



Definition and Application of Decorative Finishes

1. Scope

- 1.1. The purpose of this standard is to define the field of Decorative Finishing
- 1.2. It is also the intent of this document to:
 - 1.2.1. Identify a representative sample and describe its use.
 - 1.2.2. Establish criteria for acceptance of substrate and surface preparation for decorative finishing.
 - 1.2.3. Establish criteria for acceptance of a decorative finish.
 - 1.2.4. Define responsibilities of the various parties of a contract when decorative finishes are to be applied.

2. Significance and Use

- 2.1. The decorative finishes on a project should be applied by the painting and decorating contractor or another contractor that specializes in decorative finishes.
- 2.2. Conflicts often arise between the contractor providing decorative finishes on a project and other entities regarding the responsibility for providing surface preparation and base coats.
- 2.3. The contractor providing decorative finishes and other contractual entities must have criteria upon which to base the division of work responsibilities and criteria for the acceptance of completed work.

3. Reference Standards and Documents

- 3.1. Black's Law Dictionary, 7th Edition, Bryan A. Garner, 1999.
- 3.2. MPI, The Master Painter's Glossary-Painting and Decorating Terminology, 1997.
- 3.3. Parry's Graining & Marbling, Brian Rhodes & John Windsor, 1949, Crosby, Lockwood & Sons, Ltd. 1985, Collins Professional & Technical Books.
- 3.4. Professional Painted Finishes, Ina Brosseau Marx, Allen Marx, 1991, Watson-Guptill Publications.
- 3.5. PDA Standard 1, Touch Up Painting and Damage Repair: Financial Responsibility and Definition of a Properly Painted Surface.
- 3.6. PDA Standard 3, Designation of Paint Colours.
- 3.7. PDA Standard 5, Benchmark Samples Procedures for Paint and Other Decorative Coating Systems.

- 3.8. PDA Standard 9, Definition of Trade Terms.
- 3.9. PDA Standard 18, Recommended Protocol for Documenting Extra Work to a Contract.
- 3.10. Recipes For Surfaces, Mindy Drucker & Pierre Finkelstein, 1993, Quarto, Inc.
- 3.11. The Art of Faux, The Complete Sourcebook of Decorative Painted Finishes, Pierre Finkelstein, 1997, Watson-Guptill Publications.
- 3.12. The New Paint Magic, Jocasta Innes, 1981, Pantheon Books.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. ACCEPTANCE OF SURFACE: See PDA Standard P4, Responsibilities of Inspection and Acceptance of Surfaces Prior to Painting and Decorating, paragraph 5.1.
- 4.2. ACCEPTANCE: An agreement, either by express act or by implication from conduct, to the terms of an offer so that a binding contract is formed. If an acceptance modifies the terms or adds new ones, it generally operates as a counteroffer. [Black's Law]
- 4.3. DECORATIVE (PAINT) FINISHES: Application of paints or glazes to adorn, decorate or embellish a surface as compared to a plain solid colour, stain or varnish finish and as opposed to performing a protective function. This general group of decorative paint finishes includes a number of "subgroups" some of which overlap and others of which have more than one name by which they are recognized. These include:
 - Faux (false) Finishes: In French, "false" finish. These seek to imitate products found in nature such as wood, marble, granite, stone, etc. These include wood graining, marbling, gilding, etc.
 - Special Effect Finishes: Broken colour effects (as opposed to imitation effects), such as ragging on, ragging off, sponging on, sponging off, strié, splattering, stippling, etc.
 - Graphic Finishes: Detailed effects such as stencilling and graphics that are in accordance with "mathematical rules."
 - Pictorial Finishes: Decorative effects such as murals, scenics, portraits, etc.

- **Trompe d’oeil:** In French, “trick of the eye.” That which creates such a strong illusion that it is difficult to ascertain whether it is real or a representation. Usually, but not always, three-dimensional, giving the impression of depth and perspective. [MPI] Other decorative finishes include but are not limited to:
 - **Decorative Veneer Plaster** – A thinly applied layer or multi-layer application of various plaster compositions to attain a decorative effect. This category includes but is not limited to stucco Veneziano, commonly called Venetian plaster, stucco marmorino, natural lime based veneer plaster, synthetic plaster, and gypsum plaster.
 - **Textures** – Textures may be visual and/or physical.
 - **Visual Texture** – Multiple tonal properties giving a purposeful and visual impression of dimension.
 - **Physical Texture** – A finish that creates a profile that has a tactile quality as opposed to a visual texture.
 - **Gilding** – The decorative effect attained by bonding thin metallics. Metallics can be strips or leaves of gold, silver, brass, bronze, metallic powder or mica powder, etc. to a substrate for an authentic look. May also be used as a base for other finishes like tortoiseshell. See also Dutch metal and gold leaf. Bonding is achieved through sizes and adhesives
- 4.4. **DECORATIVE PAINTING:** Painting done primarily for appearance rather than protection. [MPI]
- 4.5. **PAINTING AND DECORATING CONTRACTOR:** The individual or company contracted to apply paints, coatings, wallcoverings and other decorative finishes. [PDA Standard 9]
- 4.6. **SPECIAL FINISHES:** Paints and coatings requiring special tools or techniques for application; e.g.: faux finishes, decorative finishes, graphics, multicolour or murals. [MPI]
- 4.7. **SPECIFICATION:** A clear accurate description of the technical requirement for material products, or services, which specifies the minimum requirement for quality and construction of materials and equipment necessary for an acceptable product. In general, specifications are in the form of written descriptions, drawings, prints, commercial designations, industry standards and other descriptive references. [PDA Standard 9]

5. Standard Specification

- 5.1. Prior to the application of primer and base coats, surfaces shall be inspected and approved in accordance with PDA Standard 4.
- 5.2. The specifications shall indicate the number and type of primer and base coats to be applied by the

painting and decorating contractor in the contract documents.

5.3. The painting and decorating contractor shall apply the specified paint coats to produce a “properly painted surface” as defined in PDA Standard 1.

5.4. The contractor that will apply decorative finishes on the project shall inspect painted surfaces for suitability to receive decorative finishes. If additional surface preparation or base coats are required, this work shall be performed by either the contractor providing decorative finishes or the painting and decorating contractor and shall be invoiced as extra work to the contract in accordance with PDA Standard 18.

5.5. Representative Sample

- 5.5.1 A sample board or mock-up can be rendered in scale to give a representation of how the completed finish should appear. The size should be at least 11” x 14” or large enough to illustrate one full repeat of the design.
- 5.5.2. The sample board or mock up is used to determine whether the colours and technique(s) are acceptable before any related work commences.
- 5.5.3. The representative sample is owned by the company or person who produced the sample.
- 5.5.4. Upon mutual agreement of the contractor providing decorative finishes and the contracting entity, a benchmark sample shall be produced in accordance with PDA Standard 5. The contractor providing the benchmark sample shall be entitled to additional compensation utilized a method detailed in PDA Standard 18.

5.6. Criteria for Acceptance of a Decorative Finish

- 5.6.1. If the approved sample board or mock up is a reasonable representation of the completed work throughout the area of application, then the work shall be deemed to be acceptable.
- 5.6.2. If, on the approved board or mock up, the pattern size had to be scaled down due to dimensional limitations, but the predetermined scale to actual scale is accurate, then the finish is deemed to be acceptable.

6. Comments

- 6.1. This standard is intended to define the field of decorative finishing.
- 6.2. This standard is intended to establish criteria for acceptance of the substrate and surface preparation for decorative finishing.
- 6.3. This standard is intended to establish criteria for acceptance of a decorative finish.

6.4. This standard is intended establish a consensus document for the painting industry's practices.

7. Notes

7.1. PDA does not warrant or assume any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any of the information contained herein.