



Painting AE Series Loudspeaker Cabinets

JBL AE Series loudspeakers are paintable. The “DuraFlex” finish provides a lightly textured surface that most paints adhere to. The result is a loudspeaker that is able to blend unobtrusively into the décor of its environment. Instructions below are general guidelines.

The DuraFlex finish is a multi-layer material. The top aliphatic coating provides a surface to which most paints bond. *Note: Some JBL portable loudspeaker models do not include a top aliphatic coating – these models are not paintable. All standard AE Series loudspeakers DO include a top aliphatic coating and ARE paintable.*

It is usually easier to paint over a white (-WH) cabinet than a black cabinet. You can also order from JBL a -UF version of any AE Series model (extra lead time applies), which is paint-grade unfinished wood. This is ultimately the easiest version to paint, following standard paint-over-wood procedures. The following instructions are for painting a standard AE Series DuraFlex finished loudspeaker.

1) SURFACE PREPARATION

Important:

Do NOT sand or scuff the surface! This could remove the top aliphatic coating which is required for good paint adhesion.

Prepare the surface by cleaning and wiping dust with a damp cloth. It may be necessary to use a mild household cleaner to remove grease. If so, be sure to rinse off the detergent and give plenty of time for the surface to dry completely. Avoid using a cloth that will deteriorate over the textured surface.

2) PRIMING THE SURFACE

Some paints may adhere well directly. Starting with a primer is highly recommended for ensuring proper long-term adhesion. Use an oil-based primer, not a water-based primer.

3) PAINT SELECTION

With Primer -- If you used a primer, select a paint that works well over that primer.

Without Primer -- If you are applying paint directly without using a primer, oil-based paint is recommended. Water-based paint does not adhere as well. Avoid epoxy-based paints as they do not stretch adequately for the expansion and contraction of a wooden loudspeaker cabinet and can crack.

4) MASKING THE BAFFLE

It is often desirable to leave the baffle (behind the grille) black.

5) PAINT APPLICATION

Apply as many coats as is required. Application can be by rolling, brushing or spraying.

6) GRILLE

Care must be taken when painting the grille not to clog the grille backing material (open cell foam on some models and grille cloth on other models). Clogging the pores will degrade the performance of the loudspeaker.

Painting Grille with Backing Attached – It can be very difficult to paint the grille with the backing attached without clogging the grille backing material.

Removing the Grille Backing – It is a good idea to remove the grille's backing (foam or cloth) and reattach it after painting. Spraying is perhaps the best way to paint the grille.

It is highly recommended to leaving the grille backing unpainted. If you must add some color to the backing, give it a very quick spray dusting of the color, making sure not to clog the pores in the backing material.

Reattach the backing securely using 3M Super 77 or similar spray adhesive, sprayed onto the back of the metal grille (spray only a minimal amount onto the backing because otherwise the backing could tend to pick up dust from the air).

If the backing gets damaged in the removal process it may be necessary to order a replacement backing – either from JBL or from a third-party foam or grille cloth provider -- if indeed a backing is required for your application.

PAINTING WEATHER RESISTANT AE MODELS

Important:

Simply painting a non-weather-resistant speaker is NOT acceptable protection for outdoor use.

Internal Protection – The WRC and WRX models are constructed with necessary additional internal protection, including: full internal surface sealant to protect the wood from the inside, special corrosion-resistant internal hardware, weather protection for the cones, protective coating for the metal parts on the back of the drivers, protective coating on crossover network, waterproof glues and special grille backing that breaks up driving rain. For speakers that will be used outdoors, always start with a WRC (DuraFlex finish) or WRX (fiberglass finish) as the base model to insure proper construction for outdoor use.

Painting WRC Enclosures -- Models with the WRC-level of weather resistant are coated with an extra-thick DuraFlex finish. Follow the same instructions in the sections above, which apply to all models with DuraFlex finish.

Painting WRX Enclosures – WRX-level weather resistant models have a fiberglass finish. Follow standard procedures for painting over fiberglass.