
CARE AND MAINTENANCE FOR POWDER COATED SCULPTURES

Powder coating is the process of coating a surface in which a powder material is applied using an electrostatic or compressed air method. The applied powder is then heated (cured) to its melting point, after which it flows to form a smooth film which dries to a firm, durable finish that is very resistant to scratches, cracking, peeling, UV rays, and rust.

Preventative Measures: Try to limit exposure to any foreign elements. With indoor pieces for example, move the sculpture before spraying Windex or any other cleanser on nearby surfaces, and do not set objects like drinking glasses on them. When placing a sculpture outdoors, think about exposure to water. Rainwater will wear down many finishes over time, but municipal water will react much more quickly with many surfaces so more detailed maintenance is required. Sprinklers are the worst offenders, as they sometimes draw from heavily mineralized well water. If you cannot avoid lawn sprinklers, any sculptures exposed to sprinkler spray should be waxed regularly. Hot sun will burn wax off more quickly, saltwater will wear it out, and either condition makes waxing more often a requirement to keep the finish protected.

Cleaning: Your sculpture should be kept clean on a regular basis by simply dusting the piece with a clean, soft, lint-free cloth or sponge, and washing with a mild liquid soap and water as needed. all surfaces completely before applying wax (see next step).

Clean off bird droppings as soon as possible, as they are acidic and can damage the finish.

Powder coating is a painted surface and should **NOT** be abraded with steel brushes or steel wool as they will erode the finish and leave particles embedded in the surface. This can lead to rusting or damage to the overall finish and color. Always test a new sponge in a small area first to make sure it will not scratch the surface.

Waxing: Once your sculpture is clean, completely dry, and cool to the touch, apply the wax with a clean, soft, lint-free rag. The key to waxing is to apply a thin, even coat of wax over the entire piece using a light stippling motion. Try to avoid streaking and build-up. A very thin coat is all that is necessary. The wax should dry in about 20-30 minutes, depending on the weather. When dry, buff the sculpture to a satin finish using a clean rag or chamois.

For sculptures with more intricate, hard-to-reach areas, we recommend a spray wax instead. Simply spray on the wax and distribute evenly with a cotton rag or clean micro-fiber cloth on all surfaces and edges. No buffing is needed. Always test the product and cloth in a small area first.

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How often a piece should be cleaned and waxed depends on the location and environmental factors. Generally speaking, an outdoor powder coated sculpture should be waxed 2-4 times a year. We recommend before and after the winter or rainy season, and once mid-summer at minimum. A dry but shady day or earlier in the morning is best, and the temperature should be warm but not hot. Too much sun makes the wax dry too fast and it becomes hard to buff. The temperature of the sculpture should not be too cold or too hot to the touch, and it must be completely dry before any wax can be applied. Always try a small area first.

The wax should be carnauba based (which also has UV protection), “clear”, and of very good quality. This will help maintain the glossy shine and vibrant color the powder coated finish. Renaissance is our preferred brand for paste waxes, as is used by museums worldwide. It is expensive, but you use a very small amount and it dries very hard but perfectly clear. Trewax Clear Paste Wax or Johnson’s Clear Paste Wax (readily available in most hardware stores) are also excellent options used by many sculptors and foundries. Our preferred spray wax is Turtle Wax Spray Wax. Always try a small area first.

Misc. Notes: Your new powder coated sculpture has been waxed before it was shipped or delivered.

Feel free to call the gallery if you need additional information or if you have any questions.

at Jack London Village – 14301 Arnold Drive Suite 8 – Glen Ellen, CA 95442

(707) 933-1300

www.sculpturesite.com