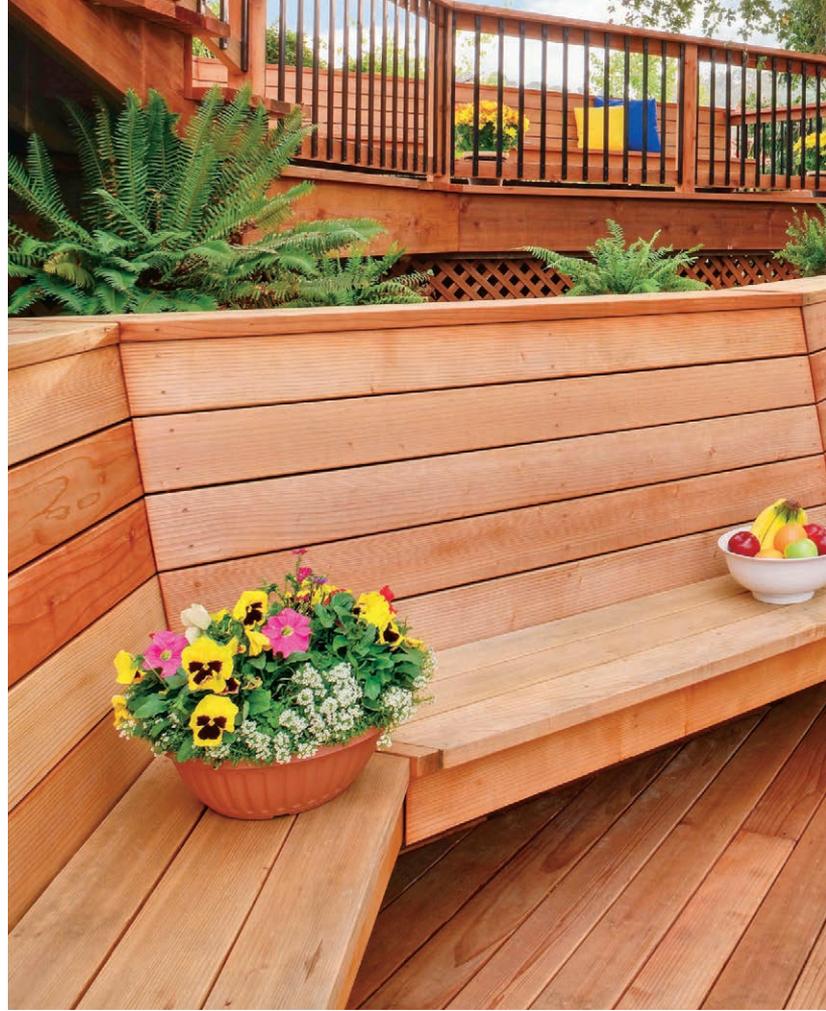


Why Acrylic Coatings are the Best Options for Decks

If your outdoor deck is looking tired, it may be high time to give it a “pick me up” in the form of a new deck coating. There’s no better time to refinish a deck than spring, when you can enjoy the fruits of your labor all summer long.





In years past, many homeowners used oil-based or “alkyd” deck stains, but these products have some major shortcomings. For one, they soon become very brittle and second, they absorb the sun’s harmful UV rays. As a result, oil-based coatings quickly degrade, wear away, and must often need reapplication as often as once a year.

Fortunately, technology has come to the rescue and manufacturers now offer far better options in the form of water-based 100% acrylic deck coatings. These products share none of the shortcomings of oil-based coatings so they not only make a deck look great, but thankfully, they also last much longer.

Debbie Zimmer is a paint and color expert at the Paint Quality Institute, which does extensive testing on deck coatings. She explains why 100% acrylic coatings perform so much better than oil-based products:

“Unlike oil-based deck coatings, water-based 100% acrylic coatings form a very flexible protective film that is also highly resistant to UV rays. So, acrylics are really the perfect ‘antidote’ for what ails oil-based deck products,” she says.

“The proof is easy to see on the hundreds of wood test decks we have at our outdoor exposure locations,” she says. “Time after time, the acrylic coatings outperform oil-based coatings, and that’s true on every type of wood, from redwood, cedar and pine, to pressure-treated wood and wood composite deck materials.”

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Acrylic Coatings for Decks

If you like the idea of stretching out the staining cycle on your outdoor deck, then a water-based 100% acrylic coating is the way to go. You can even choose from three popular options, each one offering some specific advantages:

Semi-transparent acrylic stains are lightly pigmented coatings that permit you to either maintain or change the color of your wood or composite without hiding its grain or texture. These coatings are water repellent and contain special ingredients to keep mildew in check. Semi-transparent coatings typically last about 18 months.

Solid color acrylic stains — sometimes referred to as opaque stains — have more pigment than semi-transparent products, so their color tends to obscure the grain of the wood. At the same time, that added pigment provides extra UV protection and better durability. Solid color stains last longer, typically 3 to 5 years.

Wood restoration acrylic coatings are the product of choice for severely weathered and some habitually neglected decks. These are basically super thick acrylic coatings that actually fill in and conceal cracks and crevices up to ¼-inch deep. Plus, these coatings create a slip resistant finish that resists future cracking and peeling. As with the other acrylic products, these come in a wide range of

attractive colors and offer some mildew protection as well.

“All of these acrylic coatings have excellent adhesion to wood decks and other surfaces, which is another reason they last so long,” says Zimmer. “And unlike oil-based or alkyd coatings, which require solvents for cleanup, you can clean up after applying water-based acrylics with plain soap and water.”

So unless your idea of a good time is applying another coat of stain, think about using a longer-lasting 100% acrylic coating when your wood deck starts sending out distress signals. You’ll be doing your deck and yourself a big favor!

About the PAINT QUALITY INSTITUTESM
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