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What's The Difference Between Transparent & Translucent?

TRANSPARENT VS TRANSLUCENT

Differences between transparent, translucent, and opaque acrylic



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By Kevin Delvie • January 29, 2020 Posted in [Quick Tips & Tricks](https://www.delviesplastics.com/blog/category/quick-tips-tricks.html) (<https://www.delviesplastics.com/blog/category/quick-tips-tricks.html>)

A question that comes up very frequently is the specific difference between transparent and translucent material, and it's a great question since it can make a huge impact on what sort of acrylic you end up purchasing.

Luckily, the answer is straightforward:

Transparent material has the physical properties of allowing light to pass through without a large scattering of light - this means that you can actually see through the material. The exact amount of light that can pass through depends on the material, but remember that you'll always be able to clearly see through the material.

On the other hand, **translucent** material lets light pass through but objects on the other side can't be seen clearly. Think stain glass windows, which allow light to come through, but you won't be able to clearly see anything behind the material.

In the example below, the furthest right sheet is transparent, while the next sheet over is translucent

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Kohler v. Delta
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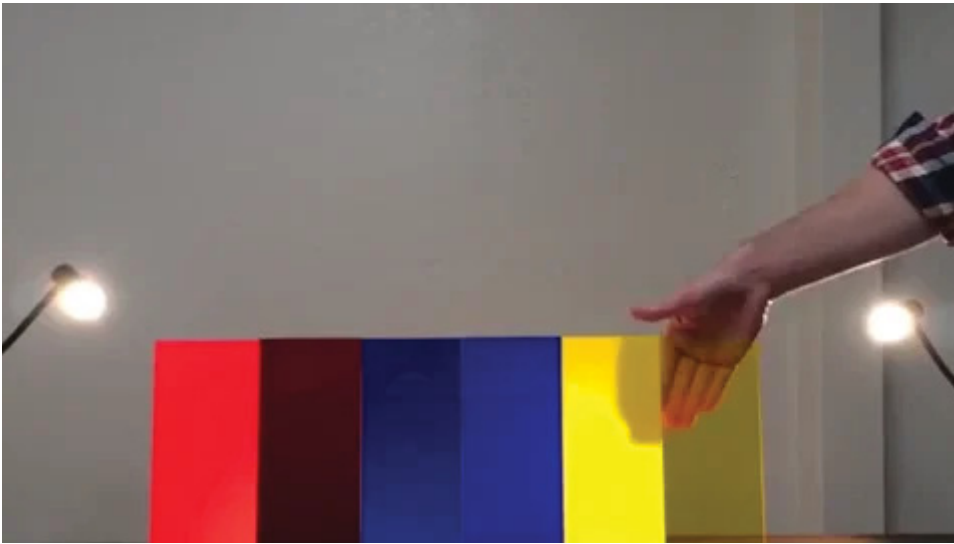
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Of course, it's easiest to see a few real-life examples using the material we have. The following video shows a few of our colors in both transparent, and translucent.

Transparent vs Translucent Colors



Both types of material have endless practical uses, but depending on your application it's important to know the difference. For example, many people use translucent material for sign making, because it is excellent for backlighting.

Another common option when choosing material is **opacity**, which lacks the characteristics of transparent and translucent material - opaque materials allow **zero** light to pass through. Here's an example of one of our opaque materials compared to translucent. You can see that the opaque material stops any light from passing through, while the transparent material allows light, and the shape of the object, to pass through.





(/blog-assets/Opaque_Example_(2)_1580252134.png)

What about acrylic rod?

The translucent and transparent properties apply to all of the products we carry, including the cast, and extruded colored rod. Again, the usefulness of each will depend on your project. We have a wide range of both transparent and translucent rods - it's just a matter of choosing the product that fits your vision!

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