

# Finishing and Decorating FIBEROCK® Panels

<b>FIBEROCK Features</b>	<p>FIBEROCK® brand panels open up a whole new world of possibilities for areas where abuse-resistant or water- and mold-resistant design is required. FIBEROCK panels retain many of the features and benefits of ordinary drywall, but FIBEROCK's innovative composition of fiber-reinforced gypsum, provides effective water, mold and indentation resistance that drywall does not.</p> <p>FIBEROCK's uniformly designed resistance specifications are engineered to install over traditional framing and offer drywall-like tapers for easier finishing. FIBEROCK panels have no face paper on either side; their special surface treatment allows for a finishing process that is similar to regular wallboard's, while offering better flexural strength, screw withdrawal and nail-pull properties.</p> <p><b>Improving Contractor Success at the Jobsite:</b> There are currently no Gypsum Association recommendations or ASTM specifications for finishing non-paper faced gypsum panels. The following industry best practices, balanced by selecting appropriate finishing products, can help improve finishing success at the jobsite. These practices can help manage expectations of owners, builders and design professionals and reduce potential callbacks that delay building schedules and impair profitability.</p>
<b>Jobsite Standard Specifications</b>	<p>An aesthetic benchmark is required for establishing and demonstrating an approved finishing system. USG strongly recommends establishing a visual standard (mock-up) at the jobsite. A physically constructed visual standard coordinates the expectations of the owner, construction manager, general contractor and design professional with those of the contracted workforce. The finished appearance of the constructed standard should be approved in advance of any widespread work.</p>
<b>Environmental Conditions</b>	<p>Controlling and maintaining environmental conditions is key to minimizing potential problems during finishing and decorating operations. Temperature, humidity and airflow should remain constant and should match occupancy conditions as closely as possible. Uncontrolled environmental conditions, i.e., changes and/or fluctuations in temperature, humidity and airflow can have a profoundly adverse effect on system performance.</p>
<b>Panel Installation</b>	<p>Install panels as outlined in USG Technical Literature F252. After installation make sure that all panel surfaces are sound and free of dirt, grease and dust.</p>
<b>Joint Taping</b>	<p>Use SHEETROCK® paper joint tape embedded in DURABOND® brand setting-type joint compound to tape all joints and interior angles. After embedding tape, immediately wipe joints and interior angles with a joint knife, leaving a thin coating of joint compound.</p>
<b>Proper Concealment (joints, fasteners, trims)</b>	<p>For proper concealment only use SHEETROCK® All Purpose joint compound—DO NOT use SHEETROCK® Lightweight All Purpose (PLUS 3™) or MIDWEIGHT™ joint compounds. Apply two separate coats over all flat joints; one separate coat over interior angles; three separate coats to cover fasteners and accessories.</p> <p>Using fill and finish coats of joint compound to properly conceal panel joints, fasteners and trim accessories makes it impossible to achieve a flat plane on a finished surface. However, a properly finished panel wall can minimize the appearance of joints, fasteners and trims. Finishing and properly concealing joints and fasteners relies on two techniques: (1) using graduated arcs to prevent recesses or ridges, and (2) not applying joint compound flush or flat to the panel surface. Recesses or ridges can result in distinct shadows in critical light or other adverse visual conditions. Applying joint compound flush or flat to the surface does not properly conceal the panel and increases the likelihood of joints and fasteners showing through the decorated finish. For more information, refer to USG Technical Literature J2010 Finishing and Decorating Gypsum Panels.</p>
<b>Sanding</b>	<p>To minimize sanding apply joint compound over joints, fasteners and accessories as smoothly or without defects as possible. Once the joint treatment phase is complete and the joint compound is thoroughly dry, some sanding of the joint compound may be required. To minimize texture variations avoid sanding the panel face. <b>NOTE:</b> DO NOT sand compound flush to panel surface; this will expose areas previously concealed. Avoid using excessively coarse or larger-sized abrasive media (or grit) that may leave visible scratches in the joint compound after painting. Remove all sanding dust prior to applying any surface treatments (primer or primer-surfacer).</p>

**Wet Sanding:** Wet sanding with a damp sponge is preferred whenever possible, especially when minimal sanding is required (refer to USG Technical Literature J-610 for more information). Note: Wet sanding methods are not intended to remove large amounts of joint compound or compensate for poorly finished joints. Wet sanding produces no dust and requires minimal clean-up; it is less likely to scuff or damage the panel face surface. Wet sanded areas may be more easily concealed with paint finishes than dry sanded areas.

**Dry Sanding:** Either manual or power equipment can be used for dry sanding, which uses abrasive-faced material to remove joint compound from gypsum panel joints, fasteners and trims. Sanding materials with abrasive media or grit, sized as fine as possible are preferred. There are three major types of sanding materials: sand paper, mesh and film; all offer a variety of grades. Good results can be achieved by using: 150-grit sandpaper or finer; 220-grit abrasive-mesh.

## Surface Treatment

FIBEROCK panels must be surface treated with one of the options, in accordance with USG recommendations. Option A may be used when surface uniformity is not of concern, i.e., the surface uniformity stipulation has been waived by the job managerial and/or inspection authorities and conditions described in Option B (below) do not exist.

**Option A:** Apply a skim coat\* of all purpose joint compound at a trowel-applied consistency to entire surface and let dry. The skim coated surface must be smooth and free of tool marks and ridges (a light sanding of the skim coating may be necessary to remove tool marks). Remove sanding dust from surface, then apply one full coverage coat (5-10 mils WFT) of SHEETROCK® First Coat primer to cover surface. Allow surface to dry prior to decorating. Refer to USG Technical Literature: J1095 for more information regarding First Coat primer; J510 for more information on skim coating. **NOTE:** A single coverage coat of SHEETROCK® TUFF-HIDE™ primer-surfacer may be used in lieu of a skim coat of SHEETROCK All Purpose joint compound and the application of SHEETROCK® First Coat primer. Refer to USG Technical Literature J1613 and J1810 for more information regarding TUFF-HIDE primer-surfacer benefits and application.

### **Option B: Recommended in areas where one or more of the following conditions exist:**

- 1) Exposure to critical/severe lighting
- 2) Paints with sheen levels other than flat are specified
- 3) High value spaces exist
- 4) Final surface smoothness and uniformity are expected and/or specified

Apply two separate skim coats\* of all purpose joint compound at a trowel-applied consistency to entire surface and let dry. The skim coated surface must be smooth and free of tool marks and ridges (a light sanding of the skim coating may be necessary to remove tool marks). Remove sanding dust from surface, then apply one full coverage coat (5-10 mils WFT) of SHEETROCK First Coat primer to cover surface. Allow surface to dry prior to decorating. Refer to USG Technical Literature: J1095 for more information regarding First Coat primer; J510 for more information on skim coating. **NOTE:** SHEETROCK TUFF-HIDE primer-surfacer may be used in lieu of a second skim coat of SHEETROCK All Purpose joint compound and the application of SHEETROCK First Coat primer. Refer to USG Technical Literature J1613 and J1810 for more information regarding TUFF-HIDE primer-surfacer benefits and application.

\* When applying a skim coat, use only SHEETROCK All Purpose joint compound – DO NOT use Lightweight All Purpose (PLUS 3) or MIDWEIGHT™ joint compounds on FIBEROCK panels.

## Inspection

The treated surface should be inspected for acceptance prior to installing the final decorative finish or topcoat paints. For inspection methods, refer to the Drywall Finishing Council document, *Method for Inspecting Interior Joint Treated Gypsum Panel Surfaces* (dwfc.org).

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For more information, please consult The Gypsum Construction Handbook  
<http://usg.com/resourcecenter/gypsum-construction-handbook.html>

