

Polyurethane Over Lacquer?

Four years ago we had our kitchen cabinets refinished with lacquer. It just isn't holding up the way we expected. Can we apply polyurethane over the lacquer?

We're surprised the lacquer finish lasted as long as it did. Lacquer is not the best nor the most durable finish to use on kitchen cabinets.

Yes, you can apply polyurethane over the old lacquer if you follow a few simple steps to ensure a good bond to the old finish. First, scrub the entire surface to remove any grease or dirt. Ammonia and water seem to work the best, but any cleaner that does not leave a residue will work fine. Follow with a clear water rinse.

To get a good bond, you need to roughen up the old lacquer with 220-grit sandpaper. After sanding, remove the dust from the cabinets with a vacuum or wipe with a tack cloth. To do a decent job of refinishing, take out the drawers, remove all the hardware and doors and lay them flat to apply the polyurethane. Now you can apply the new finish following the label directions. Remember, several thin coats will give better results than one thick coat.

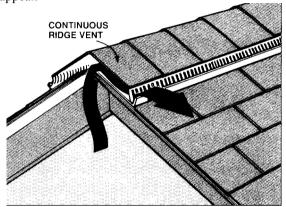
Wind Turbines For Attic Vents?

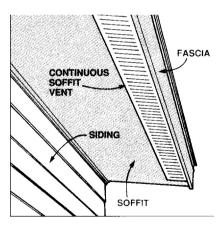
We want to install a wind turbine attic ventilator. Can you tell us the proper location for it?

Wind turbines, those ball-shaped, spinning devices installed on a roof, were designed to draw hot air out of the attic when the wind is blowing. But we do not recommend that you install a wind turbine (which is simply a roof vent with a rotating cap) because:

- 1. It has moving parts. The turbine will eventually fail and need to be replaced or repaired, and a squeaky wind turbine ranks up there with fingernails on a blackboard for irritation level.
- 2. When the wind is blowing, most of the air passing through your attic is actually going in one soffit vent and out the opposite soffit vent, not through the wind turbine.
- 3. When there is very little or no wind, attic ventilation is at its lowest and the wind turbine does not work any better than a regular roof vent, which has no moving parts.

4. In order to obtain the proper balance of soffit and roof venting, you will need several wind turbines spaced along the entire length of the roof ridge as high up the roof as possible. And let's face it, these things do not have the best eve appeal.





You will be much better off if you install a continuous ridge vent with an external baffle along with a continuous soffit vent. You can find continuous ridge and soffit vents at most home centers and lumberyards.

Custom Textured Ceiling?

We added on to our house and we need to match the ceiling texture. The texture looks like a star shape. Do you know how this was done?

Without seeing the actual ceiling, we can't tell you how it was done. Sometimes plasterers and drywall contractors use their artistic talents to come up with some very different ways to texture a ceiling.

You can handle this problem several ways. First, if you

want to match the old texture, hire an experienced plasterer or drywall finisher to do the job. Call around and ask friends who have had remodeling done, building contractors, home centers, or plaster and drywall supply companies if they will recommend a contractor with lots of texture experience. We've found that business people love to talk about their line of work and most will go out of their way to help.

Second, you can hide the old texture by applying a skim coat of drywall compound over the entire ceiling. Or you could scrape off the old texture with a wide blade putty knife. Then you can redo the entire ceiling with a new texture, or you can leave the ceiling smooth (you hope) and paint it. Keep in mind if you give the ceiling a smooth finish, all the bumps, ridges and little flaws in the ceiling will be noticeable. This is one reason textured ceilings are so common today. It's cheaper to texturize than to take the time to get a smooth ceiling.

Shock From A GFCI Outlet?

After reading your article about GFCI outlets in the June Home Tips, we installed a GFCI outlet in our kitchen and plugged our refrigerator into one. When you touch the refrigerator and stove simultaneously you will receive a shock. I thought GFCI's would prevent this.

Your assumption that a GFCI will prevent you from feeling an electrical shock is not quite correct. A GFCI will prevent you from receiving a LETHAL electrical shock.

If this is happening, you have a short in your refrigerator and it should be repaired immediately.

While the National Electrical Code allows you to use a GFCI in place of a grounded outlet, it is not a good idea in

this situation. GFCI's need to be tested periodically to make sure they are working properly. Since the outlet for most refrigerators is hidden behind the refrigerator, it tends to be forgotten and not tested.

In this situation, you need to install an electrical ground to this outlet. Changes in the 1993 NEC code no longer allow you to ground to the nearest metal water pipe since most of the main water service pipes are being replaced with plastic and are no longer good for grounding. You need to run a wire ground to the nearest grounded outlet or to the circuit breaker box.

O&A Source: Handyman Magazine.

If you have a question, change of address, comment or home tip, send your letter to *Home Tips*, Christian Building Inspectors, Inc., 1003 Star Court, Norcross, Georgia 30093. We reserve the right to edit for length.

Quote Of The Month

"MOST PEOPLE ARE ABOUT AS HAPPY AS THEY MAKE UP THEIR MINDS TO BE."

- ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A Tip Of The Hat To:

Carol Malawy
The Real Estate Clearinghouse
Marietta, Georgia



Thank You

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