

Step 1: Preparation

All wood projects require preparation sanding. *If you skip this critical step, your finish may fail.*

Preparation for Raw Wood or Raw Wood Projects That Are to be Stained

See our video: [How to Prep Sand Raw Wood](#)

1. Sanding Schedule: 120-grit followed by 150- or 220-grit sandpaper.
2. Remove dust with a vacuum, compressed air, an oil-free tack cloth or a water-dampened rag.
3. Let dry completely before applying GF product.
4. Do not over-sand with fine-grit sandpapers; this will close and seal the wood grain, preventing ideal color absorption.
5. Do NOT use steel wool with water-based finishes; the particles will get trapped in the finish and rust.

Preparation for Projects with an Existing Finish (Sealed Surface)

1. Completely remove existing finish prior to use.
2. Test entire finishing process over raw wood for adhesion before getting started. Contaminants from an existing finish can seep into the wood and impact results.

Step 2: How To Apply General Finishes Enduro-Var

How to Apply General Finishes Enduro-Var Water Based Topcoat

General Finishes Enduro-Var is an oil-modified water-based topcoat and ONLY ADHERES WELL OVER WATER-BASED STAINS, DYES AND RAW WOOD. It will adhere over an oil-based stain ONLY IF the stain is completely dry (minimum 4 days dry time). Use Enduro-Var over any other surfaces at your own risk.

1. Stir topcoat to reincorporate solids that have settled to the bottom of the can before and throughout the application process.
2. Enduro-Var has a slight pink cast to the color in the can. This is normal.
3. If desired, thin with up to 15% distilled water or [General Finishes Extender](#). Start by adding 5% in increments until you reach the desired consistency. GF Extender will improve flow and leveling and increase open time, which is helpful in dry climates.
4. Apply 3 coats. More coats will not improve durability.

- **Hand application:** Apply a liberal amount of product using a synthetic bristle brush, foam brush, pad applicator, or roller. Avoid pressure and back brushing. Wipe along the wood grain using smooth, even strokes with light lap marks.
 - **Spray application:** Before spraying, strain topcoat through a fine-mesh filter. Spray wet films at 3-5-mil thickness. HVLP: 1.1mm-1.3mm spray tip, medium air cap. Verify tip sizes with your equipment supplier. [See our general guide for spray tip sizes](#). Keep your gun at a 90° angle, 6-8" from the surface. On large, flat areas, use wet, even patterns 6-8" wide. For narrow surfaces, reduce the fan pattern to 2-3" wide to reduce overspray. Overlap each pass 25% to conceal lines. Wear a full filter respirator (NIOSH/MSHA-approved) and work in a ventilated space. [Visit this FAQ for more information on spraying techniques](#).
5. **Dry 4+ hours** between coats in ideal conditions: 70°F/20°C; 50-70% humidity. You can tell if a water-based finish is dry if it forms a powder when lightly sanded with a fine-grade (220-320) foam sanding pad. If in doubt, wait longer. **Increase dry time if:**
- Humidity is over 80%
 - 3+ coats are applied
 - Thick coats are applied
 - Applying over products from other brands
 - Layering General Finishes water and oil based products:
 - Water over oil: Let oil-based products dry 72+hr before applying water-based products
 - Oil over water: Let water-based products dry 24+hr before applying oil based products
 - To speed up drying in humid conditions add General Finishes Accelerator and work in a space with good ventilation and air movement. If you decide to re-coat before the recommended time, test dryness.
6. Finish sand between coats with a fine-grade (220-320) foam sanding pad to improve smoothness and adhesion.
7. Remove dust with a vacuum, compressed air, an oil-free tack cloth or a water-dampened rag.

Cure Time

Water-based finishes cure and harden for full use after 21 days in ideal conditions. Avoid placing heavy objects on surfaces that have not cured completely. Treat gently, and do not clean with commercial products during

the curing period.

Enduro-Var Ambers

General Finishes Enduro-Var is water-based, but it imparts a warm amber tone and brings out grain definition as a traditional solvent urethane would on exotic woods such as Paduk, Cocobolo, and Bubinga.

Tinting & Toning Enduro-Var

Add up to 5% **General Finishes Dye Stain** or **General Finishes Ready-to-Match Stain** to enhance color tone. General Finishes Amber Dye Stain or General Finishes Vintage Cherry Dye Stain work well, or a 50:50 combination of both. Apply 2 coats of the tinted topcoat for a deeper, more vibrant color.

High-Use Surfaces

General Finishes High Performance Topcoat, **General Finishes Enduro Clear Poly** and **General Finishes Arm-R-Seal Topcoat** are recommended on high-use surfaces such as kitchen tabletops, kitchen cabinets or bath vanities instead of Enduro-Var because they have greater water and chemical resistance.

WARNING: Incompatible Products

- All oil based products. Enduro-Var ONLY ADHERES WELL OVER WATER-BASED STAINS, DYE STAINS, and RAW WOOD. It will adhere to an oil-based stain ONLY IF the stain is completely dry (minimum 4 days dry time). Use Enduro-Var over any other surfaces at your own risk.
- Shellac
- Linseed Oils
- Danish Oils

Cleanup of Water Based Products

Application tools and materials containing water-based products can be cleaned with soap and water or GF Brush & Gun Cleaner immediately after use.

Product Spills

Spills may be able to be removed from fabric and carpet if cleaned immediately with soap and water.

Storage of Water Based Products

Life of Product

Water-based products do not last forever, even when unopened. General Finishes products are best used within 1 year of the manufacture date listed on the bottom of the can. The life of the product may be extended with proper care and storage.

Settling

Gravity can cause some solids to settle on the bottom of the can and slight separation on the top. This is normal. If working with older paint, use paint mixing attachment on a drill. If the solids dissolve and clumps smooth out after mixing from the bottom, the product is in good condition for use.

Storage Tips

See video tutorial: [Tips on Storing Leftover Finishes](#)

Water-based finishes crystalize and form a skin due to evaporation when the air-tight seal on a can is broken at first use. The following best practices will increase the life of your product:

1. Pry open sealed lids with a paint can opener by hooking under the lid's rolled edge. The use of a screwdriver can disfigure the rim and lid, impairing a complete seal.
2. Keep lid closed while working. Pour what you will use into a bowl, paper cup, or plate, and close can lid as you work.
3. Clean the chime of the can thoroughly with a paper towel before closing to create a complete seal. Paint in the chime can be minimized by using a pouring lid, such as Fitsall. Avoid wiping used brushes on the lid.
4. Pound the lid in place using a rubber mallet to avoid distorting the chime or lid. Dents in the lid from direct contact with a hammer can impair a complete seal. Alternatively, place a flat piece of wood over can lid and firmly pound shut.
5. Store in moderate temperatures. Avoid temperatures below 50°F/10°C or above 80°F/26°C. Keep from freezing. Frozen and heat-damaged product cannot be revitalized. Temperature-controlled spaces, such as a basement, are ideal for storage. Do not store product in an attic, garage, in direct sunlight, or next to something warm like a water heater or furnace.
6. Store can upside down to create a liquid seal, minimize evaporation and reduce the chance of crystallization. Decant remaining product from the can before stirring.
7. Decant leftovers to a smaller container when the finish is almost used up. Alternative storage containers for water-based products are plastic

FIFO bottles or glass bottles. Do not fill metal-lidded containers completely to prevent them from rusting.

The following water-based product mixtures can be stored:

1. Product thinned with up to 15% **General Finishes Extender** or **General Finishes Accelerator** can be stored, with the exception of thinned **General Finishes Water Based Wood Stain**.
2. Mixtures involving colors & sheens within the same product line, such as:
 - High Performance Satin + High Performance Gloss
 - Snow White Milk Paint + Coastal Blue Milk Paint
 - Amber Dye Stain + Merlot Dye Stain

The following product mixtures should NOT be stored:

- Any water based product with thinned tap water; water often contains bacteria that will adversely affect stored paint.
- Topcoat + Stain or Paint
- Milk Paint + Chalk Style Paint
- Water Based Wood Stain + Dye Stain

Furniture Care and Maintenance

Cure First

You have just finished applying a fine furniture finish. Treat gently until the paint or topcoat have fully cured. Allow 21 days for a water-based finish to cure and 30 days for an oil-based finish to cure before cleaning.

Regular Cleaning and Maintenance

- Remove dust with a water-dampened cloth. Dust can build up over time and may scratch or dull finishes if not removed regularly.
- Remove fingerprints, cooking fumes and smoking residue with mild soap and water. These contaminants will not harm the finish, but they accumulate on surfaces and dull the original luster.
- As with all fine furniture finishes, avoid using furniture polish, cleaners or dusting sprays that contain silicone, alcohol, ammonia and anything acidic. Exception: We have successfully cleaned with Clorox wipes.
- Clean up water, alcohol and food spills in a timely manner and use placemats & coasters to protect the finish.

- Future finishes or touch-ups may not adhere properly or perform as desired over a contaminated surface. Some contaminants, such as silicone, seep through finish into the wood and often cannot be removed.
- Avoid excessive exposure to direct sunlight, high temperatures or high humidity. These can damage furniture and finishes.

Warnings and Warranties

Compatibility: Do not use water-based products with Linseed Oils or Danish Oils.

Limited Warranty

General Finishes products must be tested to your complete satisfaction before using, including compatibility with other manufacturers products. General Finishes will be responsible only for the cost of our products and will not be responsible for any costs such as labor, damage, or replacement costs.

Contamination and Compatibility

Our finishes are engineered as a system and are compatible with each other. General Finishes cannot guarantee an ideal refinish when applying our products on top of or combined with another company's products or over surfaces that have been in contact with waxes, polishes or sprays containing contaminants such as silicone. Test for adherence and aesthetics before beginning.

Danger: Contents are COMBUSTIBLE. Keep away from heat and open flame. Application materials or other waste soaked with this product may spontaneously catch fire if improperly discarded. Immediately after use, place rags, steel wool or waste in a sealed, water-filled, metal container. Dispose of in accordance with local fire regulations.

CAUTION: Contains ALIPHATIC HYDROCARBONS. VAPOR HARMFUL. Use only with adequate ventilation. DELAYED EFFECTS FROM LONG-TERM OVEREXPOSURE. Contains solvents which can cause permanent brain and nervous system damage. Intentional misuse by deliberately concentrating & inhaling the contents can be harmful or fatal.

Warning

If you scrape, sand, or remove old paint, you may release lead dust. LEAD IS TOXIC. EXPOSURE TO LEAD DUST CAN CAUSE SERIOUS ILLNESS, SUCH AS BRAIN DAMAGE, ESPECIALLY IN CHILDREN. PREGNANT

WOMEN SHOULD ALSO AVOID EXPOSURE. Wear a NIOSH-approved respirator to control lead exposure. Clean up carefully with a HEPA vacuum and a wet mop. Before you start, find out how to protect yourself and your family by contacting the National Lead Information Hotline at 1-800-424-LEAD or log onto www.epa.gov/lead.

Do not swallow; first aid: drink water to dilute product. May cause eye and skin irritation; first aid: flush eyes thoroughly with water.

FIRST AID: In case of eye contact, flush thoroughly with large amounts of water for 15 minutes and get medical attention. For skin contact, wash thoroughly with soap and water. In case of respiratory difficulty, provide fresh air and call physician. If swallowed, do not induce vomiting. Get medical attention immediately.

Warning

This product contains a chemical known to the State Of California to cause cancer and birth defects. Do not swallow; first aid: drink water to dilute product. May cause eye or skin irritation; first aid: flush eyes thoroughly with water.