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Preparing and Refinishing Decks

Prior to refinishing a deck, many questions must be asked. For instance: How old is the deck, how high is it off the ground, and has it ever been treated, and if so is it solid or semi-transparent. These questions will help to select and rule out certain products. Also, your preference of color and level of solidity is needed for choosing the right product. Here at Factory Paint and Decorating, customer service comes first to make sure that you get the right product for the right project and that your fully knowledgeable about the process.

Prepping a deck should be performed in the following manner: First you must clear the deck of all foreign matter via push bristle broom or air blower. If there is a solid finish on the deck then you may have to strip the paint or stain off using Cabot Stains Deck Stripper. If there is no finish or a transparent product on the wood and no peeling has occurred, then there is no need to use a stripper. If the wood is discolored or gray and you are planning on using a transparent or semi-transparent product, then you should apply Cabot's or Benjamin Moore's wood brightener to bleach out and bring life back to your deck. Next, you must wash the deck with a deck cleaner. Cabot's, Benjamin Moore, or even a mixture of trisodium phosphate (TSP) and bleach will do the trick. Once the wood is dry, if there are still dead wood fibers or if it is a hard wood like mahogany or teak, you should give a light sand with 80-100 grit sand paper. This will open the grain of the wood and remove any dead wood fibers on the surface that would keep the stain from penetrating to a sound surface.

Choosing the right product comes next. If your deck is two feet or lower to the ground, you are limited to only using a transparent or semi-transparent product. Moisture from the ground must escape and if the deck is too close then it escapes through the wood. This moisture would cause an opaque or solid stain to peel, whereas a transparent won't. Next you must choose a color, but the only way to achieve a color lighter than what already exists is to use a solid stain or again to strip the old finish off. Solid stains can peel so when possible you should use a semi-transparent. With the stain lines from Cabot's, Benjamin Moore, Sikkens, Muralo, Wolmans, and Pratt & Lambert, you have a huge variety of colors and products to choose from for the right project.

Finally, the last step is the application. Applying the product the right way can make a difference of the stain peeling or not. The best way to apply either solid or semi-transparent is by brush. You can also use a roller, but you should back-brush to get rid of any puddling. Also, a lambs-wool applicator can be used with certain transparent stains from Sikkens and with the Cabot's Australian timber oil which has been a favorite for the last few years due to its ease of application, colors, and longevity. Overall, preparing your deck the correct way with the right products should give you years of protection.