

HOW TO STORE, HANDLE, AND FINISH WOOD DOORS

WOOD DOORS AND DOOR UNITS

The following statements are excerpts from the Wood Door Manufacturers Association (WDMA) Industry Standards, 6-97. The highlights pertain to handling, installation and finishing. Doors not handled in accordance with these guidelines will not be considered in any claim for warranty.

Handling

Door units should be shipped standing upright. Do not lift units by the casing as this may cause separation. Units must be kept dry. Do not install prehangs in buildings that have wet, hard coat plaster or cement until they have been properly finished. Do not store prehangs in buildings with excessive moisture content. HVAC systems should be operating and balanced. Avoid excessive exposure to sunlight before finishing, as this may cause discoloration.

Installation

Set an interior unit in the framed opening. Plumb the hinge jamb using shims. A dab of construction adhesive on the shims will keep them in place. Nail through the jamb into the framing stud to anchor the hinge jamb. Square the head jamb to the hinge jamb, shim and nail. Square and plumb the latch jamb, again shimming and nailing through the jamb. Nail the casing around the perimeter. This procedure will maintain the margins around the unit. Interior units should not be set by only nailing through the casing.

On extremely heavy doors, it is recommended that one standard hinge screw on each jamb hinge leaf be replaced with a 2" – 2 1/2" wood screw. These screws passing through the hinge, jamb and into the frame stud, will prevent the door from sagging.

Exterior units should be set in a similar manner. The frame should be set plumb and square, using shims behind the frame, and be nailed through the frame. Nails through the brick moulding should be applied after the frame is secured, plumb and square.

Finishing

Prehangs should not be considered ready to finish when initially received. Remove handling marks, scuffs, raised grain, burnishes and other undesirable blemishes by block sanding all surfaces with a 120, 150 or 180 grit sandpaper.

Doors are highly sensitive to the elements and special care must be taken to ensure their protection. Primers, sealers and stains are inadequate protection by themselves.

Water based primers (latex) should not be used. Water based coatings on unfinished wood may cause veneer splits, highlighted joints, raised grain and swelling.

The entire door, including top and bottom edges, should receive a full coat of an oil based primer (solvent type), followed by at least two finish coats.

Doors that are finished with a stain finish should receive a coat of solvent based sander sealer primer in order to attain a more even stain color. After staining, the door should receive two coats of a transparent finish such as urethane. Stain itself is not an adequate finish because it does not bridge the joints between the stiles, rails and panels.

On severe exposure locations, without adequate roof overhangs or recessed alcoves, it is recommended that a bead of caulk or silicone be applied across the bottom of each panel or glass light, on the exterior surface, to prevent water penetration.

Outswing doors, without overhead cover, must be protected by a flashing cap, or by other effective means.

When exterior surfaces are finished, the coatings should be sufficient to bridge all joints. The coatings should lap all glass lights by at least 1/16". This lap must not be broken by razor edges during cleanup.

Dark color finishes should not be used on doors exposed to prolonged sunlight. The heat buildup may cause warping, veneer checks or separation.

Any claim for manufacturing defects must be filed before installation and finishing.

The use of water based coatings will be "at your own risk".

The door manufacturer, the prehanger and the building material dealer are not responsible for the final appearance of doors finished in the field. It is expected that the painting contractor will make adjustments as needed to achieve the desired result.