

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT BOAT PAINTING

Why should I paint my boat?

There are many different reasons why someone would choose to paint their boat. If you have a fiberglass boat with a gelcoat finish, over time the gloss of the gelcoat may fade and waxing and buffing alone are not enough to keep the boat shiny throughout the season. The boat may already have been painted and you want to freshen up the appearance to make it look newer. There may have been some damage that needs to be addressed and painting may be the best option after the repairs have been made. You may have purchased the boat and want the color to be representative of your favorite or you want your boat to shine out on the water.

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Beyond beautifying a boat, a fundamental reason to paint is to add protection. Primers have been specially developed to provide active or passive anti-corrosive layers or water barriers. Protecting the underlying vessel substrate is critical to preserving an expensive asset.

What are signs my boat needs to be repainted?

There are very visible signs that highlight when you need to paint your boat, typically when the finish doesn't shine or looks very dull when the light hits the surface. For example, when the gelcoat doesn't shine for the whole season even after waxing and buffing it. For those boaters who use their boat frequently, there may be nicks or dings in the hull sides from hard fishing or perhaps some damage from hitting the docks. You may need to paint high wear areas like decks when you start to see wear through.

Old paints over time may exhibit blistering, cracking or just general wear and tear. It is best, of course, to renew the paint well before old coatings exhibit these types of in-service and age-related failures. Surface preparation and repainting over sound, intact gelcoats and existing paint systems is far easier and more cost effective than stripping back layers of failed, cracked or damaged coatings – which will always be far more expensive.

The best time to repaint a boat, is just before it needs to be repainted!

How often should a boat be repainted?

The frequency of when a boat needs to have their topside repainted depends on many different factors, including where and how well it is maintained. Some boats may be exposed to harsher marine conditions than others, this could be from extended UV exposure, along with open water versus freshwater boating. For boats that are used heavily for fishing or sailing, it is more likely they will need to be repainted more frequently than a boat that is not used as often. It is true to say that quality of maintenance and care of a paint system, is related to the longevity.

When it comes to below water fouling control, this is typically an unavoidable seasonal task, and some form of inspection, touching up, or full re-application of your preferred fouling control paint should be conducted once a year (or once every couple of years). There are a wide range of products from a single season to multi-season usage that can be chosen, and these can be applied professionally or by a boat owner in most cases.

What are the steps involved in having my boat painted?

Having your boat painted or repainted, involves a detailed conversation with your local boatyard professional. As many factors go into the paint process, as a bare minimum it requires the substrate to be properly prepared, the application of the primer then followed by the topcoat. This process can be more labor intensive depending on the current state of the boat, where there may need to be additional primers and even filler that needs to be applied to ensure a good finish. Remember, the expensive elements of a paint job are the preparation, labor and their skills set. The cost of paint in general, comparatively, is quite small, so we do recommend you don't try to save money on a cheaper paint coating system that will not last.

How long does the painting process take?

Painting a boat in good condition can be a fast process, however, it also depends on what you are painting, if you are just painting the hull sides, or the decks, or the superstructure or maybe all of it, that is going to factor into the timeline for the full paint application. This is something that you will need to discuss with your local Awlgrip[®] applicator, as they will be the best to advise on their availability and the estimated timeline for the completion of work.

How do I achieve my vision of what I want the paint to look like?

The best way to achieve your vision is to work with the Awlgrip 3D Color Visualizer as a starting point to help narrow down your color choices for the different parts of your boat. Next would be to discuss with your local Awlgrip applicator on how they can achieve your desired look. You will want to work with the applicator to understand the process and to paint some panels of the desired finish to ensure the look and feel is what you desire. It can be a rewarding and invigorating process to see your boat transform.

How do I find a reputable boat paint shop?

We would recommend that you reach out to several local boatyards that apply the range of Awlgrip finishes and discuss with them the process and ask them for examples of some recent applications that they have made. We would also recommend speaking with boaters that recently had their boat painted to find out what their experience was. This way you can feel comfortable and to ensure that your expectations are aligned with the boatyard or applicator.

Are there special effects that can take the paint color to the next level?

At Awlgrip, it is our desire to provide you with a wide range of design choices and for those boaters who desire a metallic, pearl or flat finish we have our Awlcraft[®] SE (Solids and Effects) and Awlcraft CS (Customizable Sheen). Awlcraft SE is a basecoat technology that allows boater to utilize standard solid colors or you could choose a metallic or pearl finish; which can take a typical solid color to the next level. Awlgrip just recently launched Awlcraft CS (Customizable Sheen) which is a clearcoat that can be applied over Awlcraft SE, if there is a desire to have a matte or flat finish. So, whether you want to choose a standard color or go for something bold we have the products to make your vision come into reality.

Can the finish be repairable?

Discuss with your local paint shop about the buffing, polishing and repairability attributes of the Awlgrip finishes range. Awlcraft 3000 solid color and clearcoat finish range offers exceptional repairability options and well as being a truly buffable and polishable paint – meaning you can keep your boat looking great each season. Awlgrip HDT solid colors and clearcoat offers industry ‘best in class’ gloss and color stability, while still being buffable and polishable by professionals.

For the repairable Awlgrip finish ranges, there is a specialized process for making the paint correction. Each boat may have a unique need for the repair. As the repair could be a small one or it could be significant, really depends on the situation. The steps and the result will need to be discussed with your local Awlgrip boatyard/ applicator.

There are ways to maintain and help extend the life of your paint job, and that is to use products like Awlwash[®] and Awlcare[®] to keep the finish looking its best for many seasons.

What types of exterior coatings are available, and what differentiates them?

We have a wide range of topcoats that will meet your needs with;

- Awlgrip HDT the best gloss, depth of image and durability in the industry
- Awlcraft 3000 that is easily repairable and buffable, with our new color technology
- Awlcraft SE for those looking for something unique that needs to be overcoated with either Awlgrip HDT or Awlcraft 3000 Clearcoat
- The original Awlgrip topcoat that has been an industry standard for over 50 years

Visit us at www.awlgrip.com for further information.

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