



Stucco – The Effect of Suction on Colour

Whether a cementitious finish coat or an acrylic finish coat is applied over the second coat (brown coat) of stucco, the rate of suction beneath it will determine how light or how dark the finish coat will be.

Suction is the rate that the base coat draws moisture from the finish coat. It is crucial that the base coat surface contain an equal amount of moisture prior to the application of the finish coat. To achieve this the base first must consist of the same components in equal proportions. If for example one mixture of the stucco base coat has a higher ratio of one of the components (sand, cement, lime, water) than another mix, the suction will be different, thus causing a blotchy appearance in the finish coat.

At certain times of the year the addition of moisture to the base coat prior to the application of the finish coat may be required to slow down the rate of suction. This will assist the applicator during the dry/hot season to have more open time in working with the application of the finish coat. This will minimize “scuffing” or “burn” marks occurring in the finish. A trained professional should only be allowed to “wet” the base coat so that there is moisture distributed equally over the surface. Excess moisture in one area will also create a blotchy appearance.

When acrylic finishes are applied during dry/hot conditions a primer may be applied to reduce suction, thus allowing more open time to work with the finish.

What to do when applying the same finish over two different bases! As we have mentioned above, different bases will create different suctions, which in turn will result in different colours. If for example there is a transition on a wall from conventional stucco (sand, cement, lime, water) to EIFS (Exterior Insulated Finish System), consisting of EPS foam board, a polymer modified cementitious base, a primer must then be applied to equalize the suction. *This applies only to acrylic finishes.*

If the finish is cementitious and the transition is from stucco to a cinder block then a bonding agent should be applied according to manufacturers’ instructions.

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