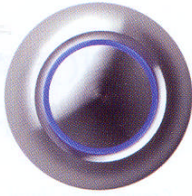


True Doorbell Button by Spore

BY RANDY WADE

There is an amazing amount of aftermarket products available for home designers, but one that is often overlooked is the item that strikes a first impression—the doorbell button.



Seattle-based design firm Spore has addressed this need with a line of contemporary, high-tech doorbell buttons that not only are well designed and solidly built, but also aesthetically pleasing. In fact, you may be admonished for continuing to push it—over and over. Spore's newest line, True, is a solid-aluminum chassis containing one printed circuit board with an onboard LED. The faceplate is available in anodized aluminum, bronze, and black with a choice of a blue, white, red, green, or amber LED halo that captivates the eye.

The company's most popular line to date, True extends the designer an excellent choice and finishing touch with an elegant simplicity not common among options in doorbell buttons. In addition to the True line, Spore also offers the Square, Round, d2, and De-Light lines. The product's lone drawback is that it will not retrofit existing, thin doorframes, though the company is working to accommodate this type of installation.

Company cofounders Ted and Lily Pierson have a solid and current philosophy: "At Spore, we strive to produce modern designs that integrate into a variety of environments. While the simplicity of line and materials is contemporary, Spore products can be at home among a wide range of styles, from Victorian and Craftsman to modern, urban homes."

FORM



FUNCTION



EASE OF INSTALLATION



RETROFIT CAPABILITIES



EASE OF MAINTENANCE



RANDY WADE is a Houston, Texas-based writer who owns Luna Lite (www.lunalite1.com), a custom outdoor-lighting firm. In more than 25 years of writing experience, hundreds of Wade's articles have been published in various publications.



JaDecor Natural Wallcovering

BY JON R. RENTFROW

As a luxury-home designer, I am generally not a fan of wallpapers in residential design. Right or wrong, I have long believed that wallpapers tend to go out of style too quickly to justify adhering them to the wall.

So upon receiving JaDecor Natural Wallcovering, a paper made primarily of cotton fibers and other minerals, I was pleased to find that the three colors I was reviewing—sandy brown, royal blue, and light olive—were all very attractive. All three colors are subtle and soft in their hue and texture, yet strong and definitive when saturating an entire wall.

While I was not able to install the product and evaluate its simplicity of installation or its color retention, I was able to get it wet, cut it, tear it, and I even tried to scratch it. During these tests, I found that JaDecor has a rather rough texture—not coarse by any means, but not smooth like most vinyl wallpapers. This texture allows it to better withstand wear and tear. Scratching it was difficult, and where I was able to, a simple fix was to scratch it even more and cover up the "wound." However, as you might expect from a product that is cotton-fiber based, water is not its friend. It didn't take the water long to make the overall surface very soft and easy to destroy. Likewise, colored liquid easily stained the material. Obviously, adding water to it to dilute the stain and to scrub it would not work, so cleaning JaDecor is difficult.

Because of its texture, I was pleasantly surprised to find that JaDecor cuts cleanly and easily, which would make installation a breeze. Although it does tear a bit rough—like common construction paper.

Marketed as a green product great for sustainability and acoustical value, JaDecor Natural Wallcovering is best installed in home theaters and living rooms, but should not be installed in a room that experiences moisture or heavy wear and tear, such as a kitchen or bathroom.

AESTHETICS



DURABILITY AGAINST SCRATCHING



WATER SOLUBILITY



EASE OF INSTALLATION



JON R. RENTFROW is an award-winning designer with a portfolio of projects all over the country (designs online at www.rentfrowdesign.com). He has also authored *...experiencing home...a guide to finding joy in your home* (Zajian Publishing, www.experiencingyourhome.com). Rentfrow lives in Colorado with his wife Elisha and three sons.