Stainless Steel Finish & Care Reference

How to choose Stainless Steel (304 / 316), confirm a PVD sample, clean the finish, and protect it in packing and on site.

What this note is

This is Metal Divider's project note for stainless steel screens and panels. It covers four decisions: which stainless grade to name, how a PVD color is confirmed, how the finish is cleaned, and how the surface is protected before it is fixed in place.

It is not an environmental declaration, and it does not restate another manufacturer's study or label. A schedule or a project report is not part of this note.

The only material named here is Stainless Steel (304 / 316). Questions go to metal-divider.com, the form at /inquiry/, or info@metal-divider.com.

Stainless Steel 304 and 316

Metal Divider screens are stainless steel in one of two grades: 304 or 316. The customer-facing wording is Stainless Steel (304 / 316). Grade is chosen for exposure. It is not a way to change the color.

Use 304 for controlled interiors and for exterior work that is not exposed to salt air, pool or spa splash, or chloride cleaners. Use 316 where that exposure is expected: coastal sites, pool edges, spas, and other places where chlorides stay on the metal. If the exposure is unclear, describe the site on the inquiry and have the grade confirmed before a sample is made.

A finish approved on 304 is not automatically the finish for a 316 panel, and the reverse is also true. If the grade changes after a sample is approved, approve a new sample on the grade that will be produced.

Decision	304	316
Ask this first	Is the screen indoors, or outdoors away from salt and pool chemicals?	Will salt air, pool or spa splash, or chloride cleaning reach the screen?
Typical use	Room dividers, lobby panels, and protected interior screens	Coastal, poolside, and other chloride-exposed screens
What stays the same	The pattern still needs a finish sample before production	The pattern still needs a finish sample before production

PVD sample confirmation

PVD is a color finish on the stainless steel. A color name is not a match. The same description can read differently under warm interior light, daylight, and wall-wash fixtures. Metal Divider confirms the PVD color on a physical sample before the production run.

Send the pattern, the grade (304 or 316), whether the screen is interior or exterior, and a short note on the light the screen will actually be seen in. A render, a website image, or a photograph of another project can start the conversation. It does not approve the finish.

Review the sample in light close to the installed condition. Look at the face and at any cut edges that will remain visible, so the approval covers what the room will see. Keep the approved sample until the delivery is accepted. Do not treat a later batch as matched on the color name alone if that sample was not retained.

- Name the grade and the exposure with the color request.
- Approve the sample; do not approve from a screen image alone.

- If the grade or the lighting assumption changes, ask for a new sample before production.
- Keep the approved sample with the project record until delivery is accepted.

Cleaning and maintenance

Clean the finish with the mildest method that removes the soil. For dust and light fingerprints, wipe with a soft clean cloth and clean water, then dry the surface. On a brushed finish, wipe with the grain.

For heavier fingerprints or light grease, use a mild detergent in water, rinse with clean water, and dry. Do not leave cleaner, pool water, or rinse water to dry on the metal. Water that sits on a horizontal surface can leave spots, so cleaning and detailing should let water drain rather than pool.

If a PVD color is cut through by a scratch, do not paint, marker, or abrade the mark on site. Photograph it and send the images through /inquiry/ or to info@metal-divider.com before any repair is attempted.

- Do not use steel wool, abrasive pads, scouring cleaners, or a cloth that already carries grit.
- Do not use chloride bleach, hydrochloric cleaners, or masonry cleaners on the finish.
- Do not allow grinding dust from nearby work to settle on the screen. Particles left on the surface can rust and be mistaken for a failure of the panel.
- On coastal and poolside screens, rinse salt and chemical film with fresh water often enough that it does not sit, then dry the surface.

Soil	Use	Do not use
Dust and light marks	Soft cloth, clean water, then dry	Dry wiping with a grit-loaded cloth
Fingerprints and light grease	Mild detergent in water, rinse, and dry	Scouring cleaners or steel wool
Salt or pool film	Fresh-water rinse, then dry	Bleach or acid cleaner left on the surface
Scratch through a PVD color	Photograph and inquire before repair	On-site paint, marker, or abrasive blending

Packaging and surface protection

The finish is easiest to damage before the screen is fixed. If the faces arrive with a protective film or with packing between panels, leave that protection in place until the panel is installed and nearby work that could scratch it is finished. Peel film off. Do not scrape it.

Keep finished faces from rubbing in transit and in storage. Separate panels, keep them dry, and keep them off wet floors and away from cement dust, adhesives, and site chemicals. Lift panels. Do not drag a finished face across concrete, a pallet edge, or another panel.

Inspect the delivery before the protective layer is discarded. If a face is marked in transit, photograph the mark while the packing is still there and send the photo, with the panel mark, to info@metal-divider.com or through /inquiry/. This note describes handling. It is not a packing list, and it does not assign a packing weight or a crate type.

- Store under cover, with airflow, so packing does not hold moisture against the metal.
- Protect cut edges and corners until the panel is in its fixing.
- If film has tightened in heat and will not peel, stop. Do not knife the face, and do not apply a solvent until Metal Divider has confirmed it for that finish.

What to send with the inquiry

Finish and care are part of the project inquiry. There is no separate download. Use the form at /inquiry/ on metal-divider.com, or write to info@metal-divider.com.

Metal Divider confirms Stainless Steel (304 / 316), the finish sample, and the handling notes for that project. Do not read this reference as a test report, a packing specification, or another party's environmental claim.

- Pattern name or drawing, and whether the screen is interior or exterior.

- Site exposure: inland, coastal, poolside, or cleaned with chlorides.
- Grade preference, 304 or 316, or a request to confirm the grade from the exposure.
- PVD color target, and the lighting the screen will be seen in.
- Whether a physical sample is required before production.
- Anything already known about handling on site, such as a long storage period or work still going on around the screen.