

OVERVIEW

There are only two major commercial grade wallcovering adhesive manufacturers remaining in the United States: Gardner-Gibson & Roman Decorative Products. They have consolidated market positions by developing numerous private label brands for most major retail paint store chains and in some cases mass-merchandising builder supply outlets. Their branded and private label products work quite well and can be used for a successful installation if these general guidelines are followed.

Always use a recommended compatible primer with the selected brand of adhesive. New sheetrock, previously painted sheetrock (latex or oil based paint?), sheetrock with wallcovering previously installed and subsequently removed (adhesive residue remaining), sheetrock in high humidity environments will require slightly different surface preparations and or formulations depending on local jobsite conditions. There are primers for unique installations that can be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

A few questions and close attention to individual jobsite details are a big plus for successful installations. We have found that water-based acrylic and or latex primers are preferred to almost all other types of primers. The individual paint stores will know the compatibility of their house brand of primers relative to their brand of adhesive relative to the condition of the chosen substrate. The good news is that it is not rocket science. The product information / application labels are actually pretty good in this industry.

GENERAL ADHESIVE GUIDELINES

The best general guidelines for a suitable wallcovering adhesive are as follows:

- 1) **Premixed** commercial grade available in one and five gallon buckets.
- 2) A “**clay**” premixed is the baseline for commercial wallcovering adhesives. All commercial wallcovering adhesives are water based. Clay based adhesives require a little more attention than a “clear cellulose” adhesive when they are dropped, smeared or spilled on surfaces other than the back of the wallcovering. A real “sea sponge” is recommended for cleaning / removing clay based adhesive residue. **Do not** try to save a few dollars by buying a conventional sponge. Time is money. A cheap sponge will spread the adhesive over a larger area and come back to haunt you when it dries. Rinse with clean water. Change water frequently.

Some installers prefer clay based products because they can readily see the amount of adhesive that has been applied to the wallcovering or the wall if “dry hanging”. There also may be some additional “open time” (the amount of time available to install the material before it dries out) depending on the local temperature and humidity.

- 3) A “**clear**” (cellulose vs clay) based adhesive will minimize clean-up issues. It dries to a consistency similar to oatmeal residue and will flake off easily. Be careful around exotic finishes (silk, woods, etc...) regardless of what type of adhesive is used. One inch “blue” painters tape is great for a quick barrier between the finishes, over ceiling grids, moldings, etc...

- 4) A “**strippable**” commercial grade adhesive will facilitate future removal of material when your client is ready to change their image/message. If you plan on going back for a future application or work with the same client repeatedly in multiple locations then seriously consider a strippable adhesive and suitable primer. Your client, installer and the walls will appreciate your foresight.

GENERAL PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS (MORE ARE AVAILABLE):

- 1) Gardner-Gibson:
 - a) Primer: Dynamite® 235 / HD acrylic primer sizing: 350-400 sq. ft. per gallon.
 - b) Primer: 221 clear wall prep.
 - c) Primer: 222 white tinted wall prep.
 - d) Adhesive: Dynamite® 780 HD clear strippable: 275-300 sq. ft. per gallon.
 - e) Adhesive: Dynamite® 234 premium HD clear/strippable.
 - f) Adhesive: Dynamite® 433 clay based strippable.
 - g) Adhesive: Dynamite® 111 clay based not strippable. Last resort.
- 2) Roman Decorating Products, Professional® Series:
 - a) Primer: Pro 935 (R-35®): 400-450 sq. ft. per gallon (might be over kill for some)
 - b) Primer: Pro 909 vinyl prep.
 - c) Pro Ultra® Prime 997: great for new sheet rock applications.
 - d) Adhesive: Pro 870 HD clear strippable: 275-300 sq. ft. per gallon.
 - e) Adhesive: Pro 838 HD clear.
 - f) Adhesive: Pro 774 clay strippable.
 - g) Adhesive: Pro 732 clay. (last resort).
- 3) Roman Decorating Products: (high humidity environments)
 - a) Primer: Pro 988 (for mildew prone environments) 400-450 sq. ft per gallon.
 - b) Adhesive: Pro 888 Clear. (for mildew prone areas): 275-300 sq. ft. per gallon.
- 4) Benjamin- Moore:
 - a) Primer: Universal Wall Grip® 203: 400 sq. ft. per gallon
- 5) Sherwin-Williams:
 - a) Primer: Prep-Rite® Pro Block®
 - b) Prep-Rite® Bonding
 - c) Prep-Rite® Pre-Wallcovering Primer (depends on condition and type of substrate).
- 6) Zinsser:
 - a) Primer: Gardz®
 - b) Also supply quality mildew prevention products.

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