



DRIVE Marine Services

AQUACOTE TIPS - For a Good Finish

Introduction

The AQUACOTE Tips have been developed to compliment the “AQUACOTE Application Directions” (Yellow Sheet) which remains the primary source of technical directions on using the product. They are based on experience using a technologically advanced product that has unique properties and characteristics not present in traditional oil or solvent based paints. Therefore, it is applied differently to oil and solvent based paints and you should forget everything you know about their application when applying AQUACOTE or there is a good chance you will not be pleased with the results.

AQUACOTE Undercoat is a water based 1:1 Two Pack Epoxy which is water wash out and water is the thinners. It is a High Build undercoat which will not self level; where you put it, is where it stays! It sets extremely tough to provide a strong scratch resistant base for AQUACOTE Topcoat.

AQUACOTE Topcoat is a water based Two Pack Polyurethane which is water wash out and water is the thinners. AQUACOTE Topcoats set extremely tough over Bote Cote Non Yellowing Epoxy (for clear coatings) or AQUACOTE Undercoat (for coloured paint). It has excellent Ultra Violet resistance and will last many years without recoating if looked after.

Undercoat

To make life easier use the following tips for best results;

- Roll on thin coats in preference to brushing where ever possible.
Note: Avoid thick coats as they take longer to dry (moisture to release).
- Three (3) to Four (4) coats can be rolled on in a day and is normally sufficient to provide enough build up to cover unevenness and to enable sanding to leave a good smooth surface for top coating.
Note: The surface may be translucent after the first coat.
- Some colours have limited hiding power such as Navy Blue, British Racing Green, Post Office Red. *If painting a darker colour over Undercoat it helps to add Epoxy pigment as it will help with topcoat coverage.* Even better results can be obtained by using a base colour coat such as British Racing Green looks sensational over black.
- If brushing; use a good quality bristle brush wet out in water and shaken to remove excess moisture.
- Wash out the brush or roller every 30 minutes to eliminate undercoat gelling in the brush.
- Leave dry for 24 to 48 hours before power sanding depending on temperature. As it is an epoxy in colder whether it will take much longer to set. It will stop curing below 10°C.
Note: It can be wet sanded sooner, but may still be a bit soft.
- Do not leave it too long before sanding as it sets extremely hard and will be difficult to sand after 4 or 5 days.
Note: The reason it sets so hard is to provide a tough base for the topcoat which makes it extremely scratch resistant. Other brands may be easier to sand, but allows the topcoat to scratch easily.
- If applied by brush; then commence sanding with 80 Grit sand paper and when all of the high spots are removed progressively work down to at least 180 or 240 Grit sand paper.
Note: The finer the sanding, the higher the gloss with the topcoat.

*For a Comprehensive Range of **Boat Building** requirements including*

Bote Cote Epoxies, Fillers, **Pour-on-Gloss** Decoupage Coating, **COP-R-BOTE** Epoxy Antifouling, **AQUACOTE** Polyurethane Coatings, **CLEAR System** – 5+ years in full sun without loss of Gloss, **WOT ROT** Rot Repair Kits, **PURBOND** Waterproof Single Pack Glue, **TREDGRIP** Rubberised non-slip Paint, Glass & Carbon **Reinforcing Fabrics**, **FERONITE** Rust converter and Primer, Marine, Proof & Aircraft **Plywoods**, **NIDAPLAST** Composites, **S/S & Bronze** Fasteners **DAVEY** Traditional Bronze & Marine Fittings
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Topcoat

To make life easier use the following tips for best results;

- For best results, use either the undercoat or Bote Cote Epoxy. If rough, commence sanding with 80 Grit sand paper and when all of the high spots are removed progressively work down to at least 180 or 240 Grit sand paper.

Note: *The finer the sanding, the higher the gloss with the topcoat. 320 to 400 Wet N Dry will provide the best finish.*

Note: *If painting a colour; always apply Undercoat or add pigment to the Bote Cote Epoxy Resin or variations in colour will occur if the topcoat is a light colour (especially white).*

Important: *When dry the Undercoat leaves a semi gloss surface; when sanding it is critical that all gloss must be removed from the undercoat or Bote Cote epoxy resin as the Aquacote topcoat will not adhere to those areas, even small dots of gloss.*

- Some colours have a lot of pigment, Navy Blue, British Racing Green, Post Office Red. They should be power stirred for 5 minutes before use to fully disperse the pigment. To avoid a mess, use an old lid of the correct size for the can, put a hole in it and pass the shaft of the mixer through the hole. Put this on the can and use a variable speed drill to operate the mixer. The small propeller mixers work well.

Note: *Lumps in the paint, when applying are usually pigment. Therefore it needs power mixing or more mixing and straining through a 180 mesh filter or pantihose.*

Note: *If there are still lumps when strained. It needs more power stirring. All you are doing is removing the colour from your paint. The pigment in AQUACOTE is one of its unique properties and can require more stirring than your average enamel.*

Note: *It pays to power mix all coloured Aquacote before using, especially if it has been sitting for more than a month.*

Note: *Use the metal paddle version with the frame around the outside to prevent it damaging the tin. Do not use the Plastic ones with a tit on the bottom as they do not lift the pigment off the bottom of the tin.*

- When sanding is completed use a green scour pad with soapy water and scrub the surface and then hose off with tap water. This removes all dust and greasy marks from your hands. It also provides an even finer finish to the sanded surface.

Important: *Do not wipe with solvents or your (greasy) hands.*

Note: *Ensure the surface is washed clear of all signs of detergent / soapy water.*

- When adding Cross Linker stir as the drops are added. It tends to coagulate if all of the cross linker is added before stirring in and can be another source of lumps.

- Roll on thin coats with a Flock Roller in preference to brushing wherever possible.

Note: *Avoid thick coats as they will cause runs.*

Note: *We stock flock roller kits at competitive price the large hardware outlets.*

- Two (2) or Three (3) coats is normally sufficient to provide a good smooth surface.

Note: *To improve the gloss finish apply two coats, allow to dry for at least 4 hours, then fine sand with 320 or 400 wet N dry paper wet with water. Wash off and apply a two further coats over the top.*

Note: *Clear coats over colour provide good depth of colour and better UV resistance and a strong protective coating that is easy to touch up if scratches occur.*

- To extend drying time, always work in a shaded area and wipe down with a damp cloth, before applying.

Caution: *Do not Tip off with a brush after rolling on as it will create a lumpy surface as AQUACOTE Topcoat dries very fast, especially in warmer weather.*

Note: *If a run occurs, wipe out with a damp cloth or leave until it hardens and sand out.*

Note: *If a small area is missed or looks dry, do not go back over the area until it has dried. It is better to cover it in the next coat.*

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- If brushing; use a premium Foam brush (not cheapies which cause too much foaming and trapped air bubbles) or a good quality bristle brush, wet out in water before starting and shake to remove excess moisture.

Note: We prefer to use foam brushes as there are no hairs to pull out.

- Wash out the brush every 20 to 30 minutes to eliminate topcoat drying in the brush and sticking the bristles together..
- Do a test area first. Depending on the atmospheric conditions it may be desirable to thin the Aquacote with up to 10% water to achieve the best flow out without causing runs.
- In cold wet conditions, it is difficult to achieve good results as the water does not evaporate quickly enough and gets trapped under the polyurethane film. Consider heating the working area using gas or electricity but NOT KEROSENE (most emit oily fumes which settle on the work and prevent good adhesion).
- If painting outside in colder weather cover overnight to prevent dew settling on the surface. Dew can cause runs if not dry or clear finish can go milky.

Note: If it goes milky it is moisture entrapment and this will normally disappear when it dries.

- It is difficult to achieve good results with Aquacote in hot dry conditions because the water evaporates too quickly, before the polyurethane film can properly level. Consider painting in the cool of the morning or evening, and increasing the humidity in the working area by spraying water on the floor and wiping over the surface with a damp cloth immediately before applying.
- In hot weather do not paint in the open as it will dry too fast and cause lumps. Use a tarp or paint under cover.
- If the surface is warm to touch, it is too hot to paint. Hose down the surface or use a damp cloth to cool down. When the surface is no longer wet but slightly damp apply the first coat.

Note: Use a damp cloth to wipe over the area (approximately one (1) to Two (2M²) to be painted just prior to application as a bit of moisture helps slow down drying the paint and ensures the surface is clean.

- Do not be concerned if the surface looks orange peely or there are brush marks when first dry. The paint continues to self level over the next two to three days as it hardens.
 - Do not leave Topcoat too long before sanding as it sets extremely hard and will be difficult to sand after 4 or 5 days.
- Note: The Topcoat sets extremely tough providing a tough surface which is extremely scratch resistant.*
- AQUACOTE Topcoat sets so hard it can be buffed with fine automotive cutting compound similar to car duco.
 - If you have some paint with cross linker added to it left over, simply put it back into the can. The cross linker automatically deactivates after a few hours if the paint is still liquid.
 - If you are spraying AQUACOTE TopCoat, **ALWAYS** filter the paint through a 180 mesh filter (we can supply these) first, or use panty hose etc.
 - Some users report that they can obtain superior gloss levels by using a French polishing technique. This involves mixing the cross linked paint with 50% water and applying using a lint free rag in a swirling action.

If all else fails, call us, so we can assist you to resolve any issues you may be having.

We stock the correct Paint stirrers, flock roller kits, premium brushes, and filters and other equipment needed.

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And finally, here is what one of our users thinks.

Today was pretty monumental as it was the culmination of about 200 hours preparation of the hull for a topcoat of POST OFFICE RED Aquacote. Still have to do a bit of post-operative spit and polish, plus anti-fouling, but that all seems rather pedestrian alongside the act of actually applying a finishing topcoat to the topsides - which is akin to a rite-of-passage for us wood butchers.

I can vouch for the ease of spray painting Aquacote. Thank you one and all for the sincere and serious, advice on the subject. The following points are a summary of my experience.

1. Pre-cursor filling (with Bote-cote filled with sanding filler) and sanding to remove high and low spots is hard work but essential.
2. The yellow "Applications Directions" are spot-on. Follow to the letter. Selection of a day of optimum ambient conditions is critical, to reduce the number of variables which would otherwise confuse any analysis of sub-optimum painting results.
3. Do not skimp on hy-build aquacote undercoat. Almost bullet-proof to apply by spray, and may be diluted with water (up to 10%) until spray flows evenly without globs or runs. Keep going forward - do not go back over recently sprayed work - have faith in the product. Allow about 20 minutes between coats and apply up to four coats in one session. Should be enough if filling and sanding was honest.
4. Sand undercoat to car-body feel - smooth as. This is hard work because Aquacote Hi-build Primer is very hard. The upside is that it protects the hull from bangs and scratches better than alternative undercoats that are easy to sand. Knock the top off high spots by hand with 80 grit and then go straight to 220 grit using orbital sander. I found 220 grit superior to all others. Do not use wet sandpaper. After first honest round of 220 grit sanding (which looks and feels good), do it all over again. Second time round is much easier and the result is noticeably better - almost excellent
5. Prepare for topcoat. Choose cool of morning on calm, warm day. Scrub undercoat with nylon pot-scourer and detergent. Wash all detergent off with fresh water. Let dry naturally - moist surface is OK. Apply masking tape at 100mm above waterline (below, since hull is upside down!) and cover bottom with newspaper.
6. Prepare aquacote topcoat. Follow directions and tips for your particular application. MIX WELL by power mixer - most important, since pigment is thick. FILTER with panti-hose or similar into spray gravity feeder. Spray on test piece (or newspaper cover) to ensure good flow without globs or runs. Avoid diluting with water.
7. Spray topcoat. Follow directions and tips for your particular application. The topcoat dries so quickly that I found I could apply a misty spray up and down and left to right, right around the boat, and by the time I got back to the starting point (about 10 minutes) it was dry enough to do the same again, this time left to right and up and down (i.e. opposite pattern to last time), always moving forward, not going back over old work. I lost count of the number of coats - probably about 10, with no runs and no discernable defects. Tonight it appears to have tightened up beautifully. I think the secret is judging when it's dry enough to re-coat - which is determined by the ambient conditions more than anything else.

All in all, I'm pretty happy with the result. Spraying has less fear now than before - in fact, the big advantage is the speed - all over in 2 hours (assuming good preparation!)

(This page is a user's experience and is not necessarily the manufacturer's official advice. The user was on the north east coast of Tasmania in November 2009. The temperature was about 20C and the relative humidity about 70%. There was a light south easterly breeze blowing.)

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