specialty Products CPO Primer or X-I-M Plastic and Vinyl Bonding Primer). Follow manufacturer's recommendations for drying and top coat.

## **D. Painting the Door**

Use exterior, high quality, oil-based or 100% acrylic water-based latex paint of desired color. High quality interior paint can be used on the interior surface of the door only. Lacquer paints are not recommended. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for paint application by using either a brush or a handheld sprayer.

## **Painting:**

Put on gloves, safety glasses, and prepare your materials. Before starting, and occasionally throughout the project, stir the paint using smooth strokes until the texture is creamy – avoid creating bubbles.

## Finishing with Brush Application:

Dip the brush into the paint, then use the rim of the container to release any excess paint. Apply paint as evenly as possible while still wet. Brush strokes should follow the grain direction of the selected area. Start working on the panels and sticking (moulding profiles), then the vertical center mullion, next the horizontal rails, then the vertical stiles, and finally, the outside edges (stiles and top rail, see figure 1 for details). Doors that are outswing or have adjustable surface mounted sweeps will need to have the sweep removed and the bottom rail painted.

## Finishing Order:

For wood-grain textured door finishing with brush.

1. Panels and sticking (moulding profiles)
2. Vertical center areas (mullions)
3. Horizontal areas (rails)
4. Outside vertical areas (stiles)
5. Edges of door (includes both sides and top of door)

## Finishing with Spray Applicator:

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for thinning the paint; (i.e. thin latex paint with water or oil-based with solvent for better atomization and spraying results). Strain paint before filling the spray pot. The door can be painted in horizontal (recommended) or vertical position; however, the paint should be applied in continuous strokes extending six inches past the edges of the door. This will ensure uniformity across the entire surface of the door. Multiple light coats are better than one heavy coat. Avoid runs as a result of overspraying.

**Note:** We recommend that all 6 sides (front and back faces plus all four edges) be sealed to eliminate moisture absorption. The bottom of your door panel(s) may contain a factory installed weatherstripping (sweep) which is sealed prior to installation. Failure to observe this recommendation may void the warranty.

## Drying:

**IMPORTANT:** Let the paint dry completely, following the manufacturer's recommended drying time before handling the painted surface or applying a second coat. If possible, allow the door to dry in a horizontal position to minimize paint runs. High humidity and/or low temperatures may extend your drying time.

**WARNING:** Foam-filled doors painted with dark colors or with attached storm doors, may become very hot to the touch in direct sunlight. Do not paint the weather strip and do not close door until paint is dry (see paint manufacturer's specifications on minimum drying time). To maintain product warranty: Paint the door, frame, header and brickmould within 45 days of installation.

## Maintenance

1. In the event that the door is scratched after finishing, the damaged area can be lightly sanded using 400-grit sandpaper (do not over-sand the surface). Follow the finishing procedures on the inside of this brochure.
2. Dirt and watermarks can build up on the surface of your finished door over time. Extend the life of the paint by cleaning the door a few times a year. Clean with warm soapy water, rinse and towel dry.
3. Repainting every 1 to 7 years will be required, depending upon weather exposure.