FINISHING GUIDELINE

CUSTOM SOLID WOOD DOORS

Wood Stain Colors for Doors

Choosing the right stain color for your wood door is important for both aesthetics and durability. This guide will help you make an informed decision while keeping your door in the best condition.

⚠ **IMPORTANT: DARK STAINS, INCLUDING BLACK AND DEEP OPAQUE COLORS, MAY VOID THE WARRANTY DUE TO EXCESSIVE HEAT AND UV ABSORPTION, WHICH CAN CAUSE WARPING AND CRACKING.**

Key Considerations

- Avoid Dark Colors: Dark stains absorb heat, leading to wood expansion, contraction, and potential damage.
- Maintain Natural Grain: Extremely dark stains can hide the wood's natural beauty.
- Sun Exposure: Doors in direct sunlight require careful stain selection to prevent heat damage.
- Maintenance: Darker stains may need more frequent upkeep compared to lighter shades.
- Aesthetic Fit: Choose a stain that complements your home's exterior and design.
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Stain Color Information

- We do not provide specific stain color recommendations.
- The stain colors shown on our website are customer-applied and not endorsed by our company.
- Availability of stain colors varies by location.

For best results, consider your home's sun exposure, shade coverage, and climate when selecting a stain.

Prep Your Wood Door

Proper staining and finishing protect your wood door from moisture and UV damage while enhancing its natural beauty. Our doors are shipped unfinished and require preparation before staining.

Step 1: Inspect the Door

Check for minor imperfections like small dings or scratches from handling, shipping, or storage. These are normal and easily fixed.

To repair dents, apply a few drops of water, cover with a damp cloth, and press with a hot iron, moving gently until the wood fibers expand back into place.

Step 2: Sand the Door

Remove debris and smooth the surface with 220-grit sandpaper, ensuring a uniform texture. Rough areas absorb more stain, so achieving consistency is key. Lightly sand any steamed-out imperfections for an even finish.

Step 3: Clean the Door

Remove all dust using compressed air or a lint-free cloth. Any remaining dust can cause an uneven stain finish.

Step 4: Prepare the Glass

Leave protective plastic on the glass and secure edges with painter's tape to prevent stains from seeping in. When removing stickers or film, avoid razor blades to prevent scratches. - **Your door is now ready for staining!**

Regarding Stain Colors

Please note that we do not provide specific information on the stain colors featured on the doors displayed on our site. Most of these doors were stained by customers, not by us, so we may not have exact details on the colors used.

STAIN COLOR CONSIDERATIONS

Natural – A clear or natural stain does not compensate for color variations in the wood. It may also enhance the natural tones and wood fibers in Teak Wood and reddish tones in Honduran Mahogany.

Light Brown – A great choice with good light reflectivity. It helps prevent excessive heat and UV absorption compared to darker stains.

Medium Brown – Another good option with similar benefits to light brown, offering warmth while reducing heat retention.

Walnut – A solid choice that balances aesthetics and functionality, helping minimize heat absorption.It may enhance the natural wood fibers in White Mahogany Doors.

Dark Oak – This can be used, but caution is advised for homes with significant direct sunlight exposure.

Cherry – This stain enhances the red tones naturally found in Honduran Mahogany. Be cautious if your home gets too much direct sunlight, which may intensify the effect.

Black, Jacobean, and Other Dark Stains – Strongly discouraged, as they can cause excessive heat absorption, leading to wood expansion and contraction. This can result in warping and cracking, which will void the warranty.

If you have any questions about stain choices, we recommend consulting a professional to ensure the best results for your door.

Staining & Finishing

TO EFFECTIVELY SEAL IN THE STAIN, APPLY AT LEAST FOUR COATS OF FINISH ON ALL SIX SIDES, INCLUDING BOREHOLES, MORTISE POCKETS, AND ANY TRIMMED AREAS. FOR EXTERIOR DOORS, WE RECOMMEND USING SPAR VARNISH, WHICH IS SPECIFICALLY FORMULATED TO WITHSTAND OUTDOOR CONDITIONS.

Unlike regular varnish and polyurethane based, **Spar varnish** is more elastic, allowing it to expand and contract with temperature and humidity changes—reducing the risk of cracking.

MANY HIGH-QUALITY SPAR VARNISHES ALSO CONTAIN UV INHIBITORS, WHICH HELP PROTECT THE WOOD FROM SUNLIGHT DAMAGE.

THE BEST-PERFORMING FINISHES FOR EXTERIOR USE COME FROM THE MARINE INDUSTRY, WHERE SPAR VARNISH WAS ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED TO ENDURE HARSH MARITIME ENVIRONMENTS.

Once cured, this finish forms a durable, water-resistant, and UV-protective barrier that safeguards your door against the elements.

For non-gloss finishes, use high-gloss for build coats, then finish with 1–2 coats of satin or matte. This brings out richness and color depth.

Application Process

First Coat - Apply a very light first coat using either an airless sprayer or a gravity-fed HVLP (High Volume Low Pressure) gun with an air compressor. These applicators provide a fine, even spray that effectively seals the wood.

Scuffing (After First Coat) - Once the first coat has dried (typically 15–30 minutes), lightly scuff the entire surface with a 180-grit sanding sponge. This removes raised wood fibers and ensures a smooth finish. This step is critical for a high-quality result.

Final Seal - After scuffing, wipe the door down with a clean, dry rag to remove dust. Apply a medium to heavy final coat evenly across the door.

Allow the finish to dry thoroughly—curing takes over 24 hours, with continued hardening over the next few days or weeks. Avoid heavy use or exposure to harsh conditions for at least two weeks to allow the material to cure completely.

Application Conditions

• Best results are achieved when the substrate, air, and varnish temperatures are between 50-90°F and the the relative humidity is less than 85%.

• Do not attempt to apply varnish when the air, substrate or varnish is below 40°F or above 105°F.

• If possible, avoid applying or curing the material in direct Sunlight to ensure adequate working time.

• Do not apply during times of high humidity, when dew, fog or precipitation may affect the drying or cured finish of Halcyon.

Long-Term Protection

When properly applied in a climate-controlled environment, this finish will protect your door against extreme weather for years to come. The effort is well worth it—a solid wood entry door, finished correctly, brings warmth, elegance, and lasting beauty to your home.

CUSTOM SOLID WOOD DOORS

What Is Varnish?

Varnish is a transparent wood finish made from a blend of oil, resin, and solvent. Unlike general wood finishes, true varnish forms a protective, glossy or matte film that both enhances the wood grain and shields it from moisture, UV rays, and wear. - Used on everything from furniture and floors to boats and cabinetry, varnish is ideal for protecting both indoor and outdoor wood.

Why Use Varnish?

- Protects against moisture, scratches, and rot
- Enhances wood grain and natural color
- UV inhibitors in outdoor formulas prevent sun damage and fading
- Available in various sheens: high-gloss, satin, and matte

Types of Varnish

The combination of oil, resin, and solvent varies by product, affecting flexibility, finish, and durability.

C**ommon Types:**

- Natural Resin Varnish (e.g., tung oil): warm, rich tone; great for traditional finishes
- Alkyd Varnish: durable and commonly used indoors
- Oil-Modified Polyurethane: versatile and often used for floors and furniture

For outdoor use, always choose a product with UV protection, especially in sunny climates or near saltwater. Marine-grade varnishes are ideal for boats and patio furniture because they’re built to withstand the elements.

Varnish Comparisons

Regular Varnish vs. Spar Varnish vs. Spar Urethane

Type	Best For	Key Traits
Regular Varnish	Indoors	Less UV resistance, less flexible
Spar Varnish	Boats, exteriors,	Contains tung oil, flexible, UV protection
Spar Urethane	Modern exterior use / Doors / Gates, Deck	Contains tung oil, flexible, UV protection

Varnish vs. Polyurethane

Feature	Varnish	Polyurethane
Composition	Oil + resin	Plastic resin (oil- or water-based)
UV Resistance	Strong (outdoor use)	Weak (mainly indoor)
Color	Warm amber	Clear
Flexibility	Higher	Less flexible
Best Use	Outdoor wood, softwoods	Indoor furniture, floors