
The logo for 'Jack Lawton's Questions & Answers' is centered at the top of the page. It features the text 'Jack Lawton's Questions & Answers' in a large, red, serif font. The text is overlaid on a square background that contains a technical drawing of a drum shell with various parts labeled. The background has a yellowish, aged paper texture. Horizontal lines are positioned above and below the logo.

Jack Lawton's Questions & Answers

Q: *Approximately how much value does a drum lose if it is recovered with aftermarket covering?*

A: There are many factors to consider before we can answer this question. First, we need to know the condition of the drum and the finish, so we can determine how valuable and collectable the drum is in its present state. If it is a rare or highly sought after drum in a desirable finish, but it's not the finish you wanted, it would certainly be better to find another drum that had a badly faded or cracked finish for this type of project. A good example would be if someone were looking for a wood shell Dynasonic in Jet Black wrap, it would be unwise to take one originally finished in Black Onyx and strip it down to refinish in the Jet Black. You would probably decrease its value by well over 50%. On the other hand, if you had a wood shell Dynasonic with a badly scratched and cracked Jet Black wrap, and had it properly refinished in Black Onyx, you may actually increase its value by 50% or more. This is assuming that there have been no modifications made to the shell, such as new holes for non-original hardware or drastically altered bearing edges. A good rule-of-thumb is if the drum is in very good to mint condition, refinishing will usually lessen its value, but if there are serious problems with the original finish, rewrapping may increase its value, provided you use a finish that was available from the manufacturer (from that era) and that the work is done to the manufacturer's original specifications.

Q: *What are the names or types of gray splatter and white paints that Ludwig used to coat the interiors of their 1960's and 1970's drums?*
Mike Balkom, Roanoke VA

A: That famous white finish on the interiors of Ludwig drums from the early 1960's to early 1968 was called "RESA-COTE". It was

sprayed on for "added response and tonal definition". Sealing the interior of the shell provided a smooth, more reflective surface, which seems to enhance the sound of the drum while also protecting it from dampness. It also provided a very clean and uniform look to the interior, regardless if it was maple or mahogany. The grey speckled finish used in the early 1970's was called the "LUD-COTE" interior. It provided a more modern look, especially to the single headed concert toms, and didn't show the dirt and scuff marks like the old white interiors of the 60's.

Q: *What is the best way to remove old covering from a drum without damaging the shell?* *Mike Balkom, Roanoke VA*

A: One of the best ways to remove old finish is with a heat gun. CAUTION: Many of the old drum finishes are VERY FLAMMABLE!! If you're using an industrial strength heat gun (500 - 1020 degrees F), keep the heat gun moving at all times, so as not to over heat an area causing it to ignite. Also, it's a good idea to have a fire extinguisher or container of water handy, just in case. The most flammable finishes were used prior to the early 1970's. It's a good idea to remove a small sliver of finish and expose it to some extreme heat to see what happens. If it just droops or melts, it's probably the safer type of finish from the 70's. If it goes up in a poof of smoke, then you know to be extra careful. Other finishes you might encounter are the cortex wraps, or the actual metal wraps, such as the chome-o-woods. These finishes can withstand a considerable amount of heat and won't ignite. It is advisable to protect your hands with heavy leather work gloves to avoid possible burns. Also, on the drums where the wrap goes into the seam, make sure you score along the edge of the overlap with a sharp utility knife and metal straight edge, so you don't accidentally open the seam when you remove the wrap.

In future issues of *VINTAGE DRUMMER* Magazine, we'll answer more of these types of questions. If you have a particular restoration problem or inquiry that you would like addressed, please submit it to *Jack Lawton's Questions and Answers* Column, c/o Vintage Drummer, 770-438-0844, fax # 770-437-9044, email billy@vintagedrummer.com.