



Getting Started

Whether you are finishing your latest deck project or want to give your living room a warm look and feel, a new coat of paint or stain is one of the easiest ways to add value and style to your home. With so many selections on the market today, it can be hard to know where to start.

No matter where you are in your process, your local Curtis Lumber is the smart place to begin. Our experienced salespeople will guide you through your finish selection and application process to achieve the look you want.

Types of Finishes

There are many types of coatings that can be used to protect, preserve, and add color to surfaces. The most common types are paints and stains.

Paint- A coating that lays upon the surface and has little penetration into the wood, drywall, or other material. Paints will provide an even, opaque finish that will not show as much of the wood grain or texture of the surface. The color selection of paints is virtually endless and your local Curtis Lumber can custom match any color.

Stain-These coatings penetrate the surface and will show more of the texture or wood grain than paint. Stains will provide a semi-transparent, semi-solid or solid finish and are available in many colors.

Polyurethane- These coatings have little or no color and simply serve as a protective finish to wood. Polyurethane can be oil based (alkyd) or water based, and available for either interior or exterior use. Because they finish hard and durable they are frequently used over stains to then provide a hard enamel finish to the surface.

Specialty Finishes

In addition to pure paints, stains, and urethanes, there are a variety of coatings that blur the lines between the three. Porch floor paint is an enameled paint that finishes with a hard surface to resist heavy foot traffic. Garage floor finishes contain chemicals that resist oil spills, hot tire pick up, and adhere well to cement. Drylock is a paint-like material that seals pores in cement to create a water barrier for basement floors and walls. Faux finishes are decorative glazes that can add texture and create very special looks.

It is also important to note that some finishes are custom formulated for specific jobs. For example, Log Cabin stain is manufactured exclusively for sealing log homes.

Each type of finish has a specific use. If you are unsure of which type is the best for your job, stop into your local Curtis Lumber, where our paint specialists will guide you to the right coating for your project.

Choosing the Right Finish

A perfect finish begins long before any coating is applied. There are many considerations that go into choosing the perfect coating.

Paints work well in cases where you want the surface to be covered in a uniform and opaque finish. Paints can go over many surfaces including wood, drywall, metal, concrete and more. Stains are a good choice for areas where you would like the texture of the wood to show through or when you need a coating that sticks well to the surface. Polyurethanes are used to protect bare wood or over an interior stains. They create a hard surface that protects the wood and provide a level of sheen. Polyurethanes are either oil based or water based. Oil based urethanes are more durable but amber over time. They also tend to have a strong odor when applying and tend to take longer to dry between coats. Water based polyurethane goes on easy with minimal odor and can be recoated a number of times in a single day.