

# Acrylic vs Fiberglass, Why it Matters

100% Cast Acrylic	Gel-Coat Fiberglass
<b>One piece construction with dome.</b> This adds strength to the unit and eliminates post installation damage, no seams to caulk and gather mold and mildew, dome eliminates ceiling maintenance.	<b>One piece construction without dome.</b> This type of construction does not support the top of the wall making the side walls vulnerable to damage. If a modular top (cap) is added then caulk must be used at the seams.
<b>Non porous surface</b> - Easy to clean, no pores to catch soap, dirt, body oils. Use of non-abrasive cleanser will mean less time spent by housekeeping removing the soap, dirt and body oils which make the surface slippery.	<b>Porous surface</b> - A porous surface is more difficult to clean which demands more time and attention from housekeeping. A porous surface becomes slippery due to the build-up of dirt and body oils.
<b>Fading</b> - Acrylic will not fade nor craze. The colour of acrylic permeates the entire thickness of the material. Acrylic was originally developed for outdoor use and therefore has a natural durability. Some of its many uses are for outdoor signs and air craft canopies.	<b>Fading</b> - Gel-coat will fade, crack and craze. This product is sprayed on similar to paint. Sun and light will fade this product.
<b>Material thickness</b> - .80 to 90 mills at the thinnest point, facilitates ease of repair from abuse or neglect.	<b>Material thickness</b> - 15 to 20 mills at its thickest point. A gel-coat product will have to be completely resurfaced to make repairs from abuse or neglect.
<b>Reinforced backing</b> - A proprietary resin mixed with a fire retardant and fiberglass strand. No fillers are used that may emit toxic fumes in case of fire. This solid backing resists post installation damage and does not deteriorate with age.	<b>Reinforced backing</b> - Typical gel-coat fiberglass units does not have a solid backing. Urethane foam is sandwiched between two layers of resin, this foam will emit toxic fumes such as phosgene and cyanide gas when ignited. Foam deteriorates with age which will weaken the backing.
<b>Installation cost</b> - Acrylic may be more at the initial purchase, however the savings realized over the life of the product due to the longevity and low maintenance of acrylic will exceed any initial cost savings.	<b>Installation cost</b> - Gel-coat fiberglass may be less at the initial purchase, however the higher maintenance and the shorter life span will negate any initial savings. In addition a proper gel-coat fiberglass installation would require that the rough-in shower area be lined with water resistant dry wall.
<b>Maintenance cost</b> - Acrylic is very low maintenance and easy to repair in case of damage.	<b>Maintenance cost</b> - Gel-coat fiberglass requires more maintenance due to its porous surface. In addition the shorter life span of this product will require unit replacement.
<b>Warranty</b> - Lifetime limited warranty against material and workmanship.	<b>Warranty</b> - 1 to 5 year limited warranty against material and workmanship.



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