

One Acrylic Many Uses

The acrylic is a useful, clear plastic that resembles glass, but has properties that make it superior to glass in many ways. General brands of high-grade acrylic include Polycast, Lucite and Plexiglass. At hand there are two basic types of acrylic: extruded and cell cast, extruded or "continuous cast" acrylic is made by a less expensive process, is softer, can scratch easier and may contain impurities. The cell cast acrylic is a higher quality acrylic and U.S. domestic cell cast is a good choice for applications that require the best and imported cell cast acrylic is often manufactured to lesser standards. The acrylic is used to make various products, such as shower doors, bath enclosures, windows and skylights and it is chosen over glass for many reasons. Acrylic is many times stronger than glass, making it much more impact resistant and therefore it is safer to people. Lessening against an acrylic shower door will not likely break it, baseballs that crash through glass windows will, in most cases, bounce off acrylic windows. It also insulates better than glass, potentially saving on heating bills. Some other great advantage of acrylic is that it is only half as heavy as glass. It makes working with acrylic much easier. It can also be sawed, whereas glass must be scored.

As adding to this favorable array of properties, a transparency rate of 93% makes acrylic the clearest material known. Incredibly thick glass will have a green tint, while acrylic remains clear. The unique property of plastic is its ability to be shaped. The Bow-front aquariums are beautiful examples of acrylic's wonderful properties. In attendance are also no seams in acrylic structures, as chemical welding at the molecular level actually "melts" seams into one piece of solid material. It seams that are welded and polished are invisible. At hand are some misconceptions about acrylic, namely that it yellows, turns brittle and cracks over time, though this might be true of very cheap forms of plastic, it is not so with acrylic. For instance, the fighter planes of WWII have acrylic bubble-tops, airplane windows are also acrylic. And if taken care of, acrylic remains new looking regardless of age or exposure to sun. Few people worry that acrylic scratches too easily, but unlike glass, scratches can be easily buffed out of acrylic. And for all of its advantages, there are two disadvantages of acrylic: it is more expensive than glass, and if exposed to a direct flame it will melt and eventually burn. Now a day acrylic is used more than ever. Virtually all major public aquariums now build display tanks out of acrylic. People will also find acrylic in malls, institutions, prisons, hospitals and commercial buildings.

About the Author

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Source: <http://www.articletrader.com>