

Products Care, Maintenance and Finishing

About Exterior Wood Finishes

There are two types of finish processes used today on exterior millwork:

- Penetrating Oil Finishes
- Shell Finishes

Architectural Traditions offers Penetrating Oil Finishes, which are created by applying a series of natural oils that penetrate deep into the cell structure of the wood. After consecutive coats, the deep penetration of these oils toughens and seals the wood fiber. The key advantages of this kind of finish are aesthetics and ease of maintenance. This finish process facilitates a very natural look that accentuates the true beauty of the wood. It also creates a “living finish” which will never peel, blister, or crack; needing only to be rejuvenated with additional coats of oil when looking tired.

The other type of finish—Shell Finishes—tend to be used by high-production door and window manufacturers and on-site painters, because of their quick application time. Examples of these are paint, polyurethane, or varnish. The theory behind this finish process is that a “top-coat” encapsulates and protects the wood underneath. These finishes tend to create a shinier, glossier, and in some cases, almost plastic appearance. Over time, the top coat will begin to deteriorate, which becomes evident by the surface peeling and cracking. Once this happens, the wood loses its moisture barrier and becomes susceptible to water damage. Shell Finish maintenance requires tedious removal (stripping/sanding) of the original top coat, then reapplication of a new top coat.

Maintaining Architectural Traditions’ Rubbed-Oil Finish “Cabot Oil Finish”

Your Architectural Traditions doors and windows have been manufactured to last for years, but as with any piece of fine furniture, the finish will require some simple periodic maintenance to keep it looking its best and to provide protection from the elements. Regular finish maintenance is also a requirement of the warranty. We recommend that you inspect wood products exposed to exterior environments annually. If your doors or windows receive a lot of moisture or direct sunlight (southern and western exposures, for example), you will want to examine the finish often. When inspecting your wood products, look for dryness of the wood and fading. Spray water on the surface of the wood, looking for water droplets to bead up. If the wood looks dry, faded, or the water is being absorbed into the wood, these are signs that the product needs a coat of oil to rejuvenate the “living” finish.

To maintain your Architectural Traditions Rubbed-Oil Finish, simply clean the wood of any dirt or debris. If the product has not been maintained, more extensive cleaning may require rubbing steel wool over the surface of the wood (exterior only). Start with medium-coarse and finish by buffing with fine density. Fungus or mold removal may require the use of deck cleaners, or one part household bleach to three parts water.

After you have cleaned the wood, simply apply a coat of wood oil, with or without color. We use and recommend Cabot Clear 3000 Natural Oil Solution, or in California, Cabot Clear 9100 or 9200 Natural. Apply the oil with a brush, and then finish by thoroughly wiping the door with a clean cotton rag. The oil will bring back the rich look in the wood. If a higher gloss level is desired on sanded surfaces (non-wirebrushed), Cabot Australian Timber Oil can be used. If you need to restore color to the wood, contact Architectural Traditions with the

name of the finish color we originally supplied on your products, and we will supply you with a color tint formulation that can be added to the Cabot Clear Oil Solution. For a Cabot finish material dealer near you consult their website: www.cabotstain.com

Maintaining Architectural Traditions' Sikkens Cetol® Finish

Proper maintenance starts with visual inspection. A time frame of every 2-3 years on the south and west exposures and 3-4 years on the north and east exposures can be used as a general guideline. However, as weathering and exposure can vary, maintenance may be needed sooner, and should be performed when visually necessary regardless of timeframe.

Clean the surface of the wood of any dirt or debris with soap and water. More extensive cleaning will require:

1. Spraying the surface of the wood with water.
2. Clean the surface with a solution of two ounces of 100% powdered Tri-Sodium Phosphate (TSP) or phosphate-free substitute plus one quart liquid bleach in three quarts of water. Apply this solution to the wood with a garden sprayer.
3. Let solution sit on wood for 15-20 minutes. During this period scrub surface with bristled brush, do not let solution dry.
4. Power wash solution from the wood with clean water.
5. Let surface dry for three days before application on of Cetol 23 finish maintenance coat. Apply one coat of Sikkens Cetol 23 finish with a brush and let air dry.

For a Sikkens finish material dealer near you, consult their website: <http://www.nam.sikkens.com/index-english.cfm>

Finish Raw Wood

It is imperative that the finish you apply fits the exposure expected for your particular application. Extreme exposure or inclement conditions beyond the norm require special attention. Before sealing your door, you must follow the instructions below, regardless of the type of stain.

For wirebrushed surfaces, sand your door with 80- or 100-grit sandpaper to achieve the desired grain texture, remove rough areas, and eliminate splinters. (CAUTION: Over-sanding will eliminate wire-brushed texture.) Rub door vigorously with medium coarse steel wool approximately 7-10 minutes per side or until all edges are rounded and flat surfaces are slick.

For sanded (smooth) surfaces, you must sand you door thoroughly starting with 120-grit and finishing with 220-grit. Failure to do so may show inconsistencies in your stain, particularly when using lacquer or varnish topcoats.

Our warranty requires that you immediately seal all exposed wood, including all mortised and drilled areas, with at least two full coats of sealer or primer. After it is sealed, let the door acclimatize to the environment before putting the finish coats on the door.

There are two ways to finish raw wood, regardless of whether it's been stained to change the color or left natural. The first is with a series of penetrating oils that toughen the wood fiber as they build up after consecutive coats. The second is with a shell-like paint, urethane, or varnish as a protective topcoat. There are advantages to both methods: consult your paint professional to determine which finish best suits your particular needs.

Maintenance and Repairs

At least annually, examine your doors and windows for signs of damage or deterioration. Scratches or dings can be repaired using a cotton swab dampened with wood stain. Remove as much excess stain as possible by dabbing the cotton swab on a clean cloth before touching up the door (this ensures an even color tone). Check periodically to see if the exterior sealants exhibit any gaps, leaks or signs of damage or deterioration, and if so, apply a quality exterior caulking to these areas.