

## Technical Tip

# Applying Interior Finishes

Like applying a finish to any wood surface the first step in an interior application is to make sure the surface is clean. If the home is completed, pressure washing is probably not an option. However there are other methods of surface cleaning that can be used. A combination of sanding with an [Osborn Brush](#) or surface conditioning disk and washing usually works well. The Osborn Brush or conditioning disk will remove most of the mill glaze and surface defects and, after vacuuming up any sawdust, washing with a one cup per gallon [Log Wash](#) solution will remove the dirt as well as any remaining loose wood particles. A wipe down with a wet rag or sponge and clean water will help wash away any Log Wash residue.

Once the wood is dry, the first coat of finish can be applied. If you want to add some color, one of our [Lifeline Interior stains](#) is the best choice. Unlike our exterior products, the number of coats you apply is not critical but adding UV Boost to the first coat will help prevent fading or darkening and the subsequent "picture frame effect." If after one coat you are satisfied with the color, you don't have to apply another coat of stain. On the other hand, if you only want a clear finish you can start off with a coat of [Prelude](#) or Lifeline Interior Clear with UV Boost (Prelude already has UV Boost in it).

It's at this point that most mistakes are made. Like all water-based products, our interior finishes may raise the grain of bare wood. However, do not attempt to sand either Lifeline Interior or Prelude since you can end up removing what you just applied. This can result in a blotchy final appearance. If you want a very smooth surface, the best time to sand is after you have applied the first or second coat of [Acrylic Gloss or Satin](#). The polymers in our Acrylic products are fairly hard which makes the surface easier to smooth. A light sanding with very fine sandpaper is all that is needed, just enough to remove the high spots and imperfections in the film. Once the surface is smooth, multiple coats of Acrylic Gloss or Satin may be applied without sanding between coats.

For those who want a clear coat with more depth or scuff resistance, [Sure Shine](#) can be substituted for Acrylic Gloss or Satin. It is a high solids water-based urethane that can be used on walls and cabinets as well as floors. However since Sure Shine is not very breathable, it should only be applied to dry wood with a moisture content of less than 20%. Since Sure Shine is a urethane it is more subject to air entrapment and should be applied with smooth, even strokes without vigorous back-brushing.



Door, stairs and railings finished with Sure Shine