

Best Practices Buyers Guide: Color Choice

To ensure a long service life, wood doors need thoughtful consideration when choosing a paint or stain color. Following the information within this guide will keep your door looking its best for a long time to come and help ensure that warranty criteria is followed.

Factors Affecting Serviceability

Color choice will impact the serviceability of a door, relative to the environmental conditions where the door is installed.

The primary environmental concern affecting color choice is exposure to light sources. The two most common light sources are:

- Direct sunlight
- Reflected sunlight from nearby sources

Light or Dark Color Choice

As a general rule of thumb, transparent (clear) and light colors are suitable for any environmental condition. Dark colors, however, require thoughtful consideration as to whether they are appropriate for the unique environmental conditions where the door is installed.

Impact of Dark Colors Explained

Dark colors will affect wood when exposed to sustained light sources:

- A dark colored door will absorb light energy.
- That light energy will be converted to radiant heat on the exterior face of the door.
- The interior face of the door will remain at room temperature.
- The result is one face of the door being hotter than the other face of the door.

This type of temperature imbalance has the potential to cause warping, cracking, joint separation, and other performance problems.

As a performance problem due to a dark color finish is not a manufacturing defect, we do not guarantee doors with dark finishes (including black). This is commonplace within the door industry.

Environmental Considerations

While clients often stain or paint their doors dark colors without issue, it is important to understand the environment the door will be used in. If a door is regularly exposed to direct sun or reflected light from nearby sources - especially in summer months - a dark finish is inadvisable. If a door has minimal exposure to direct sun and reflected light from nearby sources, a dark finish is generally not an issue.

Some factors to consider when reviewing your environment for light sources include the following examples:

- Exposure Aspect for Direct Sunlight
 - South and West exposures typically have greater exposure to direct sunlight.
- Overhang Depth & Height
 - More overhang coverage generally means less light exposure.
- Surrounding environment
 - Reflective surfaces increasing light exposure:
 - Open Ocean
 - Neighbouring Windows
 - Light colored siding
 - Etc.
 - Features decreasing light exposure:
 - Dense Trees
 - Terrain Shadows

Mitigating Impacts of Dark Finish Colors

To minimize the impact of dark finish colors, it is important to limit the amount of light exposure the door receives.

This is best done by:

- Choosing aspects that receive minimal direct sunlight:
 - North
 - East
- Extending overhangs to completely shelter doors from direct sun and reflected light from nearby sources.



A double door unit manufactured by BC Door Co Ltd that has been painted black. This unit has limited light exposure to mitigate the impacts of a dark finish color.

Key Take-Aways

It is important to understand the environment the door will be used in.

Transparent (clear) and light colors are suitable for almost any environmental condition.

Dark colors need careful consideration and are inadvisable if a door is regularly exposed to direct sunlight or reflected light from nearby sources - especially in summer months.

If a door is completely sheltered from direct sun and reflected light from nearby sources year-round, a dark finish color is generally not an issue.

It is common to see doors manufactured by BC Door Co. Ltd. stained or painted dark colors when following these best practices.

BC Door Limited Warranty for Wood Doors

This article provides general information on color choice for doors, but no warranties are provided by this article. Wood door manufacturers - including BC Door - specify a minimum level of protection to ensure warranty coverage. Full product warranties can be found at www.bcdoor.com.