

Instructions General Finishes Stain Blocker

Step 1: Preparation

All wood projects require preparation sanding, and all existing finishes require prep cleaning and sanding. If you skip this critical step, your finish may fail.

Preparation for Raw Wood or Stained Raw Wood Projects

See our video: [How to Prep Sand Raw Wood](#)

Sanding Schedule: 120-grit followed by 150- or 220-grit

Remove dust with a water-dampened rag or oil-free tack cloth.

Let dry completely before applying GF product.

WARNING: Do not over-sand with fine-grit sandpapers; this will close and seal the wood grain, preventing ideal color absorption. Also, do NOT use steel wool with water-based finishes; the particles will get trapped in the finish and rust.

Preparation for Projects with an Existing Finish (Sealed Surface)

For high-use areas with heavy grime build-up and oil from hands, give your project a deeper cleaning.

See our video: [How to Prepare Existing Finishes](#)

Scuff clean with a Scotch Brite™ pad and a 50:50 mix of denatured alcohol and water. Dry 1-2 hours. Avoid cleaning with products containing phosphates (salt), which can linger in the substrate and produce a white haze. If your project requires a deeper cleaning, see [Power Prep Cleaning Highly Used Existing Finishes](#) below.

Sand lightly with a fine-grade (220-320) foam sanding pad.

Remove dust with a vacuum, compressed air, an oil-free tack cloth or a water-dampened rag.

Let dry completely before applying General Finishes product.

Power Prep Cleaning Highly Used Existing Finishes

For high-use areas such as kitchen cabinets or tabletops with heavy grime build-up and oil from hands, give your project a "Power" clean.

See our video: [How to Power Prep Existing High Use Finishes for Stain or Paint](#)

Scrub clean with a detergent, such as Spic and Span or Dawn, using a Scotch Brite™ pad.

Rinse well with water.

Scrub clean with a Scotch Brite™ pad and a 50:50 mix of denatured alcohol and water. Dry 1-2 hours.

Sand lightly with a fine-grade (220-320) foam sanding pad.

Remove dust with a vacuum, compressed air, an oil-free tack cloth or a water-dampened rag.

Let dry completely before applying General Finishes product.

Alternative Cleaning Solutions for Existing Finishes (Not as aggressive or effective as denatured alcohol; requires rinsing.)

50:50 mix of bleach and water

50:50 mix of vinegar and water

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Mineral spirits can be used when working with water-based products, but only if the surface is thoroughly rinsed and allowed to dry for 72 hours.

If you use with products containing phosphates (salt), which can linger in the substrate and produce a white haze, be sure to rinse thoroughly.

Step 2: How to Apply General Finishes Stain Blocker

General Finishes Stain Blocker is our strongest primer for light colored paints and acts as a chemical barrier that adheres well to prepped interior raw wood and previous existing finishes. Two coats are required. The first coat will absorb bleed-through which can cause a slight color change to gray, and the second coat will seal the bleed-through.

Stain Blocker Application Steps

Stir paint to reincorporate solids that have settled to the bottom of the can before and throughout the application process.

Thinning: Do not thin.

Apply 2 coats of Stain Blocker under all light paints.

Hand application: Apply using a synthetic bristle brush, foam brush, paint pad applicator or roller.

Spray application: Before spraying, strain paint through a medium-mesh filter. Spray wet films at 3-5-mil thickness. HVLP: 1.8mm-2.0mm spray tip, medium air cap. Verify tip sizes with your equipment supplier. See our general guide for spray tip sizes. Keep your gun at a 90° angle, 6-8" from the surface. On large, flat areas, use wet, even patterns 6-8" wide. For narrow surfaces, reduce the fan pattern to 2-3" wide to reduce overspray. Overlap each pass 25% to conceal lines. Wear a full filter (NIOSH/MSHA approved) respiratory & eye protection and work in a ventilated space. Visit this FAQ for more information on spraying techniques.

Face frames on cabinets: Stain Blocker can be applied successfully to cabinet face frames, edges or drawers with a brush, pad, or small cabinet-specific roller such as Whizz or AllPro brand.

Dry 2+ hours between coats and before topcoat in ideal conditions: 70°F/20°C; 50-70% humidity. Be sure to allow adequate dry time. You can tell if a water-based finish is dry if it forms a powder when lightly sanded with a fine-grade (220-320) foam sanding pad. If in doubt, wait longer. Rushing dry time can cause clouding/blush in topcoat due to moisture trapped between coats. Increase dry time if:

Humidity is over 80%

Thick coats are applied

Applying over a previously existing finish

Applying over products from other brands

Layering General Finishes water- and oil-based products:

Water over oil: Let oil-based products dry 72+hrs before applying water-based products

Oil over water: Let water-based products dry 24+hrs before applying oil-based products

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Finish sand between coats with a fine-grade (220-320) foam sanding pad to improve smoothness and adhesion.

Remove dust with a vacuum, compressed air, an oil-free tack cloth or a water-dampened rag.

Apply 2-3 coats of paint and then seal with 3 coats of topcoat.

Cure Time

Water-based finishes cure and harden for full use after 21 days in ideal conditions. Avoid placing heavy objects on surfaces that have not completely cured. Treat gently, and do not clean with commercial products during the curing period.

What else you need to know:

DO NOT tint Stain Blocker or mix with any paint, stain, or topcoat. Contamination from other finishes will cause product failure.

Interior use only under pigmented finishes.

Stain Blocker does not adhere to melamine.

Warning: Do not use water-based products with Linseed Oils or Danish Oils.

Cleanup of Stain Blocker

Application tools and materials containing water-based products can be cleaned with soap and water immediately after use. DO NOT use General Finishes Brush & Gun Cleaner.

Product Spills

Spills may be able to be removed from fabric and carpet if cleaned immediately with soap and water.

Storage of Water Based Products

Please be mindful of the way water-based products are stored and how long they have been in storage. They are not a forever product.

Life of Product

Water-based products do not last forever, even when unopened. General Finishes products are best used within 1 year. However, the life of the product may be extended several more years with proper care and storage (see Storage Tips below).

Water-based products can last 3-5 years if the can is unopened, in good condition and stored in correct temperatures.

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Product that is 3 years old will not look like product that is 6 months to 1 year old. You will see more stratification or separation as the product ages. Always stir thoroughly before using.

Foul Smell

If your product has a foul smell, it is contaminated and no longer in useable condition.

Clumps & Settling

Gravity can cause some solids to settle on the bottom of the can and slight separation on the top. This is normal. If working with older product stir with a paint mixing attachment on a drill.

If the solids dissolve and clumps smooth out after mixing from the bottom, the product is in good condition for use.

Inability to reincorporate large, chunky lumps after stirring for several minutes is an indication that the product has frozen and can no longer be used.

Storage Tips

See video tutorial: [Tips on Storing Leftover Finishes](#)

Water-based finishes crystalize and form a skin due to evaporation when the air-tight seal on a can is broken at first use. The following best practices will increase the life of your product:

Pry open sealed lids with a paint can opener by hooking under the lid's rolled edge. The use of a screwdriver can disfigure the rim and lid, impairing a complete seal.

Keep lid closed while working. Pour what you will use into a bowl, paper cup, or plate, and close can lid as you work.

Clean the chime of the can thoroughly with a paper towel before closing to create a complete seal. Product falling into the chime can be minimized by using a pouring lid, such as Fitsall. Avoid wiping used brushes on the lid.

Pound the lid in place using a rubber mallet to avoid distorting the chime or lid. Dents in the lid from direct contact with a hammer can impair a complete seal. Alternatively, place a flat piece of wood over can lid and firmly pound shut.

Store in moderate temperatures. Avoid temperatures below 50°F/10°C or above 100°F/26°C. Keep from freezing. Frozen and heat-damaged product cannot be revitalized. Temperature-controlled spaces, such as a basement, are ideal for storage. Do not store product in an attic, garage, in direct sunlight, or next to something warm like a water heater or furnace.

Store can upside down to create a liquid seal, minimize evaporation and reduce the chance of crystallization. Decant remaining product from the can before stirring.

Decant leftovers to a smaller container when the finish is almost used up. Alternative storage containers for water-based products are plastic FIFO bottles or glass bottles. Do not fill metal-lidded containers completely to prevent them from rusting.

The following water-based product mixtures can be stored:

Product thinned with up to 15% General Finishes Extender or General Finishes Accelerator can be stored, except for thinned General Finishes Water Based Wood Stain.

Mixtures involving colors & sheens within the same product line, such as:

High Performance Satin + High Performance Gloss

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Snow White Milk Paint + Coastal Blue Milk Paint

Amber Dye Stain + Merlot Dye Stain

The following product mixtures should NOT be stored:

Any water based product with thinned tap water; water often contains bacteria that will adversely affect stored paint.

Topcoat + Stain or Paint

Milk Paint + Chalk Style Paint

Water Based Wood Stain + Dye Stain

Furniture Care and Maintenance

Cure First

You have just finished applying a fine furniture finish. Treat gently until the paint or topcoat have fully cured. Allow 21 days for a water-based finish to cure and 30 days for an oil-based finish to cure before cleaning.

Regular Cleaning and Maintenance

Remove dust with a water-dampened cloth. Dust can build up over time and may scratch or dull finishes if not removed regularly.

Remove fingerprints, cooking fumes and smoking residue with mild soap and water. These contaminants will not harm the finish, but they accumulate on surfaces and dull the original luster.

As with all fine furniture finishes, avoid using furniture polish, cleaners or dusting sprays that contain silicone, alcohol, ammonia, and anything acidic. Exception: We have successfully cleaned with Clorox wipes for occasional cleanups.

Clean up water, alcohol and food spills in a timely manner and use placemats & coasters to protect the finish.

Future finishes or touch-ups may not adhere properly or perform as desired over a contaminated surface. Some contaminants, such as silicone, seep through finish into the wood and often cannot be removed.

Avoid excessive exposure to direct sunlight, high temperatures or high humidity. These can damage furniture and finishes.

Warnings and Warranties

Stain Blocker Warnings and Warranties

Thinning

Do not thin Stain Blocker with anything but distilled water. Do not add more than 5% distilled water.

Compatibility

Do not use water-based products with Linseed Oils or Danish Oils.

Limited Warranty

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General Finishes products must be tested to your complete satisfaction before using. General Finishes will not be responsible for color satisfaction, misapplication, nor compatibility with other manufacturer's products. General Finishes will be responsible only for the cost of our products, and not for costs such as labor, damage, or project replacement.

Contamination and Compatibility

Our finishes are engineered as a system and are compatible with each other. General Finishes cannot guarantee an ideal refinish when applying our products on top of or combined with another company's products or over surfaces that have been in contact with waxes, polishes or sprays containing contaminants such as silicone. Test for adherence and aesthetics before beginning.

FIRST AID: Seek immediate medical attention if symptoms occur due to the following. **EYE CONTACT:** Remove any contact lenses. Flush eyes with water for 20+ minutes while lifting upper and lower eyelids. **SKIN CONTACT:** Wash thoroughly after handling. **INHALATION:** Move to fresh air and loosen clothing. If not breathing, if breathing is irregular or if respiratory arrest occurs, provide artificial respiration or oxygen by trained personnel. **INGESTION:** Call physician immediately. Wash out mouth with water. Do not induce vomiting unless directed to do so by medical personnel. Never give anything by mouth to an unconscious person.

Prop 65 WARNING: This product can expose you to chemicals including Titanium dioxide, Crystalline silica, respirable powder, which are known to the State of California to cause cancer. For more information go to [California Proposition-65](#).

WARNING: CAUSES EYE AND RESPIRATORY TRACT IRRITATION.

WARNING: Keep out of reach of children. Use only with adequate ventilation. Avoid contact with eyes. Avoid breathing vapor or mist. Keep container tightly closed when not in use. Wash thoroughly after handling.