Specialty and Faux Finishes Using General Finishes EF Products

NOTE: Refer to either the General Finishes EF brochure or the Country Colors brochure for basic information on the application of General Finishes water-based products and the preparation of the wood before starting. The following information only addresses using General Finishes products to create special effects. For more info go to www.generalfinishes.com

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Creating Crackle Finishes

Note: These instructions are also included in the EF Waterbase Finishing video.

Use EF Crackle with Country Colors and EF Wood Stains to produce the weathered, aged look of a crackle finish! Crackle is made with a medium that contracts when a water-based stain is applied over it. As the Crackle contracts, it fractures the top stain coat and exposes the base coat beneath.

1. For crackle effects, you will need two colors, EF crackle medium and EF topcoat.
2. Begin with a base coat of either EF Wood Stain or Country Colors. This will be the color that shows through the cracks. Let this base coat dry for 2 hours. It is not necessary to sand this coat.
3. Apply EF Crackle with a foam brush or handipainter pad. A thin application produces thin cracks and thicker applications produce wider cracks. Let the EF crackle dry for 2 to 48 hours.
4. Then brush on a relatively thick coat of your chosen second color (EF stain or Country Color). Do not overbrush by brushing back and forth repeatedly. The cracking effect will begin within minutes.
5. Let the piece dry overnight and then finish with 3 coats of EF PolyAcrylic, following instructions in brochure.

Creating Faux Marble

Note: These instructions are also included in the EF Waterbase Finishing video.

Read the information on the application of General Finishes water-based products and the preparation of the wood before starting. These instructions only address using General Finishes products to create special effects.

Creating a marble look on furniture is easy with Country Colors and EF Wood Stains. The following are some useful tips to know before you begin. Marbleizing works best on closed grain woods such as pine, maple, birch, aspen, or alder. If you use "open-grain" woods, such as oak, the distinct, visible grain of these woods will show through the background of the marbleizing, and distort the look.Use your imagination! In nature, there are no two pieces of marble exactly alike. If you don't like the results simply paint over and start again. List of Materials needed:

- Country Color White
- Country Color Black
- EF PolyAcrylic

- natural sponge
- lint free cloth (old T-shirt)
- feather
- 220-400 grit sandpaper
- foam brushes

1. Apply 2 coats of White Country Color to get a solid background. Allow each coat to dry for 2 hours. Then lightly sand the surface to a smooth finish, following instructions in brochure.
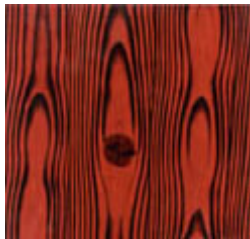
2. Dip the tip of the feather in Black Country Color and draw the marble veins on the surface in a diagonal direction. Use a slow, twisting motion with the feather as you drag the color across the surface. Veins should look like lightning bolts or tree branches, each vein roughly parallel to the one next to it. Avoid a crisscross pattern. Veins should continue from edge to edge. Allow the veins to dry for 5 minutes.

3. Pour equal parts of White and EF PolyAcrylic in a flat pan. Dip the sponge in this mixture and then blot the excess on a paper towel. Sponge over the surface in a random pattern. Lift the sponge - do not drag it. The sponge will soften the veins and begin to cover some of the veins. Let this dry 5 minutes.

4. Next, fold a cloth into a pad making sure there are no wrinkles on the bottom side. Wrinkles will leave an undesirable pattern on the surface. A latex handi-painter can also be used. Blot the entire surface by lifting the pad straight up and down. This will blend the black veins into the white creating a soft, subtle look.

5. Use the feather again to lightly accentuate the veins using Country Colors Black. Allow this to dry 2 hrs.

6. Finish by applying 3 coats of EF Polyacrylic, sanding as instructed in the brochure.

Creating Primitive Wood Grain with EF Stains and Country Colors

Note: These instructions are also included in the EF Waterbase Finishing video. Create the Old World look of primitive grain on any piece of unfinished furniture. In this discussion, we will use Cranberry Red as the base color and Black Walnut as the secondary color.

1. Apply 2 coats of the base color, then sand the surface with #320 or finer grade sandpaper. Finish with a layer of EF Polyacrylic to prevent color blending. Allow each coat to dry for 2 hours.

2. Apply a heavy coat of dark stain (such as EF Black Walnut or Country Color Black) directly over the base color with a polyfoam brush or handipainter. Allow the stain to set for 5 minutes.

3. Create a graining comb by beveling the end of a piece of corrugated cardboard with a razor knife. This will expose the ripples in the cardboard. Drag the comb across the stain to remove most of the top layer of color, allowing the base color to show through. The result will look like wood grain. You can purchase commercial graining combs from craft supply stores to create a different look.

4. An option to Graining is Antiquing. Follow steps A and B. After the base color has dried, apply a thin coat of the EF Black Walnut directly over the base color. Repeatedly brush the stain until it is almost dry to achieve soft grain lines. The wood stain softens the base color to a warm antiqued look.

5. Finish with 3 coats of EF PolyAcrylic as instructed in the brochure.

Distressing

Turn new furniture into heirlooms by creating a vintage, timeworn look. Distressing techniques give the appearance of an antique piece of furniture, that has been well taken care of over the years but, has slight natural wear on the doors, edges, or sides. Start by staining your piece. Allow the stain to dry completely. Remove the stain from selected areas, usually edges and corners, with #180 to #220 grit sandpaper. Sanding these surfaces will allow the wood to show through and simulate wear and tear. Optional: Apply an additional coat of EF Country Pine over the entire piece to create the look of aging in both the stained area and the sanded areas.

Finish with 3 coats of EF PolyAcrylic following instructions in brochure.

Pickling

Pickling is simply applying a light color stain to wood; then wiping off the stain to let the color of the wood show through. The most popular pickle color is EF Whitewash Stain or Country Colors White, however you are not limited to white. Apply the stain and wipe off as much as you want while letting the wood grain show through the stain. The look you want to achieve is a soft subtle color. Let the piece dry and apply 3 coats of EF PolyAcrylic following instructions in brochure.

Another pickling method (the French provincial look) requires two stain coats. First apply a light color stain, such as EF Pecan, and let dry for 2 hours. Then apply a coat of EF PolyAcrylic and let dry for 2 hours. Finally add the look of age by applying a washcoat of White. Push the White into the edges of raised panels or into detail areas such as carvings. Wipe off the stain from the other areas. Let the piece dry and apply 3 coats of EF PolyAcrylic, following instructions in brochure.

Wash Coats

Example: Sage green over Antique White EF Milk paint. After applying a base coat of any EF waterbase product, you have an option of applying a second color two different ways. The first is to apply a second color over the base color while it is still wet. As shown in the example here, use Antique White as your first color. As soon as your are done applying the base coat, follow immediately with a coat of Sage Green Milk Paint. This will allow the colors to blend together to create a softer shade of blue.

The second method of color washing is to allow the base color to dry completely. Apply a second choice of color over the first coat. When the second color has dried, sand the surface down using 180-220 grade sandpaper. This will allow the base color to show through. Follow with three to four coats EF PolyAcrylic finish.