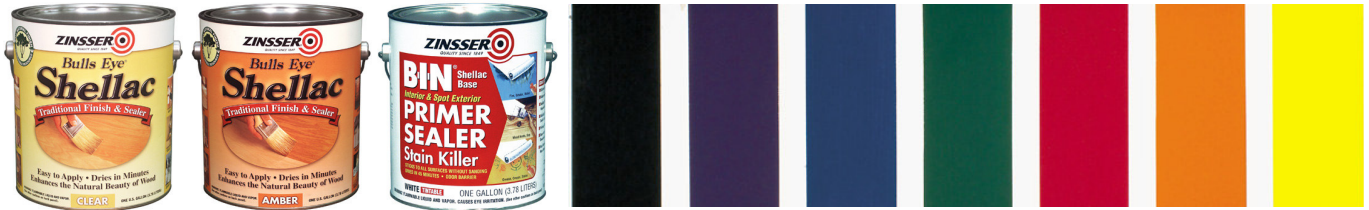




DECORATING WITH TINTED SHELLAC

Information Bulletin

Many people are unaware of the decorating options – staining, pickling, deep-color priming and even painting – that are possible with tinted shellac. An infinite palette of colors, shades and tones can be obtained by mixing Clear and Amber Shellac, tinting Bulls Eye Shellac with dyes and universal colorants or by mixing B-I-N® Primer-Sealer with tinted shellac.



Bulls Eye® Shellac is an alcohol-based solution of pure lac - a natural resin secreted by tiny insects on certain trees, mainly in India. It is available in clear and amber tones.

B-I-N® Primer-Sealer is a white-pigmented shellac used for both general and special-purpose interior priming and sealing. B-I-N has the same fast-drying and high-adhesion properties of Bulls Eye Shellac.

NOTE: Unless you intend to tint all the contents of the original can, pour off the quantity of shellac you wish to tint into a separate jar or other resealable container. After mixing the tint or colorant into the shellac always brush some of it out on a piece of scrap material.

Mixing Clear and Amber Shellac



Woodworkers and floor finishers often mix Clear Shellac with Amber Shellac to obtain a color that more closely matches an existing shellacked finish. This is often done in the case of new flooring installed in a home that already has existing

shellacked flooring. Add small quantities of Amber to Clear or Clear to Amber. Stir thoroughly after each addition. Brush out the mixture on a piece of scrap material and, when it dries, compare it to the existing shellacked surface.

NOTE: In some cases an existing older shellac finish will be darker than Amber Shellac. In the early 20th century much of the shellac applied by contractors was a darker, less expensive grade. While it may be possible to match darker colors by adding small amounts of colorant or dye to amber shellac, a more accurate and authentic approach involves using a darker grade of shellac such as garnet or seedlac. These are available in dry form from specialty dealers (Woodcraft Supply, Rockler, Inc., Mohawk Finishes, Homestead Finishing Products, etc.) and can be easily mixed with alcohol to any desired consistency. The freshly mixed garnet or seedlac can be used as is (after straining through cheesecloth) or mixed with Clear or Amber Shellac.

Stains and Dyes

Shellac can be colored with alcohol-base stains or aniline dyes. These are powerful colorants – just a little bit will give an intense hue to the shellac. Note that Amber Shellac has a pronounced orange tone that may affect the appearance of the finish after dye or colorant has been added. For example, adding black colorant to Amber Shellac produces a very dark green/blue rather than a pure black color. Use only alcohol-base stains or dyes – oil-base and water-base stains and dyes are not compatible with shellac.



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Pre-Mixed Stains and Dyes – These are alcohol-based; certain types and brands are highly concentrated. Add a few drops at a time to the shellac and stir thoroughly until the desired color is achieved.

Powdered Stains and Dyes – Perhaps the most common of these is aniline. Add dye powder in ¼ teaspoon increments and stir or shake thoroughly after each addition of powder. When the desired color is achieved, cover container and let stand for 30 minutes to ensure that all of the dye has dissolved and shake again. Always let container rest for 10 to 15 minutes after shaking to allow air bubbles to dissipate.






Universal Colorants

Shellac can be tinted to any dark color using universal colorants only. These glycol-base colorants are compatible with oil-base, water-base and alcohol-base coatings and are used to custom-tint paint; they also can be purchased in small tubes or bottles in many hardware and paint stores as well as specialty retailers and woodworking suppliers. Add up to 6 oz. colorant per gallon (1½ oz. per quart; ¾ oz. per pint). Shake well to disperse colorant thoroughly.

For best results use a mechanical shaker. Note that certain colorants may have difficulty dispersing in shellac. Always test for compatibility before tinting contents of entire container. Mix a small amount of colorant with a few ounces of shellac in a lidded jar and shake well for two minutes. Brush out mixture on a light colored piece of scrap material. If the colorant clumps and separates it may not be compatible. Certain colorants (phthalo blue, phthalo green) are vivid but somewhat transparent. To achieve a darker, better hiding color, substitute black for ¼ of the colorant formula (i.e., 5 oz. blue + 1 oz. black for 1 gallon; 1¼ oz. blue + ¼ oz. black for 1 quart; ½ oz. blue + ¼ oz. black for 1 pint).

Mixing Tinted Shellac with B-I-N® Primer-Sealer

A broad range of lighter, better-hiding colors can be achieved by adding small amounts of B-I-N into the

	1 Gal. Shellac + 6 oz. colorant
	9 parts Shellac + 1 part B-I-N
	7 parts Shellac + 3 parts B-I-N
	5 parts Shellac + 5 parts B-I-N
	1 part Shellac + 9 parts B-I-N

tinted shellac. The color and degree of hide will be determined by the quantity of B-I-N added to the colored shellac, and as the proportion of B-I-N to shellac increases, so does the ability of the mixture to hide other colors. However, this is at the expense of darker colors. The color strengths shown on the left can be achieved using the proportions of B-I-N and Bulls Eye Shellac indicated. The shellac was tinted with 6 oz. of a midnight blue formula colorant. Note: it takes a very small amount of B-I-N to lighten the color of the tinted shellac.

Working with Tinted or Colored Shellac

White-pigmented or color-tinted shellac has four primary decorating applications:

- ◆ Pickling stain for oak and other open-pored woods
- ◆ Wiping stain for open and close-pored woods
- ◆ Ultra deep-tint primer for any interior surface
- ◆ Colored finish for wood, metal, glass, etc.



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Pickling Stain

White-pigmented B-I-N is an excellent pickling stain for open-pored wood such as oak and has several advantages over ordinary thinned paints and pickling stains: it dries much faster, it seals the surface and it does not yellow over time. The effectiveness of this technique relies on the addition of ammonia. Ammonia retards the drying of the shellac, giving plenty of time to apply it and then wipe it off without leaving lap marks. The directions below will show you how to create and apply white and colored pickling stains.

White Pickling Stain – Add 2 parts clear household ammonia to 5 parts B-I-N and mix well. After adding the ammonia test-apply on a piece of scrap material to ensure that the stain has adequate open time.

Colored Pickling Stain – Tint Clear or Amber Shellac to the desired color. Add small quantities of the tinted shellac to the white pickling stain and stir well. Test-apply to scrap material to determine if the desired shade or tone is obtained. If a darker pickling stain is desired, add ammonia to the colored shellac in the proportions indicated above. Brush the stain liberally onto the surfaces of the wood and work it into the pores and open grain. Confine the application to an area of the surface that has a definite beginning point and a finishing point. After brushing on the stain wipe it off immediately in the direction of the grain. Wipe off any pickling stain that remains in grooves or crevices unless you want it there for contrast. When you are finished applying the stain/sealer, let it dry for at least 1 hour. For best results topcoat with an acrylic polyurethane finish.

Wiping Stain

Tinted shellac is a creative and colorful alternative to ordinary wood stains. Unlike ordinary stain, tinted shellac not only colors the wood but seals it as well. Add stain or colorant to 3-lb. Clear or Amber Shellac until the desired shade or tone is achieved. Then add 2 parts clear household ammonia to 5 parts tinted shellac and mix well. After adding the ammonia test-apply the colored shellac on a piece of scrap material to ensure color consistency and open time.

Sand the surface of the wood as smooth as possible and use a vacuum to remove dust from the pores. Brush the shellac onto the surface of the wood and then wipe off in the direction of the grain with a rag dampened in alcohol. Move quickly and methodically. When finished let the stain dry for at least 1 hour. For best results topcoat with an acrylic polyurethane finish.

NOTE: Do NOT use ammonia to prolong the dry time of shellac for any other application! It is intended only for use with tinted or pigmented shellac that is being applied as a wiping or pickling stain.

Ultra Deep-Tint Base Primer

Deep tinted shellac is an excellent fast-dry primer for dark and ultra-dark interior colors, which often exhibit very poor hide because they contain far more coloring material than hiding pigment. As the photograph below demonstrates, two coats of ultra-deep color paint applied to a white surface still cannot give acceptable hide. A third and, perhaps, even fourth coat may be necessary.

However, by using a combination of Clear Shellac, universal colorant and B-I-N you can overcome this problem quickly and easily. Start by adding 6 oz. of the desired color formula to one gallon of Clear Shellac (1½ oz. per quart; ¾ oz. per pint). Do this in a container that is larger than one gallon, such as a two-gallon or three-gallon pail. Mix vigorously for 3 to 5 minutes to incorporate the colorant into the shellac. Add 5 fl. oz of B-I-N colorant and mix for an addition minute or so. By adding a little bit of B-I-N to the tinted shellac you will achieve much better hide. Although the color will be lighter, it will still offer considerable hiding power for the dark topcoat paint.



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Apply deep tinted shellac as you would any other paint primer: use a quality brush and a roller with a $\frac{3}{8}$ " nap. When brushing, move quickly. When rolling on vertical surfaces start at the bottom and roll upward to prevent splattering. For the best results, apply a second coat 2 hours after the first coat has dried.

Colored Finish for Trim and Crafts

For a quick and easy change of color over interior trim, woodwork, craft item, etc. consider using tinted shellac as a colored finish. Apply the shellac as you would any paint but be mindful that it dries very quickly, so plan your work to include a definite starting point and a definite finishing point. Move quickly when brushing, do not over-brush or concern yourself with missed spots: these can be touched up after the first coat dries. Colored shellac also makes a great fast-drying paint for hobby and craft items, furniture, toys, statuary etc.

Using Shellac for Metallic Finishes

Shellac lends itself nicely to the creation of specialized decorative metallic effects. Tinted shellac can be used in place of the traditional red bole that is painted on the surface before applying gold leaf. Simply tint Clear Shellac to a deep Chinese red color and apply two coats.

Metallic Finish – Add up to 2 oz. of any metallic powder to a pint of Clear Shellac and shake well to disperse the powdered leaf. This unique, fast-drying metallic paint can be used on almost any interior surface or object and is great for any decorating or faux finishing project.

For more information on shellac write to us or ask your Zinsser dealer for a copy of *The Story of Shellac*. On the Internet you can also find out more about shellac and how it is used at www.zinsser.com.

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