



# 10 Tips for Processing Preprinted Metal

The following are ten best practices that should be implemented to ensure success with finished metals:

1. **Specifications.** Work closely with your coil coater to determine the best specifications for the product. It is important to consider the proposed manufacturing processes, the life cycle of the product, and the expectations of the consumer. Try not to over-specify the requirements.
2. **Tooling.** In most cases you do not have to change tooling, but dies should be polished and die clearances should be adjusted to fit preprinted metal.
3. **Transporting.** Preprinted coils can be shipped on flatbeds and moved with forklifts while still retaining a flawless surface. It is strongly suggested to ship preprinted coils “eye to the sky,” to avoid damaging the painted surface.
4. **Handling.** In the plant, ensure forklift masts are padded to protect coil edges. Padding on hooks and other handling devices helps keep coil in great shape. Cushioning materials like feltboard and polyurethane protect coils while they are moved, placed in inventory, or shipped.
5. **Storing.** Leave stocked coils banded until they are needed for processing, and use care when removing bands so they don’t snap back on the coil. If possible, storage in a climate controlled weatherproof building is preferable.
6. **Wrapping.** Wrapping coils with stretch wrap, coated paper, fiber-based wrap or particleboard helps protect stored coils. Use care not to create an airtight seal.
7. **Processing.** Pay close attention when feeding and processing material, as the coating can significantly change material thickness. Remove any burrs that could damage sheets or parts as they flow through the manufacturing cycle.

8. Set-up and Cleaning. Each point in a coil processing line where finished surfaces touch another surface should be considered. Be sure to check clearances and alignments. Add padding for extra protection, or bonding strips of rubber to the faces of sheers, press brakes, carry tables or bench tops. Watch out for rough dies that can gouge or scratch the prepainted surface.

9. Protective Films. The use of protective films and papers can significantly decrease any manufacturing damage. Your coil coater can help you determine what processes may be right for you.

10. Resources. Be sure to refer to NCCA's tutorials, toolkits, and videos.