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How To Apply Suede-Tex Instruction Sheet

Applying Flock It! Suede-Tex

The application of Suede-Tex is a **simple process** used in junior high school woodshops. Its simplicity is one of the beauties of the finish. Flock It! Suede-Tex finish allows you to create a **professional looking** suede-like texture with no previous experience.

Important points to remember:

- Do not skimp on the adhesive.
- Do not skimp on the fibers.
- Resist the temptation to touch the surface before the finish has dried.

If you are concerned—find a junior high school student to help you!

Step 1 - PREPARE THE SURFACE

Clean the surface removing excess dirt and grime. Seal cracks, sand rough surfaces so that they are relatively smooth. The surface does not have to be perfectly smooth, but the finish will show bumps and cracks. If applying to plastic use a "paint primer" to assure the finish will adhere permanently.

If the surface is porous, it is essential that it be sealed. The purpose of sealing is to prevent the absorption of the undercoat adhesive. If the adhesive is absorbed, the fibers will have nothing to adhere to and the finish will have thin spots. Even surfaces that appear solid can be porous (e.g. Masonite) and will absorb the adhesive.

Sealing may be done with lacquer, shellac, sanding sealer, polyurethane, etc.—anything that will prevent the surface from soaking up the adhesive. If the surface is *very* porous (i.e., soft woods, open grains, foams etc) be sure you have sealed it sufficiently – it may require more than one coating of sealant. If the sealer leaves a very slick finish, rough it up slightly with sandpaper.

Metal, glass, and plastics do not require sealing, but may need a sanding to roughen up the surface. The solvents in the adhesive may affect certain plastics and foam. It may be necessary to put a protective coat of a rubber-based primer (e.g., latex paint) on these surfaces, and then it will be okay to apply the Suede-Tex undercoat adhesive and continue with the coating process. Because it is difficult to achieve a permanent bond on plastics it is advisable to first use a paint primer on the surface.

The Suede-Tex undercoat adhesive dries stiff, and therefore is not meant for flexible surfaces such as fabric, cushions, soft foam, etc.

Step 2 - APPLICATION PREPARATION

If you want to get the most coverage with the Suede-Tex fibers it will be necessary to set up a special spray area so that you can reclaim the excess fibers to reuse. To create a spraying area, line the inside of a cardboard box or a large trash can with a large plastic bag.

Alternatively, using a large (refrigerator size) container create a booth that allows you to contain your fibers. If the object is too large for a booth line the floor with newspaper or plastic and take care not to contaminate the fibers.

Creating a spraying area using a cardboard box and a large plastic bag.

1.

- Fold over and tape open the flaps of a box.
- Cut out the bottom corners a little larger than needed to poke a finger through.

2.

- Put a plastic bag in the box and tuck the mouth of the bag under the flaps.
- Poke the bottom of the bag through the corner holes in the box.

3.

- Pull the excess bag through the corners so it is tight within the box.

Fill the applicator of your choice (Mini Flocker, Air-Assisted Spray Gun, or CP 70 Electrostatic Applicator) with Suede-Tex fiber and set aside.

Filling The Applicators

Mini Flocker

Slide the two cardboard tubes apart; fill the unmarked tube without the holes approx.1/2 full. This will allow space for the air to circulate the flocking fibers within the Mini Flocker. Gently slide the other tube (with the holes) over the one filled with flock fiber. Set aside for later use.

Air-Assisted Spray Gun

Remove the cap from the canister. Using a funnel with a large (1 ½") spout, or a funnel made from a piece of waxed paper, pour the flocking fibers into the canister. Use a pencil or stick to ensure the flocking fibers continue to flow. Fill approximately ½ full with Suede-Tex fibers. Replace the spray gun handle, making sure the **top edge** of the sprayer **is in line with** the **large red arrow** on the label to ensure proper air flow.
It is helpful to have a second, backup canister already filled with flock fiber if your object is large.

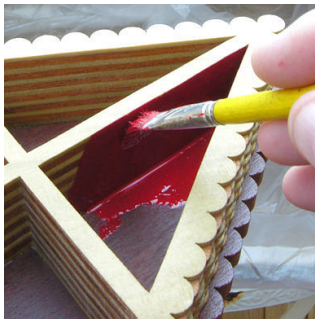
CP 70 Electrostatic Applicator

Remove the screened cover and fill no more than ¾ full with Suede-Tex flocking fibers. CP 70 Check that your transformer is plugged in and set at the correct voltage. This will usually be at 70kV. Press the "on" button to make sure the flocking fibers are flowing before beginning your coating job.

Preparation of the piece to be coated electrostatically is important. Because a positive charge coming from the applicator is drawn to the object being coated it is necessary to create a ground at the object to maintain its negative field. If the piece is made from metal it is possible to ground directly to it.

Be careful to attach the ground lead in an area that will not be seen. If the object being coated is not conductive you can line the back of it with aluminum foil and attach the ground lead to the foil. Larger objects (bigger than 14" sq. in.) require either more than one ground lead or that the ground lead be moved.

Step 3 - APPLYING THE UNDERCOAT ADHESIVE



Flock It! Suede-Tex undercoat adhesive can be **brushed, sprayed or rolled** onto the area to be coated.

If **spraying**, it may be necessary to thin the adhesive slightly with mineral spirits (no more than 1 tablespoon per pint) in order to spray it through your gun. The adhesive does tend to thicken when kept in a cool area under 60 degrees. If it appears too thick, allow it to warm up before adding mineral spirits.

Apply a **generous coat of adhesive**—that is, enough for the fibers to dig into when applied. This coat should appear liquidy. The undercoat adhesive remains open to the fibers for 10 to 15 minutes—this is your **working time.** If you are working on a larger object use a larger brush, apply the adhesive with a paint roller or spray it on.

CAUTION: If you are working on ***one continuous piece***, **DO NOT work in sections** as the lines between the sections will show.

If you are working on a project that has many small sections (compartments), requiring a more detailed application, finish a few at a time. If you cover the uncoated section(s) with a piece of cardboard and then move the cardboard as needed you will not have to wait for each compartment to dry before applying the fibers to the next area.

Step 4 - SPRAY ON THE SUEDE-TEX FIBERS

To apply the fibers place the adhesive coated project in the lined cardboard box. Using the applicator of your

choice, at a distance of 8-10", apply a **very** generous coating of flock fibers to the surface (holding the applicators as seen in the photos below). Only so much will stick; the rest will fall off and **can be reclaimed to be reused.**

Mini Flocker

Hold the outer tube (printed one) with one hand; twist the inner tube (see photo above) while pumping to spray the object you wish to coat. Keep the Mini Flocker 8" to 10" from surface and as close to 90 degree to the object as possible.

You may have to prop up your object to create this angle as you will not be able to work directly downward with the applicator. Make sure there is a steady stream of flock fiber coming out of the applicator or you may be drying the adhesive.

Air-Assisted Spray Gun

Set your compressor at 10 to 15 psi (it is okay to go up to 20 psi, but the flocking fibers will spray out of the canister more quickly requiring frequent refills). Hold the gun on a slightly downward angle (see photo) and depress the trigger at the handle. Keep the AASG 8" to 10" from surface and as close to 90 degrees to the object as possible.

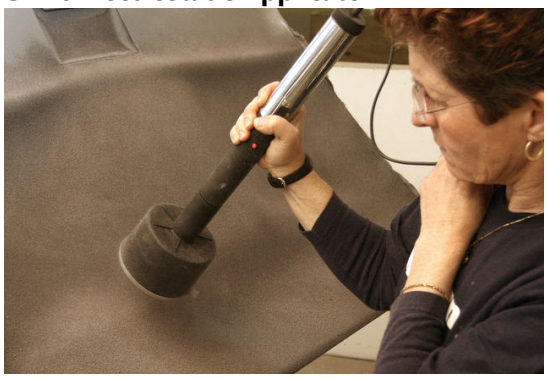
You may have to prop up your object to create this angle as you will not be able to work directly downward with the applicator. Make sure there is a steady stream of flock fiber coming out of the applicator or you will be drying the adhesive.

If the flocking fibers are not flowing check:

1. the pressure to the gun
2. the amount of flock fiber in the canister
3. to make sure the handle is in line with the arrow on the canister
4. if you are correctly holding the gun on a downward angle (see photo)

5. if all fittings are tight.

CP 70 Electrostatic Applicator



Hold the electrostatic applicator 4" to 5" from the surface being coated. Slide the switch forward and depress button until you see the red light go on. Gently rock the applicator to assure the flocking fibers continue to flow into the static field. Slowly move the applicator around the piece.

The flocking fibers will be drawn at a 90 degree angle to the piece that is grounded creating a dense, even coating. Take care not to touch the applicator or the object being coated with your free hand or you can complete a current and receive a shock.

Hint: *When coating boxes, after you have applied the adhesive, it is best to first spray the flocking fibers on the bottom and then spray the sides. If you tilt the box on its side you can aim at 90 degrees to the bottom first; then place the box flat and finish applying the flocking fibers to the sides.*

Hint: To ensure the flocking fibers continue to hit the project on the same angle, hold the applicator at the same angle to the piece you are coating (as much as possible) and raise and lower the applicator. Do not tilt it when possible.

Step 5 - DRYING

Once you have applied sufficient fibers set aside your project to dry for approximately **10 to 15 hours** before you remove excess fibers. If you need to reclaim some of the fibers before this drying process is completed you may turn the project upside down to allow the excess to fall off.

Do not tap or shake the project at this time as this may dislodge fibers that are sitting in wet adhesive. It is possible to **speed up the initial drying time** with a heat lamp. It will now take approx. 7 hours depending on your environment.

TAKE CARE TO KEEP THE HEAT LAMP AT LEAST 18" AWAY FROM THE FIBERS. DO NOT USE A HEAT LAMP WITH A BLOWER.

IMPORTANT—While the adhesive is dried at this point (10 to 15 hours) it will take 72 hours to 1 week for it to **cure completely.** Care should be taken in handling during this time.

Step 6 - CLEAN UP

Cleaning Your Applicator:

Mini Flocker

Separate tubes and empty the unused flocking fibers into the original plastic bag. A gentle tap will remove any excess flocking fibers.

Air-Assisted Spray Gun
Unscrew the canister and empty the unused flocking fibers into the original plastic bag. A gentle tap will remove the rest of the flocking fibers or you may blow them away with compressed air.

CP 70 Electrostatic Applicator
Remove screen and empty the unused flocking fibers into the original plastic bag. Blow excess flocking fibers from plastic canister and screen.

If there is a tiny amount of flock fiber left inside the applicator, it will blend into the next color used and not be noticed (with the exception of white).

Cleaning Your Project:

To remove the excess flocking fibers from your project **after it has dried** shake the item over a lined cardboard box—remember **these flocking fibers are still usable**. Or, using a dry, clean, soft brush, remove the excess flocking fibers.

Compressed air may be used, but take care during the initial 48 hours. Vacuuming may be used after the project has cured completely.