

APPLYING TOPSIDE FINISHES

What's better than a boat that looks good? The answer is simple, a boat that looks good and has superior protection from the elements all season long. Topside finishes do exactly that; provide your boat a unique look all the while making sure it's protected from the sun's UV rays, rain, wind and most importantly, the sea.

WHICH TOPSIDE FINISH IS BEST FOR YOU?

When it comes to selecting a topside finish, boaters look for a dependable, durable and visually enhancing product. Pettit Marine Paint provides topside finishes that excel in all of these areas and exceed the expectations of even the most particular boater.

EZPoxy is a modern, one-part polyurethane topside and deck enamel that offers brilliant shine and easy brush-ability. Its ultraviolet filters enhance the already superior gloss retention as well as the durability of the polyurethane, providing a lasting gelcoat-like brilliance that's easy to apply.

EZDeck is a super tough, polyurethane, non-skid performance deck finish containing a special grit that produces a slip-resistant finish on all decks and cabin soles. The durable, weather resistant finish is resistant to long term abrasion and abuse. Loaded with ultraviolet filters, this formula will fight against fading providing vibrant color retention for years with no peeling or cracking.

EZEnhancer is a performance additive for compatible Pettit topside coatings and varnishes. The product lineup includes EZPoxy, EZDeck, EZBilge, EZPrime, Captain's Varnish, and Flagship High Build Varnish. Performance benefits, application methods, and addition ratios vary by coating. Follow the current individual product data sheets.

For approved applications, EZEnhancer can improve hardness, durability and scratch resistance, with enhanced gloss retention in compatible gloss finishes. Confirm substrate and existing-coating compatibility before use.

EXPERT TIP

Apply with a roller nap no greater than 3/16 inch. Confirm the selected coating's current instructions.

EXPERT TIP

When using multiple containers of the same color, check batch numbers for consistent color appearance.

PREPPING THE SURFACE:

The success of your project will ultimately depend on your surface preparation. In order to yield optimal results with a finish that turns heads, preparation is key.

SURFACE - BARE FIBERGLASS:

1. Thoroughly prep the entire surface that is to be painted with Pettit's EZPrep 92 to remove all traces of mold release agents and wax. *This must be done regardless of age
2. Sand the gelcoat with 120 grit sandpaper yielding a dull, frosty appearance.
3. Solvent clean with Pettit 120 Brushing Thinner to remove sanding residue.
4. If the surface is rough or imperfections exist, repairs will need to be done first.
5. Fill all nicks and gouges with Pettit's 7050 EZ Fair Epoxy Fairing Compound according to label directions.
6. When the fairing compound has hardened, sand flush with the surface.
7. Solvent clean to remove sanding residue.

8. Apply a coat of Pettit's EZPrime to smooth the surface and create a uniform base.
9. Sand the surface well.
10. Solvent clean to remove sanding residue.
11. Proceed with the first finish coat of EZPoxy or EZDeck.

EXPERT TIP

Apply at least two finish coats over previously painted sound surfaces; bare wood and metals may need additional coats, depending on primer/sealer and condition.

SURFACE - CLEAN, BARE WOOD:

1. Sand the surface smooth with 120 grit sandpaper.
2. Solvent clean to remove sanding residue.
3. Fill all screw heads or small holes with Pettit's 7050 EZ Fair Fairing Compound according to label directions.
4. Sand the compound flush with the surface.
5. Solvent clean with Pettit 120 Brushing Thinner to remove sanding residue.
6. Apply a coat of Pettit's 2018 EZWoodSealer to penetrate and seal the porous grain.
7. Follow with a coat of Pettit's EZ Prime until an evenly smooth base condition is reached.
8. Sand the coat with 120 grit sandpaper.
9. Solvent clean to remove sanding residue.
10. If necessary, repeat steps 7-9 to apply a second coat.
11. Proceed with the first finish coat of EZPoxy or EZDeck.

SURFACE - BARE WOOD THAT HAS BEEN EPOXIED:

1. Thoroughly scrub the surface with an ammonia/water solution.
2. Sand with 120 grit sandpaper.
3. Solvent clean with Pettit 120 Brushing Thinner to remove sanding residue.
4. Follow with a coat of Pettit's EZ Prime until an evenly smooth base condition is reached.
5. Sand the coat with 120 grit sandpaper.
6. Solvent clean to remove sanding residue.
7. If necessary, repeat steps 2-6 to apply a second coat.
8. Proceed with the first finish coat of EZPoxy or EZDeck.

SURFACE - BARE STEEL:

1. Sandblast or grind the surface to a clean, bright finish.
2. Remove blasting residue.
3. Immediately apply one coat of Pettit's 6980 Rustlok.
4. Allow the coat to dry until tacky.
5. If the surface is rough apply one coat of Pettit's 6627 Tie-Coat Primer.
6. Sand the surface smooth with 220 grit sandpaper.
7. Solvent clean with Pettit 120 Brushing Thinner to remove sanding residue.
8. Repeat steps 5-7 until a perfectly smooth, uniform base is reached.
9. Proceed with the first finish coat of EZPoxy or EZDeck.

SURFACE - BARE ALUMINUM BOATS, MASTS & SPARS:

1. Solvent clean the surface until it is free of oil and grease.
2. Remove oxidation and etch the surface with medium grit emery cloth.
3. Remove sanding residue.
4. Apply one or two coats of Pettit's Rustlok 6980.
5. While tacky, apply Pettit's EZPrime over the Rustlok 6980.
6. Sand the coat with 220 grit sandpaper.
7. Remove sanding residue.
8. If necessary, repeat steps 6-8 to apply a second coat.
9. Proceed with the first finish coat of EZPoxy.

SURFACE - PREVIOUSLY PAINTED:

IF PAINT IS IN GOOD, SOUND CONDITION:

1. Scrub the entire surface with Pettit EZPrep 92 and a Scotch-Brite pad.
2. Thoroughly sand smooth with 150 grit sandpaper.
3. Solvent clean or wipe down with a tack rag to remove sanding residue.
4. Proceed with the first finish coat of EZPoxy or EZDeck.

IF PAINT IS OLD OR IN POOR CONDITION:

1. Remove the paint by sanding or using a paint and varnish remover.
2. Proceed with the instructions for the appropriate bare surface system.

CREATING A NON-SKID DECK FINISH

A properly finished deck should provide dependable traction, long-lasting durability, and protection against the demanding conditions of marine use. Pettit offers two non-skid coating solutions designed to meet different application needs.

EZDECK® | POLYURETHANE NON-SKID FINISH

EZDeck is a durable, one-part polyurethane deck enamel formulated with a specialized non-skid aggregate to create a slip-resistant surface. Its weather-resistant finish provides excellent abrasion resistance and long-lasting color retention, making it an ideal choice for boat decks, cabin soles, and other designated walking surfaces.

TUFF COAT® | RUBBERIZED NON-SKID COATING

Tuff Coat is a water-based, rubberized non-skid coating designed to provide durable traction and a textured, comfortable walking surface. Its rubber aggregate creates a resilient finish ideal for boat decks, docks, swim platforms, and other high-traffic marine surfaces where additional traction is desired.

WHICH NON-SKID FINISH SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

EZ Deck	Tuff Coat
Polyurethane non-skid enamel	Water-based rubberized coating
Traditional painted deck appearance	More pronounced rubberized texture
Suitable for decks and cabin soles	Ideal for decks, docks, and other approved surfaces
Built-in non-skid aggregate	Rubber aggregate for added traction

SURFACE PREPARATION AND APPLICATION

Proper surface preparation is essential for both coating systems. Cleaning, sanding, priming, and application requirements will vary depending on the substrate and selected product. Always follow the applicable Pettit EZDeck or Tuff Coat technical data sheets for approved substrates, primer requirements, application methods, and recommended coating thickness.

FOR DECKS THAT HAVE A PRE-MOLDED, NON-SKID EMBOSSEMENT:

1. Prepare the surface with Pettit EZPrep 92 and a Scotch-Brite pad.
2. Abrade the area thoroughly with bronze wool.
3. Solvent clean the surface to remove residue.
4. Proceed with the first finish coat of EZPoxy.
 - For an improved, non-skid texture add Pettit 9900 Skidless Compound to the EZ Poxy before application.
 - For a semi-gloss finish for decks and interiors use Pettit 3106 EZPoxy Semi-Gloss White.

APPLYING THE FINISH:

You've picked your topside finish, you've prepped your surface and now it's time for the grand finale - applying the finish and reaping all of the benefits of a beautiful, vibrant and seriously protected boat.

There are two methods of application favored when applying a topside finish: the roll and tip method and an airless sprayer.

EXPERT TIP

Maintain a wet edge and avoid overworking the coating. For multiple cans, use matching batch numbers when practical to minimize color variation.

ROLL AND TIP METHOD (EZPoxy, EZPrime):

1. Apply paint to the roller. You should have enough paint loaded into the roller that you do not have to stop and reload the roller before tipping, but you do not want the paint dripping off of the roller.
2. Apply the paint to the surface with the roller painting in an arm's length area, making sure to get good coverage.
 - Be sure to paint in at least two directions - opposing diagonals or horizontally and then vertically to get complete coverage.
 - Finish rolling paint onto the edge where your next pass with start. There should be some overlap here to continue paint flow.

3. Now, using your foam or bristle brush, lightly dip the edge of the brush into your paint supply
4. Remove any excess paint, the tip should be just wet enough to glide on top of the paint.
5. Run the tip of the brush end over your paint. You may see a faint brush mark as you are doing this.
6. Drag the brush end in the opposite direction you rolled the paint on to remove any roller marks or stipple.
7. Hold the brush on a slight angle as to glide over the top of the painted surface without removing significant amounts of paint. Do not use a lot of pressure.
 - Any brush marks created will quickly disappear as the paint self-levels.
8. Apply paint to the roller again following step 1.
9. You must start at the end while slightly overlapping your last wet edge to maintain paint flow.
10. Continue with steps 2-9 until the entire surface has been painted.
 - After completing the project using the roll and tip method you will be tempted to go back and retouch some areas. It is important that you DO NOT do so. Slight imperfections will be taken out by either self-leveling of the paint or they can be addressed by the second coat.
11. Allow adequate drying time.
12. Sand the first coat lightly with 200 grit sandpaper.
13. Remove excess sanding residue with a tack cloth, vacuum or air hose.
14. Repeat steps 1-10 for subsequent coats of finish.

CONVENTIONAL AND AIRLESS SPRAYING (EZPoxy, EZPrime):

1. For conventional spray application, thin the finish with 15-20% of Pettit Spraying Thinner. For airless spray application, thin the finish with 5% of Pettit 121 Spraying Thinner and utilize a .011-.015-inch diameter tip for application.
2. Apply one thin, even coat per day
 - When applying the paint, you can apply in opposite directions to ensure proper overlapping and paint coverage.
 - Applying two or more coats per day or excessively heavy films (greater than 4 wet mils) will lead to insufficient, thorough drying of the paint and will result in soft paint films.
3. Allow the coat to dry overnight.
4. Lightly sand the coat with 220 grit sandpaper.
5. Apply next coat of finish.
6. Continue steps 1-5 until the finish is satisfactory.

MAINTAINING THE FINISH:

Once your boat has been prepped and painted there are only two things left to do, show it off and maintain its features. EZPoxy can be polished and waxed after a 7-day cure time. It is especially important to allow the finish to completely cure prior to polishing and waxing to allow all solvents remaining in the paint to flash out. Premature waxing will trap the solvents in the paint making them soft.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**WHY DID THE SECOND COAT OF PRODUCT I APPLIED CRINKLE?**

Crinkling will occur when the first coat is applied too heavy and wasn't given enough time to completely dry. To correct the issue, remove the cracked and crinkled coat completely. You may need to sand back to the first coating. If the coating is too soft, allow it to dry completely before trying to sand. Remove the sanding residue with a tack rag and solvent. Replace the second coating.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I GET DRIPS OR DUST IN THE FINISH?

Drips can occur when a coating is applied too thick. To prevent drips, apply thin coats. Applying several thin coats will often provide better results than a few thicker coats. If drips do occur, sand them out with 200 grit sandpaper with a slight overlap to the surrounding finish. You can then apply a new coat of finish across the entire surface to even out and blend the appearance.

Should dust get into the wet coating, allow it to dry completely. Once the coating is dry, sand back the surface just enough to remove the contaminants that have become lodged in the coating. Make sure to overlap the surrounding finish to even it out and then apply a new coat of finish making sure to blend the appearance.

WHY IS THE FINISH TAKING SO LONG TO DRY?

Several factors can affect the drying and curing time of topside finishes, including humidity, temperature, ventilation, and application thickness.

HIGH HUMIDITY AND POOR VENTILATION - High humidity and excessive moisture in the air can slow the drying process. Whenever possible, avoid painting during periods of high humidity. If conditions are unfavorable, consider moving the project into a climate-controlled environment with adequate ventilation or using a dehumidifier to reduce moisture levels. Proper air circulation is essential to help solvents evaporate and allow the coating to dry thoroughly.

EXCESSIVE FILM THICKNESS - Applying coats too heavily can significantly extend drying times and lead to solvent entrapment. This occurs when the outer surface of the coating begins to dry while solvents remain trapped beneath it, resulting in a soft finish. Always apply thin, even coats according to the product's recommended film thickness and allow sufficient drying time between applications.

LOW TEMPERATURES - Temperatures of 50°F and below can considerably slow the drying and curing process. For best results, apply coatings within the recommended temperature range and maintain suitable conditions throughout the drying period. When possible, move the project into a warmer, properly ventilated environment.

ENHANCE YOUR FINISH WITH PETTIT EZENHANCER® - For compatible Pettit topside coatings, adding EZEnhancer can help promote a more complete cure and improve coating hardness, durability, and scratch resistance. Its advanced cross-linking technology strengthens the coating film, helping achieve a tougher, more resilient finish. EZEnhancer is particularly beneficial for high-solids coatings such as EZ Deck, where thorough curing is important to achieving optimal film performance. While EZEnhancer can improve coating performance, it does not compensate for excessive film thickness, inadequate ventilation, or application outside recommended environmental conditions. Always follow the individual product's technical data sheet for approved mixing ratios and application requirements.

WHY ARE THERE BUBBLES IN MY FINISH AFTER I HAVE APPLIED IT?

Crinkling will occur when the first coat is applied too heavy and wasn't given enough time to completely dry. To correct bubbles can occur when applying finish with a brush because the action of brushing can agitate the surface and introduce air into the finish. Over brushing will introduce even more bubbles. The more you work a section, the thinner the film becomes and the faster the solvent evaporates, which does not leave enough time for the film to self-level. When this happens, brush marks and bubbles aren't able to level themselves out.

To prevent this from occurring further, apply 10-15% more Pettit 120 Brushing Thinner to the finish mixture. This will allow the finish to dry slower, giving it more time to self-level. If you do thin the finish, additional coats may be necessary to maintain the same protection as full strength coats because the added solvent will reduce the amount of resin in the finish.

This method may be a bit more time consuming, but it will prevent air bubbles and yield a better finish.

DO I NEED TO PRIME MY BOAT BEFORE APPLYING TOPSIDE PAINT?

If the existing coating is in good condition, properly adhered, and compatible with the selected Pettit finish, you may be able to paint directly over the prepared surface but not recommended.

Priming is recommended when working with bare substrates, repairing surface imperfections, or creating a smooth, uniform foundation for a new finish. Pettit EZPrime is designed to fill minor imperfections and provide an excellent base for compatible topside finishes.

For fiberglass applications, Pettit's EZPrep Prime Paint system offers a straightforward approach to achieving a professional-quality finish. Always follow the individual product's technical data sheet for specific preparation and priming requirements.

HOW IMPORTANT IS SURFACE PREPARATION BEFORE PAINTING?

Proper surface preparation is one of the most important factors in achieving a durable, long-lasting finish. Even surfaces that appear clean may contain wax, grease, mold release agents, or other contaminants that interfere with coating adhesion.

Pettit EZPrep is specially formulated to de-wax, clean, degrease, and etch bare fiberglass surfaces before painting. Follow with any required sanding, cleaning, and priming procedures to ensure the surface is properly prepared.

Remember: **A great finish starts with proper preparation.**

SHOULD I SAND BETWEEN COATS OF TOPSIDE PAINT?

Light sanding between coats can help remove minor surface imperfections and create a smoother foundation for subsequent applications.

Allow the previous coat to dry sufficiently before sanding, and use the grit recommended in the product's technical data sheet. Thoroughly remove all sanding dust before applying the next coat.

Sanding requirements may vary depending on the product, drying conditions, and recoat interval.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO ACHIEVE A SMOOTH, BRUSH-MARK-FREE FINISH?

The roll-and-tip method is a popular technique for achieving a smooth, professional-looking topside finish without specialized spray equipment.

Apply a thin, even coat using a suitable short-nap roller, then lightly tip the freshly applied paint with a high-quality brush to smooth the surface and eliminate roller texture.

Work in manageable sections, maintain a wet edge, and avoid excessive brushing. Overworking the coating can interfere with its natural leveling properties and leave visible brush marks.

CAN I ADD EZENHANCER TO MY TOPSIDE PAINT?

Yes. Pettit EZEnhancer is a performance additive designed for use with approved Pettit topside coatings, primers, and varnishes.

Its advanced cross-linking technology can enhance coating hardness, durability, scratch resistance, and overall finish longevity. When used with compatible high-gloss finishes, it can also improve gloss retention.

EZ Enhancer is compatible with EZPoxy, EZDeck, EZBilge, EZPrime, Captain's Varnish, and Flagship High Build Varnish. Always follow the approved mixing ratios and application instructions for each product. Performance benefits may vary by coating.

WHY DOES MY TOPSIDE FINISH HAVE AN ORANGE-PEEL TEXTURE?

Orange peel occurs when a coating does not flow and level into a smooth, uniform surface, leaving a texture resembling the skin of an orange.

Common contributing factors include improper application technique, unsuitable thinning, temperature conditions, and excessive or uneven coating thickness.

To help prevent orange peel, apply thin, even coats, use the recommended application equipment, and follow the product's temperature and thinning guidelines.

If orange peel develops, allow the coating to cure sufficiently before sanding and recoating according to the product's technical data sheet.

HOW MANY COATS OF TOPSIDE PAINT SHOULD I APPLY?

The number of coats required depends on the selected product, substrate condition, previous coating color, and desired finish.

For many traditional Pettit topside applications, two finish coats provide good coverage over a properly prepared and primed surface. However, additional coats may be necessary to achieve uniform hiding, color consistency, and the specified dry film thickness.

Always follow the individual product's recommendations for coverage, film thickness, and recoat intervals.

HOW LONG SHOULD I WAIT BEFORE USING MY BOAT AFTER PAINTING?

Dry-to-touch time and full cure time are not the same. A coating may feel dry while still developing its final hardness and durability.

Allow the finish to cure according to the product's technical data sheet before subjecting it to heavy traffic, abrasion, washing, polishing, or other demanding use.

Temperature, humidity, ventilation, and coating thickness can all influence curing time.

Avoid placing equipment, hardware, or protective coverings against freshly painted surfaces until the coating has developed sufficient hardness.