

Technical Bulletin

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Topic: Metallic Finishes Tips and Tricks

Metallic finishes are hot right now. Designers are looking to these finishes to add drama and visual variation to the wall surface. Master Wall® has several options for the designer and applicator to consider, but some are more appropriate than others when planning the application.



Texture Concerns

Standard finishes and colors always came with the saying "Texture is color, color is texture", meaning that as the finish becomes bolder or smoother the color will look slightly different. With metallic finishes the texture usually starts with our Fine Sand 1.0 and only gets finer. The color looks the same but any surface variations become more pronounced with finer finishes meaning greater care is required to help avoid dips as even the smallest variation can show up depending upon the sun's orientation.

The reality is, if the surface is more than ten feet away it is hard to tell a textured finish from a fine one. So it is to the designer's benefit to have some texture in the surface to minimize the effects of planar surface variations.

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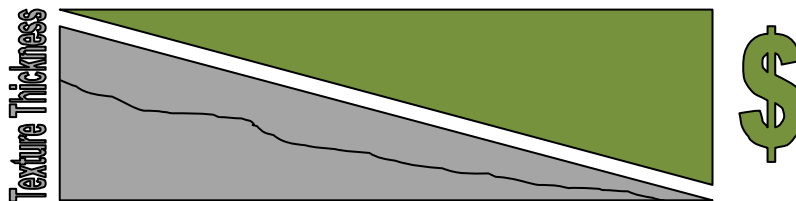
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Surface Considerations

The finer the finish, the finer the subsurface needs to be. This can include double or triple base coats, leveling coats and diagonal rasping or sanding techniques. When the finish is expected to look like a metal panel, the techniques and skill needed is much the same as a custom auto body shop, and one way or another you are going to need to break up the panels.



The finer the texture, the greater the overall costs

Visual Panelization

As the finish becomes finer it becomes more important to visually break the panels with grooves. Why? First, you are approaching the limitations of the wall and the mechanic performing the work. Buildings are not that exact. Therefore, the walls need to be broken into smaller panels so they can accurately be worked smooth. In the same manner that a metal panel will oil can or vary, metallic finishes will change slightly in plane and this may be visually objectionable.



Example of oil canning a.k.a. buckling or surface variation on a metal building



Walls are never straight. While we suggest a maximum of 5' x 5' panels, for very smooth applications panels should be much smaller. This will help hide surface and wall variations the same way it would in real metal panels.

Wall Panel with Metallic Cote

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Practical Recommendations

For larger areas where you want the metallic look use either a base of Fine Sand 1.0 with a coating of Metallic Cote or use our MetalTex Fine Sand with the metallic coating infused into the product.

For smaller pieces our MetalTex Aggrelime can be used, but keep the areas small such as a quoin or trim.

If you are going for a metal panel look without the appearance of oil canning, you will want to visually divide the panels into very small panels, no larger than 3'x3'. These panels will need 2-3 coats of base coat, at least two leveling coats of our Savannah finish using the cross-sanding technique described in our bulletin and a professional spray out of 1-2 coats of Metallic Cote.



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