



the

complete **diy** guide

to painting your home



brian cahill

almost everything you need to know about interior painting projects
includes...

- repairing gaps, cracks, holes, wallpaper, rust, mould, stains...
- awkward bits... and how to approach them
- a list of useful products, items and tools to make the job easier
- how to tackle ceilings, walls, rooms plus a hall, stairs and landing
- project makeovers – kitchens, wardrobes, fireplaces and...
- *oh no!* - unexpected problems need not be a disaster!

All the problems pictured below were fixed using the methods outlined inside this book.

Almost every type of problem is catered for.

Don't be afraid to confront problems yourself – there is a straightforward Technique, product and tool that will solve it!





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INTRODUCTION

The difference between an **average** finish and a **finish you can be truly proud of** is enormous. Achieving it doesn't take a huge amount of skill – it just takes a little care, some knowledge some advice - and patience. If you want a finished look you can be proud of this book will help you achieve it!

When I took up painting and decorating for a living I began to discover just how much I **didn't** know about the products, tips and techniques which would help me attain a finish that looked the same as if it was done by a pro.

I searched the web, read books and trade publications and observed professional tradespeople trying to find ways of improving my ability to get that expert looking finish. While I found a lot of useful stuff, I couldn't find all that I was searching for in one place and that is why I decided to write this book.

The book is designed to be simple to read and quick to reference. The table of contents doubles as the index and anything you need to find out about should be located in less than 15 seconds. Read what I have to say on the subject and study the pictures.

Re-decorating your home yourself is a great way to save money, but don't try and save money at the expense of the final finish. You don't need to! While the book is about doing it yourself and saving money don't try and save money by buying cheap materials. Cheap materials = cheap looking finish!

Cheaper paints simply don't have enough pigment in order to provide a high-opacity finish whereas more expensive ones do. Also it's a false economy as three coats can be required in order to provide a similar level of covering power as two of a higher-end product. Just means more work and the likelihood that it still won't look like a professional-standard finish.

With the help of this book you can ...

- have a professional-standard finish you can be really proud of
- save money *and*
- get a lot of fun out of just doing it yourself!

When you've finished your project – whatever it is – you want friends and family to say "Wow, what a fantastic job! Even better when you say "*Thanks – I did it myself!*"

I hope you find the book useful, informative and stimulating!

Best wishes.

BRIAN CAHILL

BRIAN CAHILL

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THE STEPS

There are **10 steps** to achieving that professional finish...

1. LOOK CLOSELY AT THE ROOM OR AREA AND PLAN WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO

It makes a lot of sense to survey the state of the room **and note repairs in particular that need doing**. Removing nails can leave unsightly holes and don't forget to look up - cobwebs can spoil your finish! **Plan the order in which you're going to do things**.

2. REMOVE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE FROM THE ROOM

Furniture is best moved out completely but if this isn't possible move it away from the walls but keep it to one end of the room. Don't push everything into the middle of the room as this makes laying drop cloths difficult and prevents access to things like the ceiling rose which can be awkward to get around.

Ornaments, lamps etc need to be put somewhere safe and curtains need to be taken down. Walls often have pictures, mirrors or ornaments hung on them. All are hung on nails, screws or hooks of some kind. These all prevent a roller getting a clear run and can cause drips.

3. TREAT ANY STAINS

Any treatment applied to a stain will need time to dry. Water-based treatments need less time than oil-based, so decide which you're going to use and allow enough time for it to dry thoroughly. Oil-based treatments should usually be applied the previous day and allowed to dry overnight.

4. FILL AND REPAIR ANY HOLES, DENTS GAPS OR CRACKS

Holes and dents can appear anywhere but particularly in walls. They spoil the finished appearance so fill them before painting. Gaps and cracks can appear anywhere but typically on ceilings, between skirting boards and walls, between door-frames and walls and between ceiling and walls. Fill them with acrylic-filler and smooth to a finish using a moistened finger or filler-knife.

5. SAND SMOOTH

Sand any filler using a flexible sanding block of around 100 grit. This is rough enough to sand coarser fillers but light enough to give a smooth finish. Move the block in either a circular or side-to-side motion and don't exert too much pressure. Woodwork to be painted also benefits from light sanding. For larger surfaces use a sheet or detail sander as appropriate.

6. CLEAN ALL SURFACES THOROUGHLY

A professional finish is achieved through professional preparation. Wash all surfaces with a solution of Sugar Soap for a thoroughly clean surface ready for painting.

7. MASK OFF AND COVER OBJECTS AND SURFACES NOT TO BE PAINTED

Light switches, electrical sockets and ceiling roses are the main objects to be masked off. There is nothing more unsightly than paint splattered plastic or brass (even worse!) fittings when masking them off only takes a matter of seconds. This is why I say that you must look at the room to be painted in advance. Many people don't do this and therefore miss items that need to be masked-off. They then start painting, meet the obstacle and decide that they'll just go as near as they can without touching it. Never works! Mask it off before painting!!!

Masking-off is also necessary around window-frames and window-sills and along carpet edges. It is also useful when painting skirting boards and door frames a light colour but a dark colour on walls.

In some cases where painting over wallpaper, a border may be present which is to be retained. Apply masking tape CAREFULLY to the border making sure that the top and bottom edges are sealed.



The adhesive on masking tape gets stronger with time and may pull the surface to which it applied off as it is removed, so be careful! Test a small area first!! If ordinary masking tape is too strong then use a low-tack tape. More expensive, but designed not to damage the surface to which it's applied.

8. PAINT!

If you have prepared things properly it will be a simple matter to start painting. Make sure you have your trays, rollers, brushes and paints ready and know where you're going to start and in what order you're going to do things. A little bit of planning makes for a better, smoother, thoroughly professional finish.

9. REMOVE ANY MASKING TAPE – Carefully!

No point doing all the work and spoiling it at the end!

10. TOUCH UP ANYTHING THAT NEEDS IT

There's generally always something!



Before starting any painting project make sure you have adequate ventilation. Some paints and varnishes give off fumes which may be dangerous if used in unventilated or confined areas.

And lastly... TAKE YOUR TIME!

A RUSHED PAINT JOB LOOKS EXACTLY THAT.

A RUSHED PAINT JOB!



TYPES OF PAINT

- **EMULSION**

Water-based. Ready-mixed or made-up from colour card. Matt finish suitable for all walls, silk finish tends to show-up imperfections so better suited to smooth walls. Some emulsions are branded as wipeable, washable and even scrubbable.

- **CEILING EMULSION**

Almost always white. A useful alternative if you don't want a stark white ceiling is to have it tinted with something like Gardenia which is a *soft* or *off-white*.

- **OIL BASED**

Generally regarded as harder wearing than water-based paints. Spirit clean-up. Less politically correct nowadays. All manufacturers moving to water-based paints.

- **WATER BASED**

Water-based paints offer a more environmentally-friendly alternative. Soap and water clean-up.

- **Paint Finishes**

- **Full-gloss.** Shiny finish easily wipeable
- **Eggshell or Satin finish** – semi-gloss also easily wipeable
- **Dead-flat finish** – certain manufacturers offer a flat-finish paint which is well suited to older properties. Almost no sheen at all. Beautiful period finish; more difficult to keep clean.

- **VARNISH**

Varnish comes in a variety of finishes from full, oil-based gloss to water based satin or matt. Oil-based varnish tends to be thicker in consistency than water based; Solvent cleanup. Water-based products are more environmentally-friendly but thinner consistency.



Both oil-based and water-based varnish can be difficult to apply. Many people load far-too much oil-based varnish onto their brush with the consequence that it runs down the surface in "curtains" or drips. Load less onto the brush and brush-out well.



Water-based varnish is of a very thin consistency and needs the same careful approach as oil-based. When you have finished applying water-based varnish clean your brush out in water, dry it and go over what you have just varnished. This way you will remove any excess varnish neatly. If you try to do this with a brush coated with varnish all you will do is keep applying varnish over the areas where you want to remove it!



Drips like this really spoil the final appearance!

- **READY MIXED PAINTS**

Choose from a colour card, buy off the shelf.

- **IN-STORE COLOUR MIXING**

Increasingly popular and available in hundreds of colours and shades. Choose from a colour-card and the DIY store will mix the colour using a tinting-machine and computer-based formula. The container is then placed in a mixing-machine to produce the desired colour.



It is possible to select a colour and have it made at $\frac{1}{2}$ strength, $\frac{3}{4}$ strength, $1\frac{1}{2}$ strength etc. This means that if you like a colour but feel it might be too dark you can ask to have it made lighter and vice-versa. Very useful for instance where the lighting in one room may differ from that of another; you can keep the same colour and have them look very similar.

Ask your DIY Store if they can offer this service.

- **SPECIAL PAINTS**

There are certain paints on the market such as Zinsser Perma-White which are better suited to areas with damp conditions such as shower-enclosures and bathrooms than ordinary ceiling emulsion paints. See the chapter on Shower Enclosures and Bathrooms. Some are also tintable.

Many manufacturers are offering paint ranges which are targeted at damper areas. Check their colour cards or ask at your local DIY store.

- **HOW MUCH DO I NEED?**

Lots of books go into paint coverage in square metres and the like. Manufacturers clearly state how much each can will cover under certain circumstances but the reality is that paint generally comes in a number of can sizes which will govern how much you will need to buy and it is usually emulsion paint that people are concerned about.

Emulsion generally comes in $2\frac{1}{2}$, 5 or 10 litre cans. For most rooms you will need to purchase 5 litres – not that you might use all of it but $2\frac{1}{2}$ litres is generally too little for two coats on anything but very small rooms. A Hall, Stairs and Landing area generally takes between 5 and 7 litres for two coats. For much larger rooms buy a 10 litre bucket if you are using a made-up paint. It will work out cheaper and you will get a consistent colour.

- **HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE ON THE WALLS?**

First of all, remember that the same paint applied to different walls can and may look totally different. This is because natural and artificial light has a big part to play in how the final colour will perform. So what's the solution?

- **PAINT-POT SAMPLES**

Some paint manufacturers supply small paint-pot samples for purchase. Typically though, most people apply a bit of sample paint on top of the existing colour and try and judge from that.

The problem with this is that a) it gives a distorted appearance and b) if a lot of different samples are applied to a wall and some of them are dark you end up with the problem of trying to hide them if a lighter colour is selected.

- **READY-PAINTED COLOUR CARDS**

Other manufacturers now have ready-painted colour samples available to buy. This avoids the need to buy sample pots is more likely to give a better approximation of the true colour. They also mean that you can easily move the colour-card around the room to check how the colour looks under different lighting conditions. Very important!

- **WHITE CARD**

If you need to buy a paint-pot sample then paint it onto a piece of white card. As with the ready-painted card this will allow you to move the card around the room and judge more realistically how the final colour should look. It also avoids the problem of having to obliterate darker colours.



Disposing of Paint

Paint should always be disposed of at a recycling facility and **never** in the general rubbish or poured down drains.

Water-based vs. Oil-based

Some sources would say that water-based paint does not have the same penetrating qualities as oil-based paint when painting over an existing oil paint and so it is necessary to **1.** lightly sand the surface to provide a key and/or **2.** apply a high-adhesion water-based primer first.

It is suggested that if neither of these is done the paint will not adhere to the surface as it should and will therefore deteriorate quicker and be less durable.

Personally I find that the application of a primer coat first enhances the quality of the finish.



A to Z LIST OF USEFUL PRODUCTS ITEMS AND TOOLS

BAGS

Plastic bags are particularly useful when it comes to storing rollers for a period of time - be it overnight, for days or even weeks. The best ones for rollers are those made of thinner material like you find in the fruit and vegetable department of a supermarket. Blow into the bag to open it and carefully insert the roller or rollers. They do not have to be removed from the frame. Wind the open end of the bag around the roller frame to prevent air getting in. Brushes covered with water-based emulsion paint can be stored this way too.



A light plastic bag is great for short-term storage of emulsion rollers



Store a roller tray overnight in a plastic carrier bag

Trays with emulsion paint still in them will keep overnight if inserted into a plastic bag of heavier material. This helps stop a skin forming on the surface of the paint. The bag does not have to be tied but pull it taut across the top of the tray to stop it dipping into the paint. Next day just remove the tray carefully, Take your rollers and brushes out of their bags and you're ready to start again. This saves a lot of cleanup time when jobs can't be completed in one go.

BOWLS

Round, plastic bowls are handy in the brush-cleaning process, for mixing additives to small amounts of paint and for holding small amounts of paint when you are cutting-in for instance. **Even better if you can get a bowl with a lid**; ideal for keeping unused paint overnight or even longer!



BRUSHES

There are a multitude of brushes available on the market but I'll tell you what works for me. For most paintwork I use a set of **synthetic bristle** brushes of varying sizes which are available at reasonable cost from most DIY stores. Bristle brushes are less accurate for detailed and final finish work but are quite suitable for tasks that don't require precision and can be very good for painting detailed cornice.



Synthetic brush

For “cutting-in” (getting a sharp line at say a ceiling/wall intersection) I use either a 2” synthetic bristle brush or a 15mm sash (or oval) brush. For painting narrow surfaces such as the part of the door frame that meets the wall I use a sash-brush. This is an oval brush which not only holds lots of paint but spreads out to form a consistent line of paint without stray bristles sticking out. Standard, non-synthetic, flat bristle brushes are not suitable for cutting-in since they do not hold enough paint and tend to have stray bristles which can put coloured paint onto a nice white ceiling!

Sash or oval brush tip



A dead-straight line!

Standard bristle brushes are useful for painting cornice work as they tend to be less springy than the synthetic bristle type. I use a 3” or 4” for painting smooth cornices. Also useful for applying primers.



Synthetic bristle brushes often come in sets



REMEMBER! You don't have to try and do everything with the same brush. Use an appropriate brush for what you're doing!

CARDBOARD (or THIN PLASTIC SHEET)

Another simple and useful piece of equipment which costs nothing is a piece of stiff cardboard! When you're painting a door – particularly with a gloss roller – just slide it between your dropcloth and the door and paint right over it. You'll get right down to the bottom of the door with good pressure and an even finish. The same applies if you are painting skirting boards over a wooden, not carpeted floor. Just slide the cardboard along as you paint with either brush or roller. It is also useful as a sliding mask against window frames when painting the reveals if you haven't used masking tape.

Slide under door or pipework



You often find very-suitable plastic sheet at the bottom of supermarket “bag for life” type shopping bags!

CAULK (ACRYLIC FILLER)

Caulk – also commonly known as Flexible Acrylic Filler is usually packaged in either a squeezable tube or as a cartridge which requires a cartridge gun. It is a flexible filler which is easy to apply, which dries quickly and which can be overpainted in a very short time. Ideally it should be applied in one movement – not stop/start – but it isn't vital when you are filling a gap. It is much more important if you are using a silicone sealant to provide a waterproof seal around a sink or bath for instance.

When the Acrylic Filler is applied you can use your finger to smooth it - but make sure your finger is wet otherwise it will drag the filler and give an uneven finish! A small bowl of water is handy to keep alongside you if you are doing a lot of filling.



You should also be aware that Flexible Acrylic Filler comes in colours other than white! If you are filling gaps between oak coloured skirting boards and the wall for instance use oak-coloured filler. Check your DIY store carefully as the white filler is usually much more prominent!



Standard manually-operated caulking gun



Filler will continue to exude from the nozzle even after you have released the gun handle – this is because of the built up pressure – so be careful where you put the gun after you have finished with it otherwise you may find sticky Flexible Acrylic Filler or Decorators Filler somewhere you don't want it!

CLOTHS

- **Kitchen Cloths**

Great for wiping down and general cleaning. Better if you can get an industrial version – stronger and more resistant to tears.

- **Drop Cloths / Dustsheets**

An absolute must! If you are painting a special room in particular such as your lounge or dining room a heavy-duty, non-bleed drop-cloth is a must. Usually measuring 12' by 12' they are great for large rooms but a little unwieldy for smaller areas. Cut up a 12' one into more manageable sizes if you want or buy, for instance, a 24' x 3' one especially for stairs. Smaller, lighter drop-cloths are available and you should decide on the most appropriate one for the work you're going to undertake.

Bathrooms and en-suites in particular pose a special problem in that the toilet bowl, shower area and wash basin are of irregular shape. **Old, thick towels** are really useful in getting in and around these objects and will keep paint splashes from getting on the floor surface.



- **Plastic Drop-sheets**

Plastic drop-sheets are excellent for covering all sorts of objects as they are available in different sizes. They are ideal for covering fireplaces, baths, furniture, kitchen-cupboards and appliances. Because they are made of plastic they are impervious to paint and so no problems with drips! Generally these are available through specialist paint centres although some DIY stores may carry them.

Some manufacturers such as Pentrilo make pre-taped drop-sheets of different lengths which are excellent for all sorts of tasks.



- **Tack Cloths**

Available at most good DIY stores, a specially impregnated lint-free painters tack cloth is one of the best ways to remove dust, fibres and grit before applying a finish coat. Generally considered indispensable to a level-3, first-class finish (see page 78).

DUST MASK



Wipe with a tack – cloth for a fine-finish!

Dust masks are a must if you are sanding and vitally important if you are using a power-sander. There are many different types available but I find that a standard mask fitted with a filter serves just fine. If however you are going to be engaging in any task that is going to generate large quantities of dust (sanding a wall after removing wallpaper for instance) invest in a high-quality mask with heavy-duty filtration capability.

EAR DEFENDERS

Another **must** if you are going to do a lot of power-sanding or drilling.



E-B

This is a water-based, stir-in bonding primer which is added to the first coat of paint – either interior emulsion or exterior masonry paint. After application the E-B soaks into the substrata for a tight grip with the paint facing out. It provides a bond for exterior masonry paint particularly where the surface may be chalky or flaky. Very useful when you are painting a room which will have lots of posters stuck to the walls with Blu Tack™ or other tapes as it prevents paint peel-off peel away when the Blu Tack™ is removed.



EXTENSION POLES

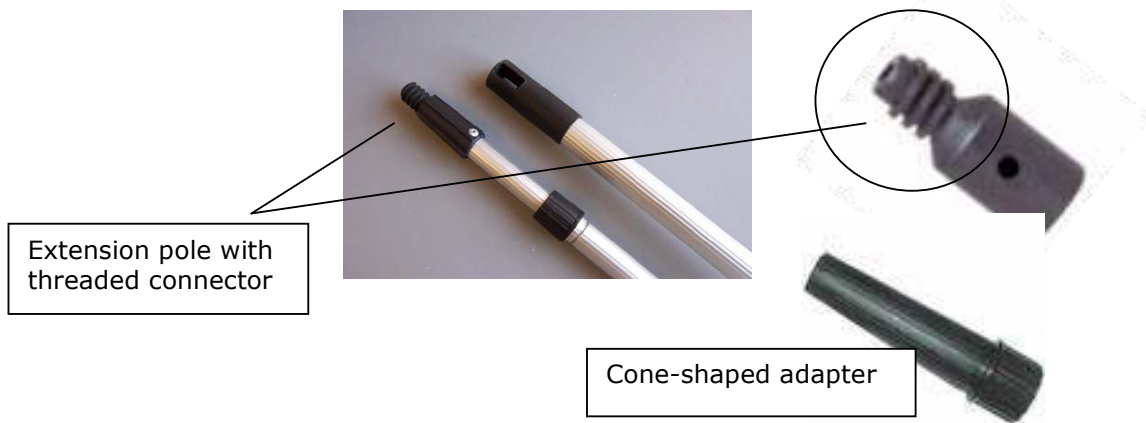
Extension poles allow you to extend your reach, paint more evenly and see much more easily what you have and haven't painted since you are not right up against the surface. This is particularly useful when painting a white on white ceiling where it can be extremely difficult to see where you've been.

Almost all DIY stores and paint retailers sell a range of extension poles.



Make sure that the pole fits the connection thread of the rollers you intend using.

Some poles have a thread which will accommodate the connection of a cone-shaped adapter. This allows you to connect a roller frame which is unthreaded.



Most extension poles comprise two pieces which can be locked in any position to give you a reach that is variable. However they cannot be made shorter than the outer sleeve, which is generally around 4 feet which can prove a little difficult in confined spaces. Some manufacturers make 3-section poles which are much better for tight spaces since they collapse to around two feet and extend to between 6 and 8 feet. If you are doing a lot of decorating it can pay to have both types.

There are also short-handle extension poles available which are about 12" to 18" in length. They are useful for painting in tight spaces where you need a little extra reach or up a ladder where a lightweight extension can be a real help.

FILLERS

- **Coarse blend fillers**

Coarser-blend fillers are useful for filling deep holes or gaps but it is difficult to get a seamless finish using this type of filler alone and should be used in conjunction with a fine, but hard-setting, filler such as Spackling.

- **Spackling**

A very fine lightweight filler that has a firm and smooth consistency which is ideal as a finishing filler for smaller areas. It sets hard but is easy to sand to a smooth finish if necessary. Can be used indoors or outdoors. Mix a little water in and stir to a creamy consistency.



FIXER MATE™ FROM GEOCEL

A high-adhesion sealer which is a thicker consistency than normal acrylic filler. Cut the nozzle wider than for normal acrylic filler as it can take a lot of pressure to force it out. **Very sticky**, needs white spirit clean-up. Excellent for filling wide gaps. Squeeze carefully along gap then either dip your finger or your filler-knife into water or white spirit and draw along to achieve smoothest finish you can. Alternatively use the back of an old spoon. Allow to dry, and then apply normal acrylic-filler if necessary and smooth with a wet filler-knife or your finger.

Wide gap between skirting board and wall



Apply Fixer Mate



Smooth using a wet filler knife



FLOETROL

- Floetrol is a paint-conditioner suitable for all emulsions and exterior masonry paints. It makes paint flow without brush or roller marks and increases the hiding power on reds, yellows etc. If you are painting in warm conditions it will keep the wet-edge open longer to prevent lap marks etc. It also makes rollers and brushes glide with less drag or effort.



Running out of paint?! If you are coming to the end of a job and find yourself running low on emulsion Floetrol can help. Just add some Floetrol to the can and you may find you have enough to finish without having to buy more.

GLOVES

By wearing a pair of gloves while you're painting you will not only keep your hands clean but you will be able to answer the door or the phone or move objects without getting paint on them. Lightweight gardening gloves are ideal as they are thick enough to keep out paint but light enough for you to be able to feel what you're doing. You can of course wear lightweight disposable rubber gloves but these are tighter and much less easy to pull off quickly.



LADDERS

- **The Stepladder**

One of the most important ladders for indoor work is the stepladder. Make sure you invest in a reputable brand which conforms to European safety standards. A stepladder should be lightweight and sturdy with wide treads for safety. Some come with a tool-tray which is handy for holding small tools, screws, nails etc.



- **The 3-Way Combination Ladder**

This is a lightweight, versatile ladder which can be configured as a conventional stepladder, as a two-stage extension ladder or as a stairway ladder.

LONG-HANDLED SPOON

It's always a problem to get the last bit of paint out of the tin! When you tip emulsion paint up and into your roller tray you'll often find quite an amount still left in the bottom. Buy yourself a cheap long-handled spoon and the problem is solved!



MASKING TAPE

Never attempt a paint job without masking-tape. You will never achieve a clean, razor-sharp line if you don't. It must be applied carefully otherwise there's no point as paint will get in to any overlaps or missed surfaces and spoil the final look. When using tape to mask off a carpet from skirting board pull it as taut as possible and make certain that it is pressed right in to the edge otherwise paint will get onto the carpet.

Mask light-switches, electrical sockets, ceiling roses, recessed ceiling-light fittings and in particular, brass electrical fittings and door handles.



Masking over carpet



Masking over top of kitchen units



Masking applied to top of skirting board



Masking around light switch



The adhesive on masking tape gets stronger over time so do not leave it on longer than necessary. Be careful when removing it as it can pull paint with it, particularly vinyl emulsion paints and gloss paints which form a skin as they dry. Careful application and removal is key to the final finish!

- **Low-tack masking-tape**

Some manufacturers make special low-adhesion or "safe-release" tapes which are necessary when protection is required to a surface painted with emulsion – for instance when you are painting a cornice white but the ceiling gardenia. Normal masking-tape is generally too sticky and will pull off the emulsion when removed. These special tapes are designed to overcome this.

MINI-ROLLERS

Don't attempt to paint a room without a long-handled mini-roller! Mini-rollers are a terrific little tool since at 4" they reach places a normal 9" roller cannot. They are ideal for rolling the outer edge of a ceiling since they get right against the edge and overlap onto the wall.

However straight the edges may seem, they are generally not entirely true so overlapping ensures that the paint edge between the two is completely filled.

If bought as a set they generally come complete with small roller-tray and short-handled roller frame. Many again come with a threaded handle to accommodate the connection of an extension pole.



Typical Gloss Mini-Roller



Mini-Roller and Tray



Standard radiator roller



Emulsion Mini-Roller



One of the most common mini-rollers is the **radiator roller** which is the same as a short handled mini-roller but with a longer handle to allow you get right down behind a radiator. Although sold as radiator rollers they do much more than that – allowing you to reach almost from floor to ceiling in one go without the need for a ladder (connect them to a short extension pole and unless the ceiling is abnormally high you will reach from floor to ceiling with ease!). They also allow a long run from side to side on a wall or ceiling. Saves time, gives a better finish!



Using a radiator roller around an obstacle

Radiator – or long-handled mini-rollers - are ideal for getting in-between ceiling and wardrobe tops!



They are a real benefit when painting walls as they get right into the edges between skirting boards, door-frames and between window-frames and reveals. They also allow you to get (with a bit of practice!) within about half an inch of the top of a wall and the ceiling – something you can't do with a 9" roller!

Fitted with a high-density foam, gloss-roller you can apply gloss paint quickly, evenly and without drips. You can achieve a much better and more even finish with a gloss roller than you can with a brush.



Rollers spin as they apply paint and can therefore spray paint where you don't want it. When you take up the roller full of paint from the tray first make sure that it has stopped dripping then roll upwards against the wall slowly at first. After that you can roll quicker!

Sometimes you'll want to paint a strip of timber – the edge of a door for instance – which is narrower than the roller. Apply carefully as the paint contained on the roller surface not in contact with the strip will fly off the roller onto the nearest surface – including you!

NITROMORS™

Nitromors is a chemical paint stripper which is very effective in restoring brushes which have been left and have hardened.

As with any chemical, the manufacturers instructions must be followed to avoid accidents

In the following example a set of chrome handles had been overpainted with gloss paint. The quick and easy way to clean off the paint without scraping was to soak them in a little Nitromors. They were then rinsed and wiped clean to a paint-free finish.



Overpainted chrome handles



Soak in Nitromors



Good as new!



A If you are doing a kitchen makeover it is very effective at removing tile-adhesive.

B If you have painted-on screws that just won't budge dab on Nitromors and leave it overnight. The screws should then be loosened enough to allow you to unscrew them fairly easily

OOPS!™ FROM HOMAX PRODUCTS

A terrific product to have which removes dried-in emulsion paint, marker, lipstick, grease and adhesive residue. Very handy for clean-up or prep work.



OWATROL OIL

I discovered this product through an advertisement in a trade publication and once I used it I wouldn't paint without it! It is a terrific product which when added to paint -

- Minimises or eliminates brush marks
- Makes paint flow on beautifully without pulling or dragging
- Will not dull or harm the gloss finish like white spirit
- Increases hiding power especially on low hide colours like reds, yellows etc
- Increases actual paint coverage
- Makes paint stick tightly & eliminates gloss paint peeling particularly on window sills and exterior woodwork
- Keeps the 'wet edge' open longer
- Makes paint much easier to apply in either cold or hot weather



Used neat it is an effective solution for rust – it drives out moisture and air leaving a tough flexible film in its place. It can then be added to subsequent primer or paint coats for longer-lasting protection.

PAINT KETTLES

Usually made of either plastic or metal, they come in various sizes. They are particularly useful since you can pour just enough paint into the kettle, add your paint conditioner and mix. This is almost impossible to do properly using the original paint can since as they are too full. Paint kettles are much safer in this regard too as they avoid spillages when manoeuvring from place to place since you have much less paint in them.





PLASTIC KNIVES

Plastic knives such as those party-packs sold in supermarkets are great for stirring small tins of paint or varnish. They are easily wiped clean and easily disposed of. They also come into their own when you open a tin of paint and find that a skin has formed on the surface. Since plastic knives have a serrated edge they are ideal for cutting around the edge of the skin. Use the knife to carefully lift the skin – **remembering that it will drip!** – into a plastic bag which can then be tied closed and disposed of easily.



PRIMERS / SEALERS

There are many products belonging to the primer / sealer category available at your local paint centre or DIY store. They are problem-solvers and are designed to do exactly what they say – to prime surfaces before painting them and to seal surfaces which may be damp or otherwise unsuitable for painting. Damp, chalky and flaky surfaces cannot be painted directly – they need a base coat – and that is what primer / sealers do very effectively. Some are water-based and some are oil-based differing only in their thickness, capacity to obliterate and clean-up procedures.



You must cure the cause of any penetrating damp first otherwise all a primer / sealer can do is mask the problem for some time. Eventually the problem will recur if the root cause isn't found and fixed.

SUPER PVA FROM UNIBOND



Another really useful product for priming, sealing or sticking. Terrific for repairing cracked ceilings where the paint layers have peeled away. Paste on PVA in accordance with the manufacturers instructions and let it dry.

RAZOR BLADE HOLDER

A razor blade holder is a must for scraping off paint splashes, especially on glass. They accommodate standard safety razor blades.



The blade retracts for added safety

ROLLERS

Rollers are an indispensable tool for the painter, they are easy to use and cover large areas quickly. To complete the interior of a typical house you need 2 plastic or metal roller trays which will accommodate a 9" roller – one for white paint to do the ceilings and one for the wall colour. The most usual roller is a medium pile, 9" wide. Many Paint and DIY stores sell a variety of rollers, trays, roller frames and sets to suit every surface. For large surfaces and speed use a 15" or an 18" roller! For smooth walls use a short-pile roller of around 12mm, for stippled ceilings use a longer-pile.



Double Sized 18" Roller



Standard 9" Roller

ROLLER-FRAMES

Each roller requires a roller-frame. The best ones are made of heavy-duty, birdcage frame construction or those designed for the professional painter. The double-sized roller has its own special frame.



Many have a threaded handle to accommodate the connection of an extension pole. Check that one fits the other before buying!

ROLLER TRAYS

Roller trays come in various sizes. The most usual fits a standard 9" roller and are often found as sets in DIY stores.

Standard roller tray



Large, double size roller tray



SAFETY GLASSES

A must if you are using any type of power-sander or cutting tool.



SANDERS

- **Orbital Sander** - Ideal for sanding larger surface areas.



Orbital 1/3 sheet sander



Using an orbital sander on door frame

- **Detail Sander** -



Useful for those hard to get at areas which a larger orbital sander can't reach.

- **Flexible Sanding Block** -



Useful for light sanding and awkward shaped areas. Available in varying grit densities.

Most usual are:

- 40 - 60 Coarse for heavy sanding and stripping
- 80 - 120 Medium for general smoothing
- 150 - 180 Fine for surface finishing



When they get clogged simply wash them.

- **Pole Sander**

A pole sander is a really useful tool when you have to sand a large area. Fitted with a universal joint it can be used at any angle on either walls or ceilings. Usually they have a threaded connector to fit most standard extension poles.

Particularly useful and quick when sanding walls after wallpaper has been stripped. Less dust and noise than a power-sander plus the fact that almost every area to be sanded can be tackled from the ground.



The universal joint on a pole sander means it can be used at any angle

SCOURING PADS

Kitchen scouring pads are particularly useful for de-greasing paintwork and general preparation work.



SHARP KNIFE / BLADE

You will always need a sharp knife! Use a Stanley or snap-off blade type for best results.

SKIM PLASTER

There are a number of branded, ready-mixed skim plasters on the market and readily available in DIY stores and specialist décor centres. They can be used to repair larger damaged areas. Some are applied by brush or roller and smoothed using either a plasterers trowel or a proprietary spreader. Since most of us are not professional plasterers it is usually necessary to sand the area to a fine finish. If done with care the repaired area will be indistinguishable from the surrounding area. Paint in the usual way.



SPACKLING

A very fine lightweight filler that has a firm and smooth consistency which is ideal as a finishing-filler for smaller areas. It sets hard but is easy to sand to a smooth finish if necessary. **Can be used indoors or outdoors with excellent results!**



If the filler looks a little dry and crumbly just add a few drops of water and mix to a creamy consistency.



STAIRMATE®

The Stairmate® is a clever product which allows you to get at those awkward to reach areas when painting stairwell walls and ceiling. It comprises a heavy-duty metal tray with adjustable height to fit all heights of stair treads. To use it you just extend your combination or 2-stage ladder to the height you need and place it squarely into the tray. That's it – you're ready to paint!



The Stairmate is fully-adjustable for tread height



Sometimes a combination of tools and equipment make a job both easier and safer. When cutting-in at the highest point of the stairwell using the Stairmate to provide safe and secure access in combination with the System Freehand Holsta™ makes the task considerably easier and safer. The Holsta attaches securely to the hip ensuring you can apply paint by roller and brush safely and accurately. (Image courtesy of Shield Innovations)



SUGAR SOAP

Sugar-soap is a really effective preparatory cleaner that will cut through grease and grime leaving a clean surface that will provide greater paint adhesion giving a better finish. It is usually available in ready-mixed or undiluted bottles or sprays. It is also available in its original crystal form. Follow the manufacturers instructions for mixing. Rinse off with clean water.



THICK SPORTS SOCKS

These are useful in protecting your wall surfaces when leaning a ladder against them. Most ladders have a hard plastic end to them **which can dig into the wall** when your weight is applied. Simply slip them over the ends that will be in contact with the wall to reduce the pressure and avoid damage which will have to be repaired. **Alternatively fold and place a towel over the top. Just as effective.**

TINFOIL

- **For short-term storage**

For a long time I searched for a method of keeping foam, gloss rollers and paint-brushes used for oil-based gloss paints overnight or even over a weekend if necessary. Tinfoil fits the bill just fine! Make sure that you have completely covered the roller or brush bristles otherwise they will become hard. Done properly brushes and rollers can be repeatedly used without having to clean them with white spirit every time you're finished with them.

- **To cover unused paint**

Use tinfoil to cover unused paint in a paint kettle or roller-tray – it stops a skin forming! It's also handy to line a mini-roller tray with tinfoil and then pour the paint into it. Saves cleanup time!

- **To pour paint from its container**

Tinfoil is brilliant when you have to pour oil-based paint from a brand new can to another receptacle such as a paint kettle. If you try and tip paint from a brand new can which is full to the brim, a fair amount of paint will drip down the sides of the tin towards the base. Messy!



Make a funnel out of tinfoil when pouring from a large container



Cover unused paint in a roller tray



Tinfoil covering unused paint in a paint kettle

Wrap paintbrushes or gloss roller carefully for short-term storage



- **To fill gaps or holes**

If you don't have a high adhesion filler to hand, tinfoil is excellent for filling a large gap or hole. It doesn't expand or try to spring back to shape. Tear small sections of foil, crush them to an appropriate shape and press them into the gap or hole. Once in place, fill with spackling or acrylic filler for a perfect finish!



**Never use tinfoil to fill gaps around electrical switches or sockets!
Use polystyrene foam if you don't have a high-adhesion filler.**

TOWELS

Drape a folded towel over the top rungs of a ladder when leaning against an interior wall to prevent damage caused by the rungs digging into the surface as you climb up.



A towel draped over your ladder can prevent damage to the walls



VC175 MOULD KILLER

In damp or humid conditions such as bathrooms, and en-suites in particular, surfaces discolour and stain with unsightly mould and algae growth which, unless checked, will continue to be a problem. The time to treat surfaces against mould growth is when paint is applied. A few drops of a mould-killer added to the paint and your surfaces will stay like new without unsightly and musty smelling mould.



VC175 on its own does not remove existing algae. The surface must be washed with a solution of 50:50 water and bleach first.



WHITE SPIRIT

Solvent used to clean brushes after painting.

How to use: **DO NOT** pour a load of white spirit into a bowl and leave you brush in it to soak. Put you brush into a bowl and pour in **A LITTLE** white spirit. Work it into the brush until a fair amount of paint has been removed from the brush. Pour out the solution and repeat until the brush is clean. Pour a little washing-up liquid into the bowl and dilute with hot water. Work into the brush. Rinse **AND DRY**.

Your brushes will last far longer if this simple method is followed plus you will use far less solvent than by leaving brushes to soak.



Do not use it as paint thinner as it dulls the paint finish and thins the paint. Use Owatrol Oil instead. White spirit is a solvent and due care and attention must be applied when using it and disposing of it.

ZINSSER PERMA-WHITE

This is a specialised paint especially **suited to damp or humid conditions** e.g. bathrooms, shower areas, en suites etc. Water-based its unique formulation prevents mildew growth on the paint film even under the harshest conditions. It is self-priming, tintable to any colour, low-odour and easy to apply.





SURFACE PREPARATION

CLEANING WOODWORK

The biggest obstacle to a professional finish is a poorly prepared surface. Paint will not stick to a greasy or dirty surface. **Sugar Soap** is a very effective surface cleaner which removes dirt, grease and stains leaving the surface ready for painting. You can buy it ready-made in a bottle – just dilute it - or as a ready diluted mix in a spray bottle. It also comes in powder form – just mix with water.

I find it useful to spray the sugar-soap either onto the surface directly or onto the cloth. Rinse off with a damp cloth.

HOOVERING

Dust, hairs and cobwebs are a major obstacle to a professional finish. Hoover your room thoroughly to remove them before starting to paint. And don't forget to look up - cobwebs tend to go unseen at ceiling level!



Don't forget to hoover the ceiling!

COVERING

Cover everything likely to get any paint on it. Floors, furniture, wooden window-sills, tables, chairs etc. **Guaranteed – if you don't cover something it will get paint on it!**



If painting wardrobe doors remove clothes first – particularly those on hangers. It is very easy to get paint on a sleeve if there is a gap between the doors! If you can't be bothered to remove them cover them with a clean, plastic drop-cloth.



SANDING

A flexible sanding block is a really useful tool. They come in varying grades from coarse to fine and give a nice, smooth finish to filled surfaces. A 100 grade block is probably the most versatile since it is rough enough to sand coarse fillers but fine enough to sand a lightweight filler such as spackling to a smooth surface.

For very-fine sanding use 240 grade sandpaper or higher.

For larger surface areas e.g. doors, a power-sander is really useful. You'll get through the job quickly and evenly with the added benefit that most sanders come with a dust-bag attachment minimising cleanup.



If you are painting a surface that requires a really fine finish you should use 'wet and dry' sandpaper. The problem with dry sanding is that it puts fine particles into the air which in turn land back on the surface to be painted. Sanding 'wet' avoids this. You must use a paper branded as 'wet and dry', if you try to wet ordinary sandpaper the backing sheet goes soggy and disintegrates.

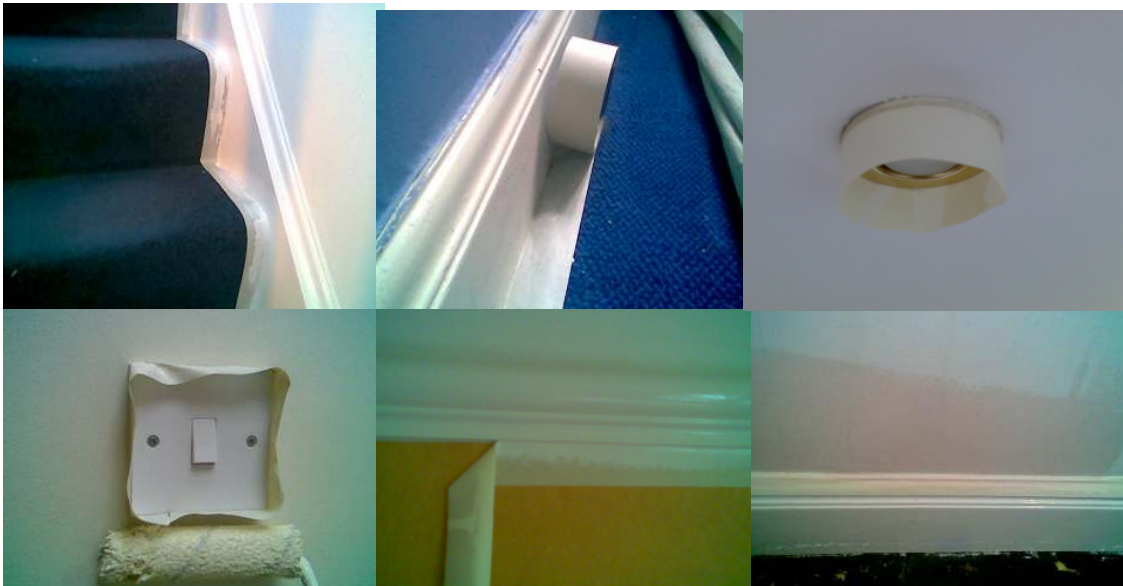
NAILS, SCREWS AND PICTURE HOOKS

Remove them! Smooth walls = smooth finish!



MASKING

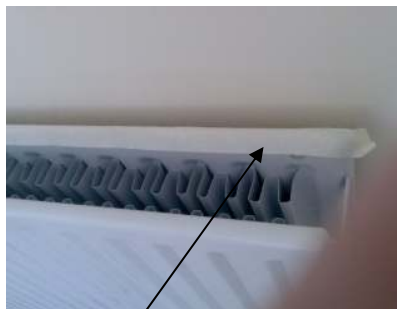
Masking tape is one of the best means to getting a professional finish. *But there is no point in masking off things if it is not done accurately or loosely!* Time spent masking off will more than pay for itself in reduced painting time later and a much better finished product.



Carpet, Recessed Ceiling Lights, Light switches, Picture rails, Top edge of skirting-boards



Floor to ceiling wardrobes



Applied to top of radiator as wall is being painted

The tops of kitchen cabinets tend to have a greasy surface which will transfer to the roller and spoil the finish. Masking prevents this.



Top edge of kitchen cabinet



Remove the door (give or take... only 6 screws!)
Put masking-tape along this edge to prevent unsightly overpainting onto the wardrobe edge

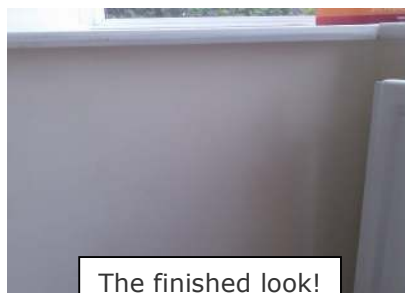
FILLING

- **Small Deep Holes**

Deep holes can be successfully plugged using tinfoil and a lightweight filler such as spackling. Tear the tinfoil and scrunch it into a sausage shape. Pack it into the hole, Use more tinfoil as necessary. Leave about a quarter to half an inch at the opening and fill this with lightweight filler. Leave to set. Fill again until the filler is slightly protruding, Sand and paint!



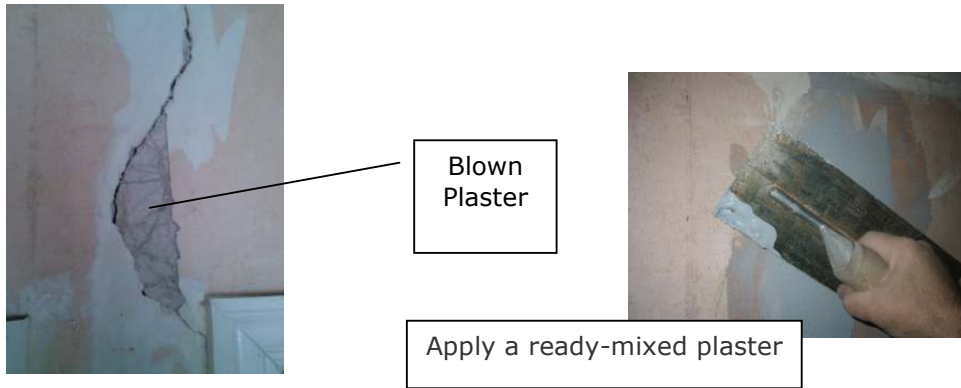
Deep holes left in plaster after radiator was removed



The finished look!

- **Larger Damage**

Sometimes walls have larger areas of damage which need to be repaired before a finish coat can be applied e.g. when using a steam stripper to take off wallpaper it can dislodge the plaster if left in one place too long. Don't panic! Most damage can be fixed almost invisibly quite easily.



Method:

1. Clean out the area and remove any loose material
2. Apply a ready mixed plaster to the area. You can use a plasterers trowel or the spreader which either comes with, or can be bought separately to, skim plaster.
3. Unless the damage is shallow don't try and get a finished surface in one go; fill the area roughly first, score the surface with criss-cross lines to give a good bond to the next fill. Leave to set thoroughly.
4. It helps a lot if the spreader you use is longer than the areas longest measurement. This means you can get an even spread across the whole area without having to remove "tram lines".
5. Let each fill dry thoroughly. Fill any imperfections with lightweight spackling. Lightly sand if necessary.
6. Prime the damaged area with a suitable primer
7. Paint as normal.



The various stages of repairing badly damaged plaster

Sometimes previously "repaired" surfaces can be so badly done that there is nothing to do but undertake major surgery! In the example below the wall surface above the door had been unbelievably poorly done...

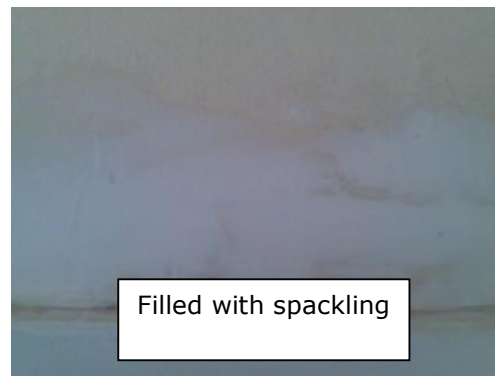


Rough and rock-hard filler meant sanding was not an option

There was nothing else for it but to chisel out the filler, fill with Spackling, smooth and sand to a fine finish then paint as normal. With a little bit of effort you can achieve an invisible repair.



Chiselled out



Filled with spackling



The finished look – no sign!!



STRIPPING PAINT AND VARNISH

Sometimes there are occasions where you just have to strip off layers of paint or varnish in order to achieve a finish. Just have a look at this...

1



In a pretty sorry state of repair this front door had been overpainted with oil-based varnish which has blistered and cracked due to direct sunlight.

Coats were stripped using a chemical stripper (in this case Paramose). The stripper was brushed on and left to work on the surface coats. After a short time the surface bubbles, indicating that the stripper has penetrated what's underneath. Using a flat-blade begin to carefully scrape off the softened accumulation. Keep on working at it until you have completely removed every trace of the offending coats and you are back to bare wood.

2



3



Once you are back to the basic timber you will need to repair any damage to joints. Use a recognised wood-filler of an appropriate colour to fill any cracks, dents or separations. Leave to dry thoroughly then sand back to smooth. The timber on this door was pretty dried out so it was given one coat of Owatrol oil to restore the wood fibres and provide a penetrating oil base. Once dry this was followed by 4 coats of Sadolin Exterior Varnish.

4

The Final Result!



Why 4 coats?

4 carefully applied coats are better than 2 heavily applied coats. Why? Because varnish which is not carefully applied tends to drip. **There are NO drips on this door.**



The method of application was to dip the brush into the tin and then dab the brush onto the lid of the tin rather like an artists palette. This meant that there were no drips or splatters as the Sadolin was transferred from brush to surface. Using light brush strokes the surface coats were built up slowly each day.

The end result speaks for itself. Attention to detail at the preparation, using the right materials and taking the time and effort to do it properly meant that a sorry looking entrance to a house now looks an inviting entrance to a home.



To recap:

Two usual methods: - 1. Chemical paint stripper 2. Electric Heat Gun

If using a chemical stripper such as Nitromors or Paramose you need to take appropriate precautions. Chemicals are caustic and may burn eyes and skin; they will also remove the surface of whatever they drip onto. **So take precautions:** wear gloves and eye protection and place drop-cloths at the base of whatever you're stripping.

Heat-guns, while not caustic, punch out somewhere between 1600 and 2000 watts of heat. Again, wear gloves and protect your eyes. Do not keep the gun for too long in one place otherwise you will scorch the wood and darken it, spoiling the finish.

Unfortunately neither method is particularly eco-friendly.



There are however Water Based Gel Strippers which are not based on dichloromethane. They typically don't give off harsh fumes and are a safer and environmentally more appropriate solution.



PAINTING NEW PLASTER OR DRYWALL



Newly applied plaster **must be completely dry** before starting to apply any paint!
If the room has no cornice prime the walls before painting the ceiling. This ensures that you have no colour mismatch around the edge of the ceiling as the primer will be a different shade of white to standard ceiling emulsion.

Method 1

The absolute best way to prepare newly plastered or drywall is to use Zinsser Allcoat Multi-Surface Primer and Finish™. It's a fantastic product that will do a host of things for you. It's a high-adhesion product similar to their Bullseye 1-2-3™ product but unlike that product will provide you with a finishing coat as well. It sticks to almost anything, obliterates deep colours and is very economical. One coat is often enough but in some cases you may need additional coats.



Priming Drywall or Plasterboard



Obliterating a dark colour



Method 2

Stir about 20% E-B to your **first** coat of emulsion.
This will ensure good paint grip and stop it constantly peeling away as you roll.

Method 3

Alternatively you use an emulsion paint of a suitable colour which has been diluted with clean water – usually 20%. This ensures that the emulsion will thoroughly penetrate the plaster and any moisture will be allowed to escape. Several coats will need to be applied until the surface is built up to a solid finish.

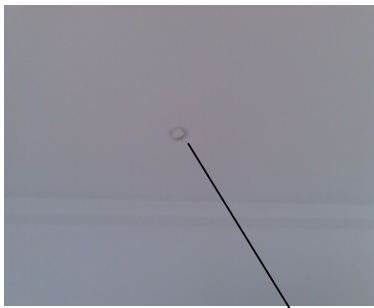
When applying the finishing coat or coats do not dilute the emulsion but apply it as if you were painting a normal wall or ceiling.



CEILINGS



Check the ceiling for exposed plasterboard nails! This is a good indicator of the quality of the ceiling-paint as a number of nails showing probably means that the build-quality leaves something to be desired. This is especially true of modern apartments which have been built quickly. In my experience the existing paint is more likely to come off on the roller unless you are very careful. See Repairs for instructions how to fix plasterboard nail damage.



Check for plasterboard nail damage!



Make sure you overpaint onto the wall!

Method – Standard ceilings

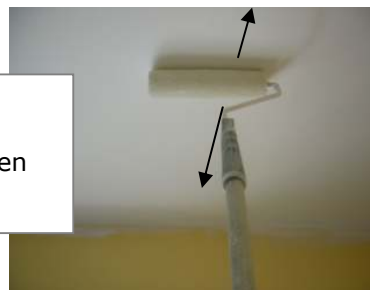
1. Go around the ceiling edges using a long-handled mini-roller, making sure you overpaint onto the wall.
2. Paint around the ceiling rose with the mini-roller as well
3. Attach extension pole to large roller and adjust to comfortable working height
4. Load roller with paint. Roll backwards and forwards in tray until roller is evenly coated



Watch for drips as you lift the roller from the tray and move it to the wall or ceiling!

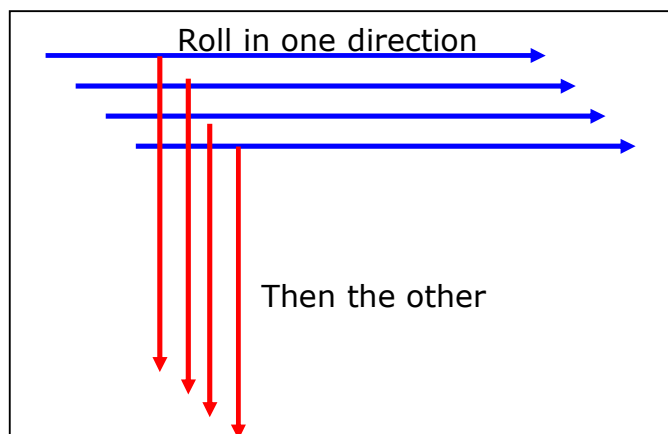
5. Press roller against ceiling. **Slowly**, roll smoothly backwards and forwards using long, even strokes
6. Continue until you feel roller needs more paint
7. Re-load with paint and continue rolling backwards and forwards
8. Continue until ceiling is completely covered

Move the roller backwards and forwards in an even stroke



A 9" or 18" roller will not be able to cover right into the edge between the ceiling and the wall so switch to the mini-roller. Make sure the mini-roller is loaded with plenty of paint particularly at the end in order to seal the edge between the ceiling and the wall.

If it is necessary to apply two coats of paint to a ceiling – and it usually is! - you will get a much better result if you roll in one direction first and then at 90 degrees for the second coat. This minimises missed spots due to irregularities in the ceiling itself.



Oh No!

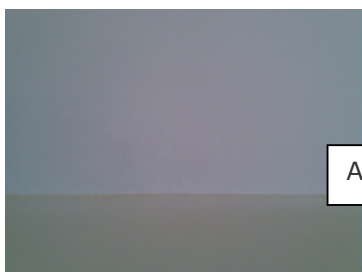
Things are going really nicely and then... part of your ceiling is now wrapped around your roller leaving you with a nasty hole with peeling skin. Don't despair! - it can be almost invisibly-repaired if you just take a little time and trouble. Here's how...

1. Wait until the paint dries then peel the skin back carefully until you reach sound surface
2. Apply PVA Adhesive and let it dry (shouldn't take too long!)
3. Get something like a piece of hardboard and squeeze out an appropriate amount of acrylic-filler
4. Sprinkle some water onto the filler and mix it in. This makes the filler thinner and easier to apply – you are only filling to a depth of 1 or 2mm
5. Take a broad-blade filler knife and smooth into the damaged area
6. Let it dry. Repeat 3, 4, and 5 if necessary
7. Paint carefully
8. Admire your handiwork!



The original emulsion has come away with the roller

Mix acrylic filler on a board as described in step 3



Apply carefully and this is the end result!

AWKWARD BITS



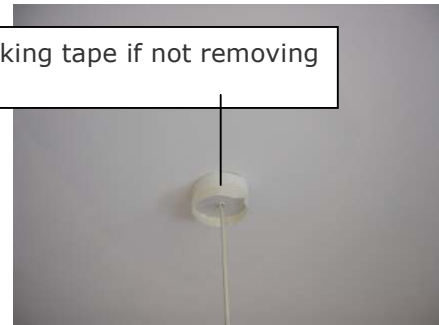
- **Ceiling Rose**

Awkwardly placed – generally in the middle of the ceiling. First of all – mask it! Then use a mini-roller to paint around the rose to a width that will allow you use your roller unhindered.



Remove a ceiling-rose cover if possible

Apply masking tape if not removing



Use a miniroller around the rose

- **Ceiling Rose with Decorative Plasterwork**

If your ceiling rose is incorporated into decorative plasterwork mask the plastic rose, pour a small quantity of ceiling paint into a paint-kettle or container and apply carefully by brush. Paint to a width that will allow you use your roller unhindered.



Decorative plasterwork surrounds the ceiling rose

- **Cornice**

Pour a small quantity of ceiling paint into a paint kettle or container and apply carefully by brush. A wide brush is best and don't worry about getting paint on the wall. By overpainting onto the wall you ensure that the narrow edge at the bottom of the cornice is completely covered. When you finally cut-in with the wall colour emulsion you will have a sharp defining line between the two which will serve to make the cornice really stand out.

However... if you want to paint the ceiling a colour which is different to the cornice you will need to mask the edge of the cornice which adjoins the ceiling itself to prevent the two colours intermixing. Use safe-release masking tape.



Typical decorative cornice If the ceiling colour and cornice colour are to be different, mask here



Paint cornice with a wide bristle brush. Make sure you overpaint onto the wall

- **Extractor fans**

Found in bathrooms and shower cubicles. Mask them off to avoid unsightly overpainting. **Better still**, if they can be loosened from the ceiling you will minimise the potential for paint peeling away in the future as the seal between fitting and ceiling paint is tighter.



- **Light Fittings**

If appropriate and possible mask around them at the ceiling join Place a plastic bag or use a lightweight plastic dropcloth over expensive fittings and tie so as to avoid splatters on brass or crystal fittings.



A lightweight dropsheet was wrapped around this light fitting to protect it from paint splatters when painting the ceiling

- **Recessed Ceiling Lights**

Very awkward!

Although you are supposed to be able to pull them away from the ceiling I find that they do not come away cleanly and take some of the plaster board edge away also. Some have an edge around which you can apply masking-tape but some have a wafer-thin edge which the tape won't grip. If not – apply emulsion using a brush CAREFULLY! Awkwardness is multiplied as these fittings usually come in multiples on a ceiling!



Standard recessed light



This is the result if you can't be bothered to mask off!
(and this was done by somebody being paid to do it!)

- **Roof Windows**

Typically have a varnished edge as a surround when set into the ceiling. There are two methods of approach

1. Paint the reveals with a brush; in which case you should not need to mask the wooden edge
2. Use a mini-roller, in which case you will definitely need to mask!

Advantages of method 2 are speed and consistency of finish. A brush will leave a smoother finished surface than the roller but since the rest of the ceiling will have been rolled in my opinion it pays to have a similar finish.

Usually a thin, varnished edge



- **Smoke detectors**

Smoke detectors perform a vitally important function so extra care must be taken when painting ceilings where they are installed. Battery operated units are easily removed – generally just two screws are used. If the unit cannot be taken down – mask it off



Do not paint over openings as this may render the unit inoperative. When replacing the unit it is an ideal time to make sure the unit is working and that the battery doesn't need replacing! Test it when back in place – it might just save your life.



WALLS

- 9" or 18" Roller and tray
- Long-handled mini-roller (Radiator Roller)
- Extension pole
- Wall emulsion
- Paint or Varnish for Woodwork



Apply masking tape to top of skirting board before painting walls a dark colour



If painting the walls a dark colour mask off the woodwork first wherever the new paint will meet it. It saves time later when doing the gloss painting! Alternatively, paint the skirting first with gloss paint. Allow to dry. Apply masking tape and then paint the walls with the dark colour. When dry peel off the tape. Razor sharp edge!

Method

Attach extension pole to roller and adjust to comfortable working length. Using an extension pole allows longer, more even strokes resulting in a better finish and less fatigue. Load roller with paint. Roll backwards and forwards in tray until roller is evenly coated. Watch for drips as you lift roller from tray!



Press roller against wall. Slowly roll smoothly up and down using long, even strokes.



Stop the roller short of the ceiling! Continue until you feel roller needs more paint. Repeat



Leave a space between the previous roll



Paint in a "W" pattern initially. Then finish in the same direction



Don't start the next roll right next to the previous one. Keep it 6 to 8 inches away and roll out smoothly to the left and right. You'll get a better finish!

Paint in a "W" pattern and finish with a straight up and down motion to get the best finish with no skipped bits – known as "holidays"!

CUTTING-IN

Cutting-in means painting at the dividing line between two surfaces – usually the ceiling and walls.

Using a sash or oval brush to cut-in



A 9" or 18" roller will not be able to cover right into the edge between the ceiling and the wall so switch to the mini-roller if the distance between the ceiling and wall is an inch or more. CAREFULLY roll out the paint as close to the ceiling as you can get without getting paint on it!

You have two choices here. Either use a 2" **synthetic no-loss brush** or, if you are not so confident, a **sash brush**. The synthetic brush holds plenty of paint and lays it down over a broader area than the sash brush but being larger you may find it a little more difficult to work with.

Technique

Dip either brush into the paint to about half its depth so as to load sufficient paint for a good run. Slowly apply the paint using the ceiling line as your guide – it helps if you go as close to the line as you can on the first pass without trying to get the finished line immediately. By doing this you will essentially lay down a reservoir of paint that can be picked up by the brush on its final finishing pass. It does require a steady hand and some confidence.



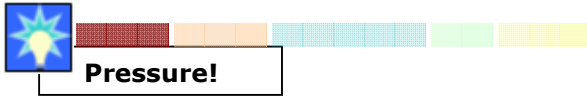
Take a deep breath and slowly breathe out moving the brush as you exhale. This helps relax the muscles and allows a more even movement. Sure it's tricky, but with a little practice you'll find it gets easier!



Cutting in at the join between two walls using a synthetic brush



Cutting-in at the join between ceiling and wall using a sash brush



Where the right-angle corner join is can be quite difficult to get to and here is where a little pressure combined with gradual movement of the brush works. By increasing or decreasing the pressure you apply to the brush will cause the bristles to splay out. The synthetic brush in particular is ideal for this work as, with a little practice, you can almost get one filament directly into the angle. With this as your starting point you can then pull the brush across the ceiling-line for a short distance to get your cutting-in started. Then proceed as described. With practice and growing confidence there should be no reason why you cannot achieve a razor sharp definition between wall and ceiling!

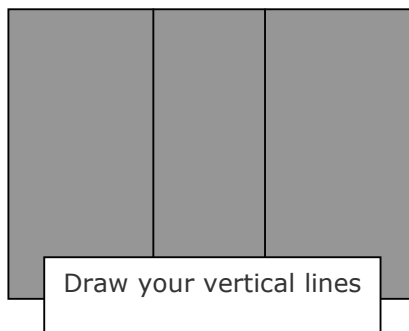
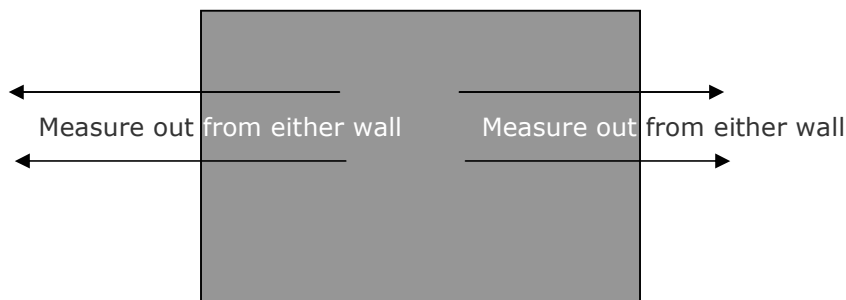


The more the pressure, the more the bristles splay out

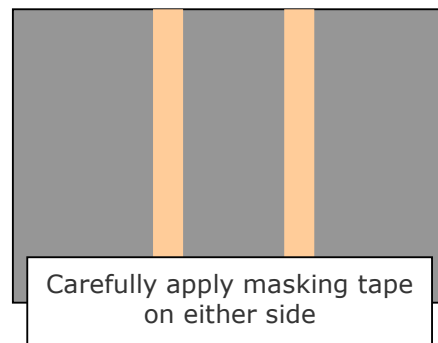


PAINTING STRIPES

1. If you want to paint a stripe down a wall here's what you do:
2. Decide where you want the stripe to start
3. Measure accurately from one of the walls on either side
4. Mark the wall LIGHTLY!
5. Decide how thick you want the stripe to be. Mark the wall LIGHTLY!
6. Use a plumb-line, a vertical spirit-level or a laser to draw a vertical line down the wall on either side
7. Carefully and accurately apply low-tack masking-tape on the edge of each line. This gives you the area to be painted



Draw your vertical lines



Carefully apply masking tape on either side



If you paint carefully you'll end up with a pretty flawless stripe! Or stripes!!

AWKWARD BITS!



- **Air Vents**

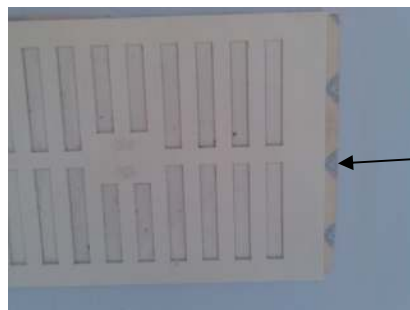
Generally made of plastic and attached by four small screws. Remove them, wash them, apply a primer such as Zinsser Bullseye 1-2-3™ and paint the same colour as the walls. Best not to make a feature out of them!



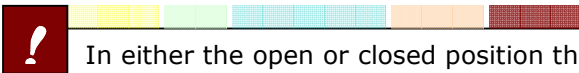
Vents also harbour lots of dust and dirt behind them so remove them and wash before putting back!

- **Sliding air-vents**

Can sometimes be awkward to remove and replace. If leaving them in place read the warning below!



Narrow strip unpainted!



In either the open or closed position these vents leave a narrow strip on one side which people often forget about. The vent above was painted in the open position which leaves the narrow strip on the right-hand-side unpainted.

- **Cornice**

See ceilings. How to tackle cornice is covered there.

- **Curtains, Rails and Roller Blinds**

Take them down! Remove the rails as well if at all possible. Fill any holes if not replacing them.

- **Dado Rail**

Dado rails are decorative timber forms generally placed at the height of a chair back. The idea is that the dado stops the chair-back making unsightly marks on painted walls. It is generally much easier to paint the dado before painting the walls as many of them incorporate an extremely narrow edge into their design which makes painting them difficult. It is far easier to cut in with emulsion on a wall which is facing you than at an angle with oil-based paint



- **Fireplaces**

Generally the focal point of a room so extra care needs to be taken with the surround and the hearth. Use a lightweight plastic dropsheet to avoid accidents.



1. Apply masking tape to the fireplace surround where it meets the wall



2. Carefully position a plastic dropsheet to the top of the fireplace and drape it over the front. It is generally safer to cover the hearth with a cotton or twill dropsheet. It is less likely to slip and provides more protection to delicate surfaces like marble or granite

- **Light Switches, Electrical Sockets, TV Points etc**



- **Picture Rails**

Difficult to paint as they tend to have a narrow edge where they meet the wall. Like dado rails it may be easier to paint these first and then paint the walls. Depends on the design and how confident you are! Mask off the wall if you are not so confident.

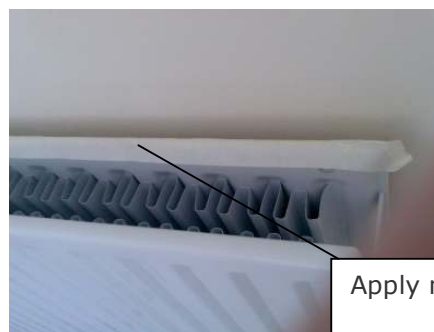


- **Radiators**

Radiators come in all shapes and sizes and, although there are specialist heat-resistant paints available, are usually painted with gloss or satin-finish paint. There are, of course, special heat-resistant radiator paints which may be used in place of normal paints.



Standard radiator



Apply masking tape

If for any reason you are not painting the radiator then apply masking tape to the edge nearest the wall. This will prevent unsightly emulsion marks.

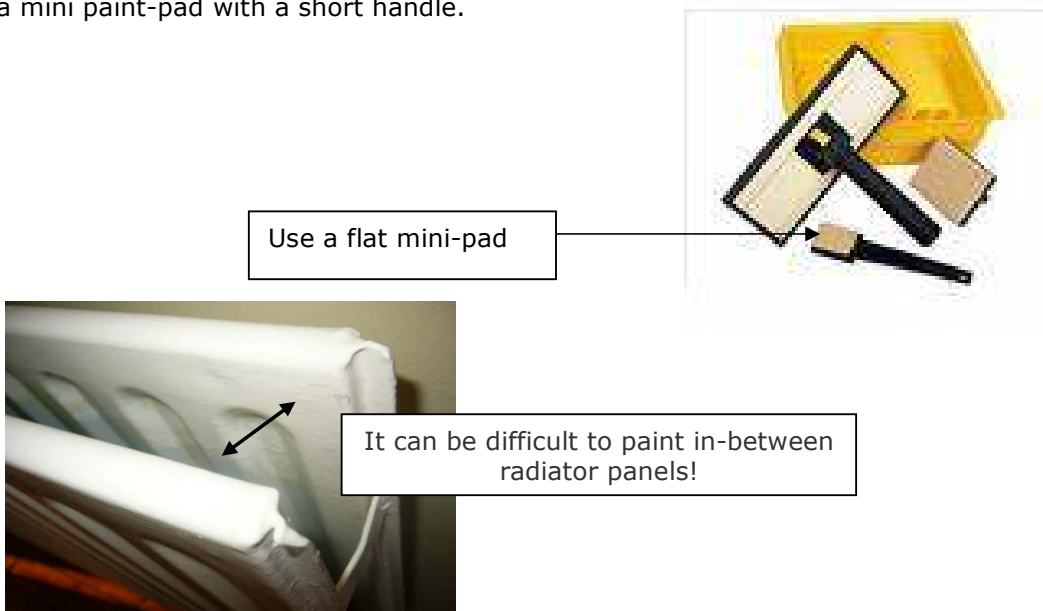
Preparation...

Firstly - turn off the radiator. Hoover thoroughly – especially underneath by the skirting. Rads harbour loads of dust and fluff. Then either lightly sand or apply a primer.

Painting

Usually radiators are painted by brush because of the number of recesses. Some radiators however are primarily flat surfaced with a groove between each section. Paint the groove with a brush and use a gloss roller to get a really good even finish on the rest.

It is almost very difficult to paint the area in between a two panelled radiator – it is narrow and recessed. A gloss roller can help you get further down where a brush cannot go. Alternatively try using a mini paint-pad with a short handle.



Radiators have lots of potential areas where drips form. Make sure your dropcloth covers the entire length and breadth, and beyond, of the radiator. Do not remove it until the paint is completely dry otherwise you may come back to find drips on your carpet or expensive wooden floor!

N.B. When the radiator is turned back on you may notice a strong smell of paint. This is normal and will disappear after a short time.

- **Shelves**

If possible remove any shelving – it makes for an easier job and better finish. If you cannot remove the shelf, mask around it.



If you want your shelves to be **EXACTLY** the same colour as the walls then paint them with the same emulsion paint **BUT THEN varnish** them using a water-based varnish in a matt or satin finish, depending on the finish of the walls.



- **Venetian Blinds**

In my opinion you cannot paint reveals with venetian blinds in place. So how do you remove them? All blind fixings are not the same but the most common I have come across are as follows:-



Venetian Blinds generally have a decorative cover



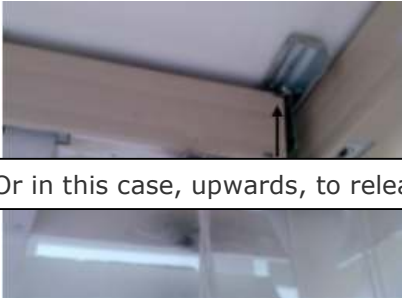
In many cases there are 2 plastic clips which hide the metal supports. Prise open carefully to allow the cover to drop free



This reveals the metal support boxes on each side



Sometimes they swing sideways



Or in this case, upwards, to release



Once released, simply lift out the metal container housing from either side

BUT BE CAREFUL!
They are usually quite heavy!

Then simply unscrew the support brackets from the wall.

- **Wall Lights**

Since they are electrically wired it is not usually possible to remove them completely. It is sometimes possible to unscrew them just enough to allow you to get behind them with a mini roller. If not, apply masking tape carefully around as much of the exposed surface as possible.

As with all electrical fittings care must be taken in order to avoid accidents.



Typical Wall Lights

- **Windows**

Windows need to be tackled in two parts – 1. the surrounding wall and 2. the **reveals**.



Reveals

The reveals are the recessed part of the wall that the window sits into. They are bordered by the window frame and the window sill. Both of these must be masked-off before painting. If masked off properly a mini emulsion roller can be used for both speed and coverage.



HALL, STAIRS AND LANDING

The approach to tackling a hall, stairs and landing is the same as painting a room except for increased height and the angle and narrowness of the stairs.

Break the area into three separate sections – the hall section, the stairs section and the upstairs landing section and treat it like painting three separate rooms.

Paint the ceiling first. As in painting a room adopt the same approach and overlap onto the wall surface to ensure a tightly painted edge between wall and ceiling. As I describe in the ceilings section paint first in one direction and then in a second direction 90° to the first. This ensures that you have no missed patches due to uneven surfaces.

The hall section and the landing section are just like painting a normal room. The stairs section requires some additional equipment in order to tackle the angle presented by the stairs and the height of the drop from the top of the ceiling to the bottom of the stair treads.

THE HALL SECTION

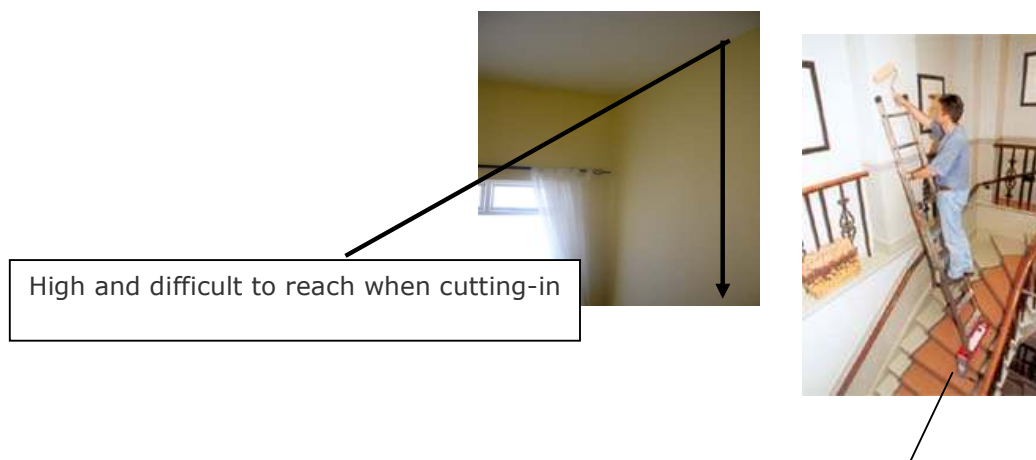
Depending on the layout the hall section is generally straightforward and consists of the elements you would find in a room.

THE LANDING SECTION

Again depending on the layout the landing section is generally straightforward but does have two elements that require mention – the stairwell opening and the attic trapdoor.

1. The stairwell opening

This is the void where the stairs ascend to the landing area. It is difficult to reach as you must lean over the banisters to reach the walls. It is high, the stairs are uneven and you are going to have to “cut-in” the intersection of the walls and ceiling.



From my experience the best approach to tackling a stairs is to use the Stairmate. This device allows an extending ladder to be positioned sideways on the stairwell which in turn allows you to operate facing the appropriate wall as opposed to facing sideways. It also ensures that you can reach right up to the highest and most difficult section of a stairs where the highest part of the landing ceiling meets the intersecting walls of the stairwell.

2. The attic trapdoor

It is generally a matter of taste as to how this is painted. The options are -

a) White Ceiling Emulsion – good match for the ceiling but not so hard wearing or dirt resistant. **Of course ceilings don't always have to be white!** They can be off-white, cream, gardenia – and the attic door can of course be painted the same colour if you wish



You can increase the durability of the attic door finish by varnishing over the emulsion. Use a water-based matt varnish.

b) White Eggshell or satin finish oil paint – good choice but will stand out from the ceiling due to slight sheen

c) Gloss paint – hardest wearing but will definitely stand out from the ceiling due to high sheen

If the attic door is newly installed and made of wood it will have to be primed first. Brush on one or two coats as necessary. Apply eggshell, satin or gloss with a gloss roller for the best finish.



Attic doors are often overlooked when it comes to blending them in to the ceiling finish!

d) Varnish – you may prefer not to paint your attic door but to varnish it instead. It's all down to individual taste.

THE STAIRS SECTION

This is the most awkward section. It is high, uneven and contains some awkward elements. In most cases a wooden staircase is either stained and varnished or painted. In many cases the handrail is stained and varnished but the balusters are painted. The same can also be said for the "string" which is the term for the flat piece of timber to the side.



Handrail stained and varnished.
Balusters white



Handrail
Balusters
Closed "String"

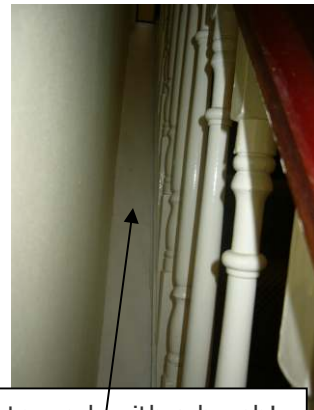
Staining /varnishing a wooden staircase is straightforward because everything is the same colour. In the picture showing the stained handrail but painted balusters things get more tricky – particularly as the underside of the handrail must be either stained/varnished or painted upside down with little room to work.

Splitting the job into two parts can help. Do the balusters first and allow them to dry thoroughly. Then carefully apply masking tape around each intersection and stain/varnish the handrail. Any drips or splatters can be easily wiped off the gloss paint as necessary.

Unfortunately, as most handrails and balusters reach towards the landing area the space to work becomes less and less – in some cases almost impossible!



Very little room to work!



Painting these balusters can be very difficult!

There is little room to work with a brush!
Use a mini gloss roller on the balusters.

Use a brush to paint this section...



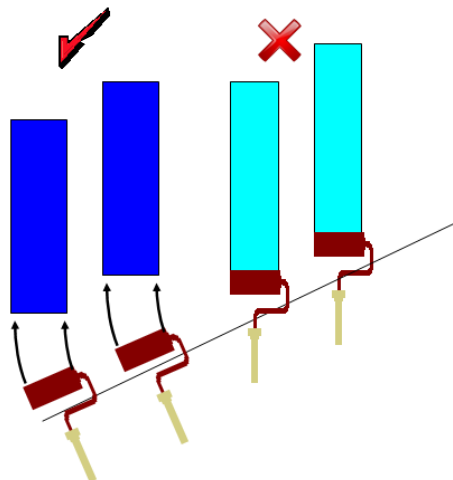
It is possible to use a mini gloss roller to paint balusters. You need to be careful because the roller is wide but the balusters are narrow so there is a chance of splattering if you roll too quickly.

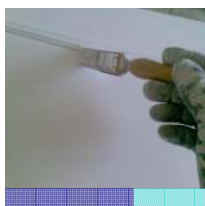
Stairs are tricky and require patience and care to achieve a professional finish. But it can be done!



The Zig-Zag Pattern!

Many walls have an **unsightly zig-zag pattern** made by the roller as you look up the stairs from bottom to top. This is because the roller has been kept in an upright position and the closed string at the base is angled. Try keeping the roller parallel to the closed string and move it upwards in a curved direction until you hit vertical. This will eliminate the zig-zag effect and give a considerably smoother finish to the wall.





BATHROOMS AND SHOWER ENCLOSURES

Painting these areas is basically the same as any other with just a few additional points:

- **Ceilings**

Exposure to damp conditions in bathrooms, and shower enclosures particularly, means that mould and mildew are more likely to appear than anywhere else.

If this is a problem a specialist paint like Zinsser Perma-White contains anti-mould and mildew additives and is better suited to ceilings in particular than standard emulsion paints. It is available in several different finishes and is also tintable.



You must clean-off any mould or mildew initially using a mild bleach solution before applying any paint **and** you must ensure that the area has adequate ventilation – either a window or an extractor-fan otherwise the problem will recur!

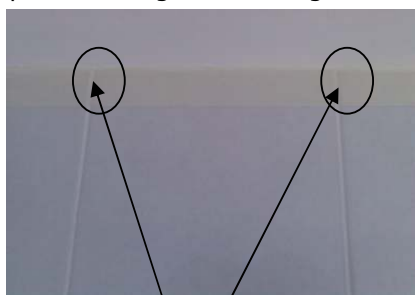
If mould and mildew are **not** a problem then the ceiling can be painted using conventional ceiling emulsion. I would suggest a two coat approach with 25% E-B stir-in bonding-primer added to the first coat. This will help the paint adhere to the ceiling. You might also consider adding some VC175 Mould Stop to hold-back potential mould.

Alternatively – and an approach I prefer – use an acrylic eggshell emulsion which will repel condensation better than normal ceiling emulsion.

- **Masking Tiled Areas**

When painting the ceiling of a tiled-area - typically shower-enclosures and bathrooms it is a major time-saver to apply masking tape to the tiles to protect them from overpainting. However! it is vital that you don't just stretch the tape across the tiles because the grouting joint between each tile provides a gap where paint can drip.

Apply masking tape across the first tile then press the tape into the grout making sure there is no gap. Continue on. When paint is dry peel-off carefully.



Press masking tape into the grouting!

Masking off beading around tiles

Unightly overpaint spoils the finished look in many bathrooms. Take a minute to apply masking-tape and you'll get a sharp finish.

If you don't mask-off this happens!



- **Protecting the bath**

In general, normal drop-cloths are too heavy to drape over a bath; they keep falling off under their own weight. Use lightweight masking-sheets instead.



- **Protecting the toilet and cistern**

If it is possible, remove the lid on the cistern do so and apply masking-tape around the edges. If not; apply masking-tape carefully around the edges – not forgetting to get right underneath! Mask off the large waste-pipe as well!

Cover the cistern and the seat with drop cloths.



It can be difficult to shape a large drop-cloth around the back and sides of a toilet. Use old heavy towels, smaller pieces of heavy drop cloth or use plastic sacks.

- **Protecting the sink**

If painting up to the edge of a sink apply masking-tape carefully around the edges – not forgetting underneath! Cover with a lightweight drop-cloth.

- **Protecting the Shower Tray and inside of the bath**



Place a dropcloth inside the bath or shower tray if you need to use a ladder to reach up

Place a drop-cloth in the shower tray when using a ladder to apply masking tape and when painting. Lean the ladder against the wall and remember to mind the upper shower rail which can be awkward to work around.

- **Protecting the Shower Head and Controls**

Don't forget to cover these – especially if they are chrome or brass. Paint splatters will spoil their appearance if you don't protect them. Just tape a lightweight dropsheet to the wall above the fittings and you won't have to worry about paint splatters on your expensive fittings.

Simply drape a lightweight plastic dropsheet from the shower-head





WOODWORK

This section covers the various types of woodwork you will encounter – Doors and Frames, Skirting boards, Picture rails, Dado rails, Windows and Window Sills.



Before starting to paint make sure you have masked off the relevant areas – surrounding carpet edge and at the base where the frame meets the door saddle.



LOADING THE BRUSH

Dip the brush about to about half-way up the bristles. Don't drag the brush across the rim of the tin as this removes most of the paint. Instead tap against the sides of the paint kettle or can.



Dip the brush to about half-way

Tap against the side of the container



CLEANING UP

A professional finish is as much about cleaning-up as it is about preparation. Clean brushes, rollers and containers as soon as you have finished with them. If paint cans have paint left in them that you want to keep for touching up make sure the lids are secured tightly. Old oil-based paint can be revived by adding a little **Owatrol Oil** and stirring it in thoroughly.

DOORS

Tools & Materials

- Paintbrushes
- Gloss mini-roller and tray
- Paint for woodwork



Remove or mask
the door handle!

Cruciform Door

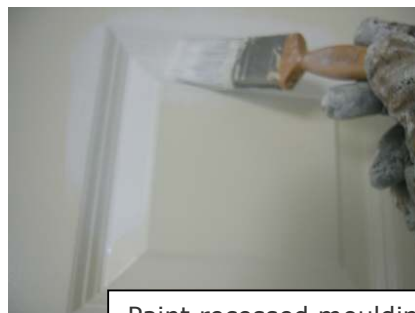


I do not believe that there is a set sequence required to paint a complete door. I generally start from the bottom and work upwards. **The reason for this is drips!** Drips form where the panel meets the flat outer frame of the door. If you start at the bottom and a drip is going to form this gives it more time to become noticeable and therefore fixable. As you paint upwards you are more likely to see a drip forming than down towards the floor. Keep checking back after you have finished painting the entire door. Nothing spoils a finish like a drip!

- Remove or mask the door handle
- Remove any coat hooks if possible
- With the brush, paint the mouldings of each panel which the roller will not reach
- Place your cardboard under the door
- Load your gloss roller with paint, roll lightly in the tray to remove excess paint
- Carefully lift from tray, press against door and roll *smoothly* until you need to re-fill the roller
- Repeat until the door is completely finished
- Gloss rollers give a great finish with no brush marks



Cardboard under door



Paint recessed mouldings first



Use a mini gloss roller to obtain a super finish!

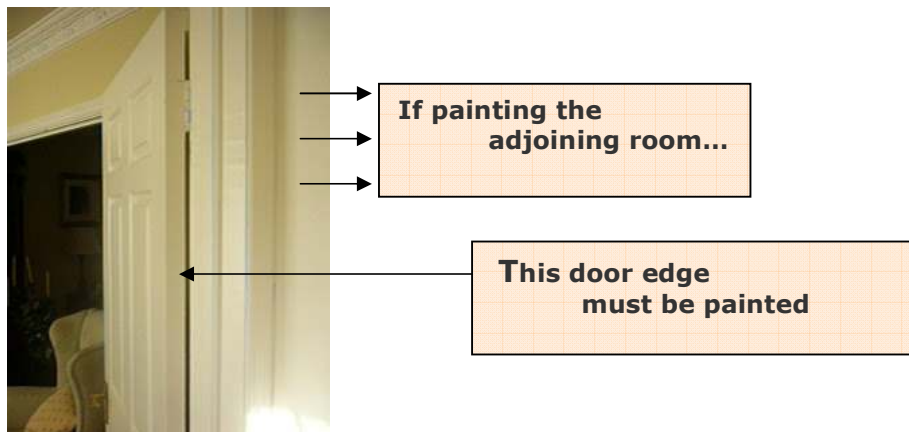


Method - Flat panel doors

These are doors which consist of one smooth sheet with no detail. Use a gloss roller as above – a brush takes too long. Start at the bottom and work your way upwards.

DOOR EDGES

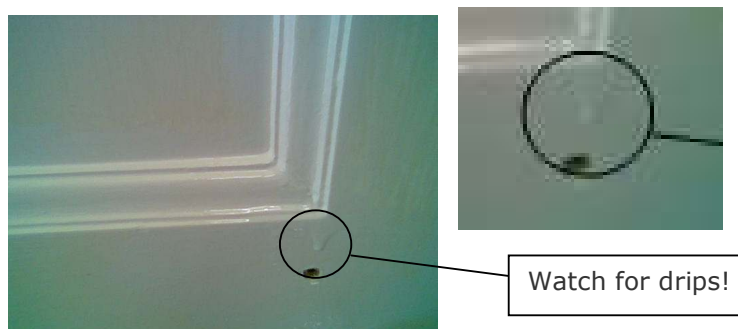
There are two edges on a door that are relevant. The edge that contains the handle mechanism and the edge that the hinges are fixed to. If you are painting just a room paint the inner door surface plus the handle edge only. If you are painting an adjoining room, hall, landing etc then the hinge edge will need to be painted also.



Drips!

Paint is a liquid and will therefore drip and run if applied too thickly or without sufficient care. Panelled doors are a particular source of potential drips since there are many edges which can gather paint which will eventually begin to sag or drip. Keep checking back over painted areas and brush out while still wet.

If drips have dried in slice them off with a sharp knife then sand smooth. Sanding on its own tends not to give as good a result in my experience. **Once you have finished your door and move on with your painting it's important to check back after 10 minutes or so to check on drips. Nothing spoils the look as much as a drip!**



DOOR FRAMES

Door frames are among the most difficult pieces of woodwork to paint since they comprise a series of curved edges plus some very narrow edges.



Use a sash-brush to paint the narrow edge



This is the limit for painting a door frame if you are not painting the area outside

Paint the door first in its closed position. Open it and then paint the relevant edges (see Door Edges above). Finally tackle the door frame. Use as wide a brush as you are comfortable with. You can also use a mini gloss roller for the wider sections of woodwork so long as you are careful.

To paint the narrow edge of the frame it is advisable to use either a synthetic brush or a sash brush. Either will deliver the paint in a manageable and straight line.



If you paint from the top down as you paint in a single movement paint begins to build up underneath the bristles and will eventually drip! The best way to counteract this problem is to paint *upwards* where you can more easily see when the paint begins to build. Once the brush is clear of any potential drip you can then paint upwards and downwards as usual.



If you feel that your hand isn't steady enough then simply apply low-tack masking tape to the adjoining wall surface and carefully paint the frame with the gloss paint. Once dry remove the tape and touch up any areas that need it.

SKIRTING BOARDS

Skirting boards are generally, but not always, painted with a gloss or satin-finish oil paint but of course may also be varnished. They vary in shape and design and some have a very narrow top edge which meets the wall surface.

Mask carpet carefully with wide masking tape. Stretch it tight and make sure it provides a good seal between carpet and skirting especially at the corners.



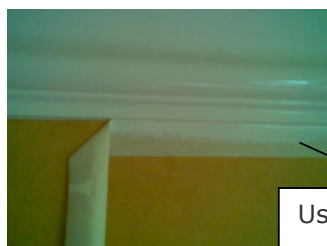
If painting walls a dark colour apply masking tape to the top edge of the skirting first then apply the emulsion. Since skirting boards are generally a light colour it makes it easier to get an even finish.



If the skirting board has a narrow top edge use a sash brush to get a clean, accurate paint line. You can then use a wider brush to paint the lower parts.

PICTURE RAILS

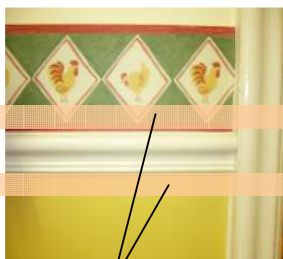
Difficult to paint as they tend to have a narrow edge where they meet the wall. Like dado rails it may be easier to paint these first and then paint the walls. Depends on the design and how confident you are! Mask off the wall if you are not so confident.



Use masking tape if necessary

DADO RAILS

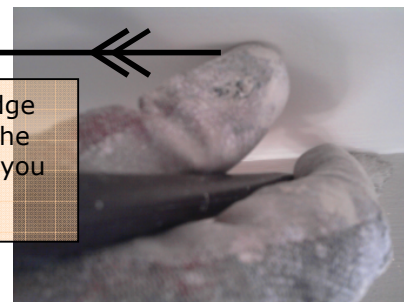
Dado rails are decorative timber forms generally placed at the height of a chair back. The idea is that the dado stops the chair-back making unsightly marks on painted walls. It is generally much easier to paint the dado before painting the walls as many of them incorporate an extremely narrow edge into their design which makes painting them difficult. It is far easier to cut in with emulsion on a wall which is facing you than at an angle with oil-based paint.



Apply masking tape here if necessary



When painting a thin edge rest your thumb against the wall and draw it along as you go for better stability



WINDOWS

Security!

Unfortunately open windows can be tempting to some people even though they may have wet paint! Be careful and vigilant!

Water-based paint

Windows can be tricky and time-consuming to paint if you use oil-based paint. Fortunately however, water-based paint has changed all that. Water-based paint dries so quickly that you can generally get two coats or possibly more depending on drying conditions applied in the same day.

Although it appears dry it will still not have hardened completely so there is still a possibility that if the window is closed overnight and then re-opened that some paint may peel off. In my experience however, this is relatively uncommon.



Don't forget... water-based paints are available in **exterior-grade** satin/eggshell and gloss finishes!

Oil-based paint

With the advent of new-technology water-based paints the use of oil or solvent based paints is becoming less and less. The advantages of fast-drying, easy clean-up and eco-friendliness are making water-based paints a far more attractive option.

However, if you are using oil-based gloss paint it will take some time to dry – especially if it is gloss-finish - so you need to plan carefully how you're going to tackle them. It is best to start early in order that they can be left open for as long as possible. If they are locked shut before the paint has dried the paint will stick and when you open them again will pull off leaving an unsightly finish.



Tools

- Paintbrush – preferably a sash brush or an angled synthetic brush
- Gloss or Eggshell paint – either water-based or oil-based

Method

If it is possible it helps a lot if you can remove the window itself and paint it separately. This allows you to gain better access to the frame. If not, open the window progressively outwards using the window lock if there is one.



Try to remove the window itself

If you can't remove the window - open it progressively right out using the window lock



Opening it out progressively allows you to get easier access to the upper recesses which have to be painted upside down.

A little practice with a sash brush will mean that you don't have to apply masking tape to the glass. This is time-consuming and fiddly. It is also not 100% accurate in keeping paint off the glass.



A sash brush is purpose-designed to tackle narrow window edges



Small-paned windows are best tackled using a sash brush

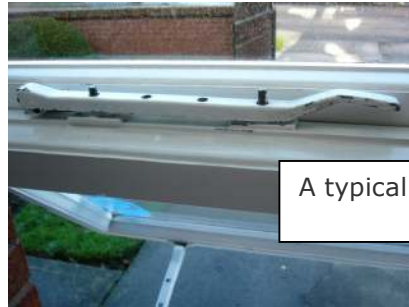
This is particularly relevant to small-paned windows which have frosted-glass with an uneven surface. Care and of course, patience, is always needed when painting any narrow and awkward surface.



If paint does get onto the glass - **let it dry thoroughly** then scrape it off with a razor-blade.

WINDOW LOCKS

These come in various shapes, colours, finishes and sizes. If they require painting, paint them last of all as they are useful for manoeuvring the window in and out. They can be painted of course, but you may achieve a better finished look if you buy new ones in say white or brass.



A typical window-lock

If you really pride yourself in the finish don't do what this painter did – or rather, didn't do! How can you expect a quality finish if you can't be bothered to remove the fittings.

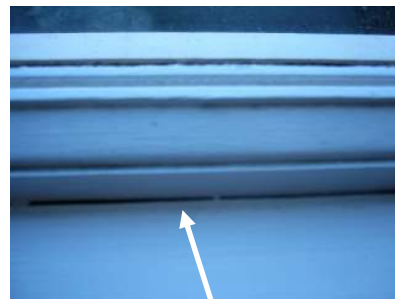


WINDOW SILLS

Most window sills are made from either timber or MDF and comprise a flat upper surface and a rounded lip. Often there are gaps where they meet the window-frame. These should be filled with acrylic filler prior to painting.



Typical window-sill



Gaps can occur between sill and frame. Fill with acrylic filler



PROBLEMS

LOOSE OR TORN WALLPAPER

Sometimes it's necessary to paint over wallpaper and sometimes you'll find that it's torn and hanging loose. It's not necessary to go making up a solution of wallpaper paste, there are two easy solutions...

1. **PVA Adhesive** - Mix the PVA in accordance with the instructions and paste onto the wallpaper, the wall or ceiling surface, or both.
2. **Acrylic Filler** - Just get your acrylic filler gun and spread some either onto the wallpaper, the wall or ceiling surface, or both. It will stick without problem and the excess can be smoothed along the jagged edge to seal and disguise

For more difficult repairs like the one below you will need to take a number of steps in order to achieve a smooth and invisible finish...



This room had two types of patterned wallpaper plus a vinyl border



Result after vinyl border was removed

1. Paste back any loose or torn wallpaper using either PVA adhesive, acrylic filler or wallpaper paste. Pay special attention to joins in the paper
2. When dry, sand any rough edges



Paste back loose paper



Sand torn paper back to sound surface

3. Apply first coat of Zinsser Allcoat Multisurface Primer and Finish™
4. With a wide blade filler knife apply a coat of spackling to damaged areas and allow to dry



5. When dry, sand smooth
6. Apply a second coat of Zinsser Allcoat Multisurface Primer and Finish™



7. With a wide blade filler knife apply a coat of spackling to areas that still need it and allow to dry
8. Apply a coat of white ceiling emulsion. This should almost obliterate any wallpaper pattern showing through
9. With a wide-blade filler-knife apply a coat of spackling to areas that still need it and allow to dry
10. Sand to achieve the final surface finish
11. Apply two coats of the finish emulsion as normal



PEELING , CRACKED OR BLISTERED PAINT



Badly blistered paintwork



Paintwork which has blistered should be lightly sanded



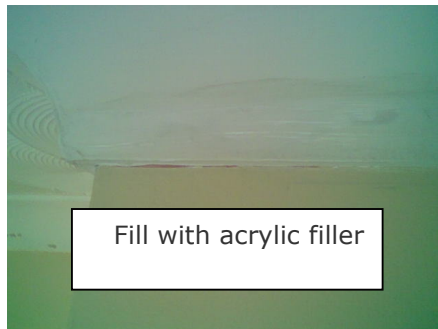
Fill with acrylic filler



Spread evenly. Make sure spreader is wet



Badly peeled cornice



Fill with acrylic filler



Smooth with wet finger or spreader. Two coats of paint and you'd never know!

BADLY CHIPPED PAINTWORK

The secret to a top-quality finish is to take time in the preparation. This staircase was very badly chipped but all it took to get the finish you see was to sand smooth, wash down, apply a coat of Zinsser Bullseye 1-2-3™ primer, apply acrylic filler, smooth out and paint with gloss paint.



Very badly chipped



The finished look!



This door was badly chipped. It was repaired using exactly the same method as above

These Victorian concertina window-shutters were badly damaged from the sun. They were repaired as follows:



1. They were sanded back to a sound surface.
2. Acrylic filler was applied and smoothed - with a wet finger on rounded surfaces, and with a wet filler-knife on flat surfaces. This evens out any dips and hollows.
3. Zinsser Bullseye 1-2-3™ primer was applied
4. A finish coat of oil-based paint brought them back almost as good as new!

DAMAGED LAMINATE EDGING STRIP

Split or cracked edging can be repaired using laminate edging strip and / or Flexible Acrylic Filler. Simply apply and smooth over. If the strip has come away from the surface it can be stuck back using flexible acrylic filler itself or an adhesive such as PVA. Apply and let the adhesive begin to

set. Press against the strip and hold until it sits in place. Trim and then sand lightly to remove excess filler/adhesive and paint if necessary.



The edge of kitchen units often come loose and have to be repaired

HOLES

If the hole has a solid back to it you will be able to fill it as normal and then sand to a smooth finish.

Holes in plasterboard

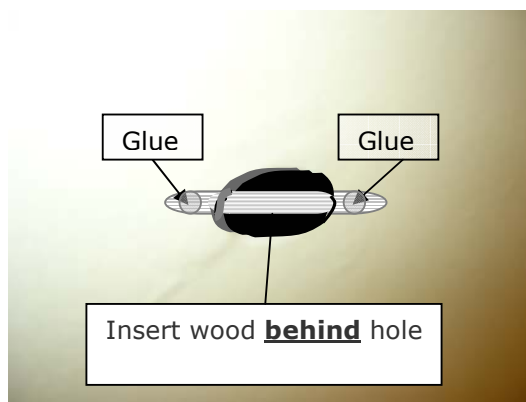
- **Smaller**



If the hole is quite small then apply either acrylic-filler or Fixer Mate initially then finish with spackling if necessary.

- **Larger**

If the hole is larger and has nothing at the back of it to hold the filler try this: take a piece of light wood - a lolly stick will do for smaller holes - and cut it to size so that you can insert it into the hole to one side then slide across to the other side. Bore a hole in the middle and insert a screw. **Apply glue to both ends facing you.** Insert into the hole, slide across and using the screw pull it towards you so that it sticks to the back surface of the plasterboard. Leave to set. When set remove the screw and fill using lightweight filler. Sand smooth.



DEEP HOLES

Can be successfully plugged using Geocel Fixer Mate™ or alternatively tinfoil or polystyrene foam and a lightweight filler. Tear the tinfoil and scrunch it into a sausage shape. Pack into the hole, Use more tinfoil as necessary. Leave about a quarter to half an inch at the opening and fill this with lightweight filler. Leave to set. Fill again until the filler is slightly protruding, Sand and paint!

Deep holes left in plaster



The finished look!



RUST

Rust is caused by the oxidation of metal as a result of some form of exposure to moisture. It must be treated before attempting to paint! There are a number of rust treatment products available on the market. Personally I find Owatrol Oil excellent in treating and preparing rusted areas.

Step 1 - Scrape off loose paint and sand to remove loose dust

Step 2 - Wipe with a damp cloth and allow to dry

Step 3 - Apply Owatrol Oil to rust-affected areas and allow to dry thoroughly.
Add some more Owatrol Oil to gloss paint for a superior grip and finish

Step 4 - Prime if necessary

Step 5 - Paint as normal



Radiators often show signs of rusting. It must be cured before painting!

STAINS

Stains should be treated with a proprietary stain block. These can be water-based (ok for light stains), aerosol-based (easy to apply, fairly fast-drying and ok for heavier stains although several coats may be required) or oil-based (for heavy stains).

Stains on wall and ceiling surfaces especially can spoil the entire finished product if not treated properly before emulsion is applied. As part of your pre-work checklist look for stains since they will need to be treated and allowed to dry thoroughly before emulsion can be applied. Light stains may be satisfactorily treated with either a water-based primer such as Zinsser Bullseye 1-2-3 or a spray-on one such as Zinsser B-I-N Primer Sealer.



Water-damaged ceiling



Apply stain block. Allow to dry.
Paint with ceiling emulsion as normal

For heavier and more obstinate stains you may need to use an oil-based product. These are painted on and left to dry thoroughly. You can then apply emulsion without fear of the stain bleeding through.



PEELING PAINT

Sometimes ceilings particularly are in bad condition. They can have cracks, peeling paint, stains or mould (usually in bathrooms and shower areas which are poorly ventilated).



This ensuite ceiling was badly damaged from steam

It was repaired as follows:

1



Unscrew the fan from the ceiling if possible

The peeling paint was cut, scraped and sanded back to a sound surface

PVA adhesive was applied all over and allowed to dry. If necessary e.g. where the surface is left uneven, apply acrylic filler and spread smooth (**See "Oh No!" in the Ceilings chapter**). Prime the affected area with a primer/sealer. Allow to dry and paint as normal. You could use E-B stir-in bonding-primer in the first coat of emulsion to ensure good paint adhesion. Saves a lot of time!

2



The affected area was painted with Zinsser Bullseye 1-2-3 Primer / Sealer and allowed to dry thoroughly

3



Two coats of a water-based eggshell emulsion were applied

4



And this is the final result!



MOULD

Mould should be treated by washing with a solution of bleach and water then a proprietary mould-resistant paint such as Zinsser Perma White applied. Ordinary water-based emulsion paint can also be applied by adding some VC175 Mould Stop into regular emulsion paint.



Ceiling with extensive mould



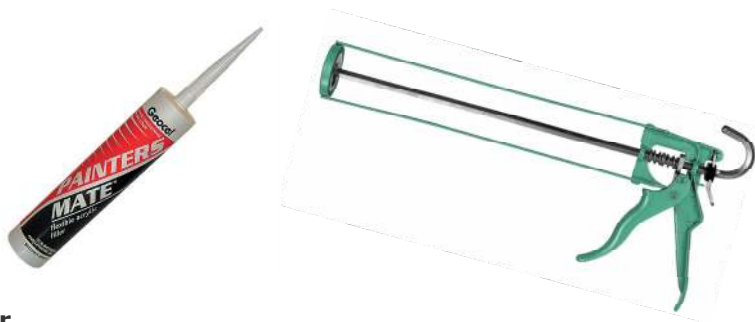
Mould is usually the result of inadequate or non-existent ventilation. If you don't sort it, the mould will keep coming back! If you can't keep a window open install an appropriate extractor-fan.

GAPS

- **Narrow**

Narrow gaps are best treated with acrylic filler. This is a flexible filler available from good DIY stores, many of which sell them under their own brand names. White is the most commonly used since it is easily overpainted with either oil or water based paints.

The most cost-effective filler comes in a hard plastic tube with a nozzle at the end and is applied using an applicator-gun device.



- **Wider**

Wider gaps can be fixed by either using a high-grab acrylic filler such as Geocel Fixer Mate or Panabond to provide the initial fill and then normal acrylic filler spread over it. If you don't have a high-grab filler you can achieve the same result by packing tinfoil into the gap and applying normal acrylic filler over it. Either method will result in the gap disappearing.

Gap between frame and wall.
Pack with tinfoil



Apply acrylic filler and smooth



Wide gap between skirting board



Apply high-grab acrylic filler





Filler can keep on coming out of the nozzle for some time after you have finished with it due to the build-up of pressure. This means that you need to be careful where you put it down as you may find it has dripped onto a surface it shouldn't have! If this happens let it harden and then pick it off rather than trying to remove it while soft as it will only spread.

CRACKS

Often found on both ceilings and walls, cracks can be treated with either acrylic-filler or a lightweight filler such as spackling. Longer cracks are generally best treated with acrylic filler. Fill deeper and wider cracks with spackling.

As with gaps, when using acrylic filler remember to smooth it out with a moist finger or wet filler-knife. You'll get a smoother finish which stands a much better chance of being invisible when the emulsion is applied.

Deeper and wider cracks are best treated with Spackling. This lightweight filler is generally white in colour, is very easily and smoothly applied and sets hard quickly. It is easily sanded to a smooth finish and if applied carefully will be indistinguishable from the surrounding surface.



For very deep holes it is best to build up to the final surface in stages, letting each stage dry before applying the next and so on. Light sanding is all that is needed to get a professional finish ready for painting. Like acrylic filler spackling is best applied slightly moist. Add a few drops of water to the compound and mix to a smooth paste before applying. A really excellent and versatile product **indoors and out!**



Crack across ceiling



Fill with acrylic filler



Spread the filler smoothly



Common type of crack in door frame



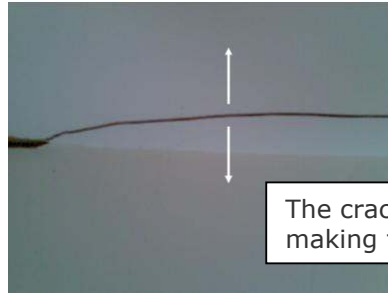
Apply acrylic filler



Smooth out with wet finger

More awkward cracks can appear almost anywhere. One of the more difficult ones to deal with is when the crack has caused the surfaces on either side to shift away from one another leaving them at two different levels.

If you simply apply filler there will always be a noticeable defect. In the example below the crack is on the ceiling...



The crack has caused a shift in levels making the crack wide and noticeable

It was repaired by cutting through on either side of the crack in order to widen it. This makes the shift in levels less noticeable...



Widen the crack with a knife



The finished look!

To complete the repair fill with spackling and sand level if necessary.

DAMAGED CORNER EDGES

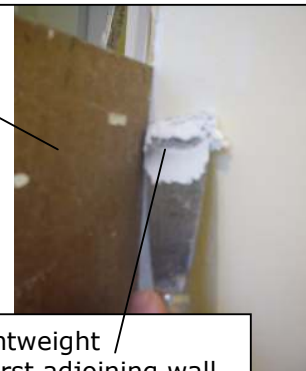
Method:



Badly damaged corner edge

1

Fix piece of board to one edge of wall. Secure to the wall with masking tape.



2

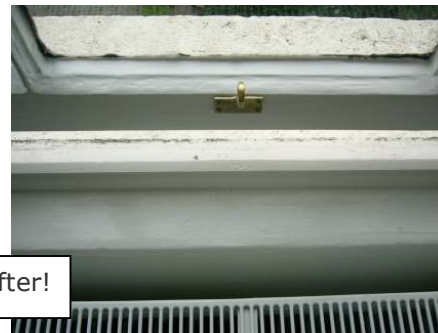
Smooth lightweight filler to the first adjoining wall and **allow to set completely**

3

Repeat for the other wall

DAMAGED WINDOWS

Sun and condensation can cause considerable damage to paintwork on windows and sills but they can be simply repaired and brought back to a top-quality finished look with a little effort.



1 Sand and scrape away any loose paint and debris. This is where a detail sander can save a lot of time and effort !

2 Hoover and wash the woodwork

3 Fill any damaged areas with Spackling and allow to dry

4 Sand smooth

5 Fill any gaps with Acrylic filler

6 Apply a Primer / Sealer

7 Apply an oil-based paint as a final finish

A detail sander can get right into the corners





CONTEMPORARY MAKEOVERS

With the right materials and approach it is quite straightforward to give kitchen units, wardrobes, fireplaces and items of furniture a contemporary look.

The process is almost always the same:-

- 1** Clean the item thoroughly. Use Sugar Soap and/or White Spirit or Oops!
- 2** Fix any hollows, gaps or cracks. Glue back any laminate edging that may be loose. Sand lightly if necessary. Wipe clean using a damp cloth. Dry thoroughly.
- 3** Apply a coat of primer. If you are using an oil-based primer add some Owatrol Oil for better flow and grip. Pay particular attention to edges or where drips can form. If the item has inset moulding, paint this first using a synthetic brush. When dry, lightly sand to ensure the surface is as smooth as possible. Wipe with a damp cloth, dry and wipe with a Painters Tack Cloth.
- 4** Apply at least two to three coats of oil eggshell paint with some Owatrol Oil added using a gloss roller or brush as appropriate. If the item has inset moulding, paint this first using a synthetic brush. Lightly sand between coats, wipe with damp cloth, dry and wipe with Painters Tack Cloth.

Before the final finish coat...

Level 1 - sand lightly to remove any bobbles and bubbles that may have formed as the paint was drying. Wipe with your Tack Cloth and then apply the final eggshell coat. For this final finish coat roll evenly with light, uniform pressure. As you finish rolling each section of paint ease off the pressure so as to avoid unnecessary marks - almost let the rollers own weight do the work. Lay-off with a brush.

Level 2 - if you want a much better and smoother finish, sand using a detail sander with 120 grit paper. You'll be amazed at how much grit it lifts. Hoover off the dust, wipe down, allow to dry and wipe with a Tack Cloth. Use a new gloss roller for the finish coat. Lay-off with a brush.

Level 3 - for a mirror-glass finish perform level 2 then sand by hand using 600 grit wet and dry sandpaper - used **wet**. Wipe off the residue, dry thoroughly then wipe with your Tack Cloth. As with level 3 use a new gloss-roller to apply the finish coat. Done properly you will end up with a finish that looks like it was sprayed on! Lay-off with a brush.



The final finish is as much about how the surface *feels* as to how it looks!

Don't forget to add **Owatrol Oil to your final finish paint coat and mix *thoroughly!***





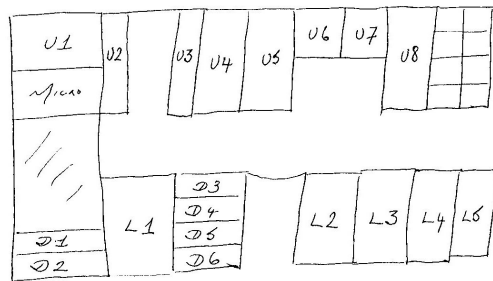
PROJECT. KITCHEN UNITS

A dramatic, bright-look kitchen for much less than the cost of a new one!

An old and tired kitchen can be given a new lease of life for much less than the cost of fitting a new one and with a lot less disruption and hassle. As long as the doors and drawer units are in good condition they can be painted in any colour of your choice and brought up-to-date with the addition of new knobs.

Method

- 1 Make a drawing of the layout of the doors and drawers. Label them U (for upper) 1,2,3,4 etc. and L (for Lower) 1,2,3 etc.



- 2 Remove the doors, drawer units and blanking panels **one at a time** by unscrewing the small retaining screws at each hinge.



Put all the screws and bolts you remove into a bag or container so that none go missing!



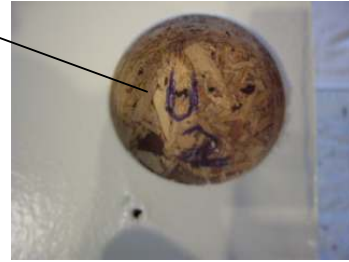
You will achieve a much better finish if you detach the drawer front from the drawer itself. You will almost certainly have to do this in any case if you are replacing old knobs with new ones as they are attached from behind. Take a photo of the mechanism before you unscrew them and also take note which way is up! You can refer to this when reassembly time comes.



Remove these screws

3

In the hinge recess mark each door with U for upper or L for lower 1,2,3 as appropriate. This ensures you will put the doors back in their original places!



4

Remove the old handles.

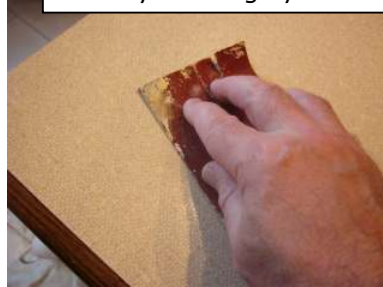


5

Clean the doors, drawers, panels and trim thoroughly as they can be greasy. Use Sugar Soap and/or White Spirit or Oops!

6

Sand each item plus the trim thoroughly. Wipe clean. Dry thoroughly



If the old handles have two screw holes and are being replaced by single screw knobs one of the holes will need to be sealed. This can be easily done with tinfoil packed into the hole, sealed with acrylic filler and smoothed to be invisible with a lightweight filler such as spackling.

7

Apply two or three coats of primer to each side of the fitting. For units with mouldings do these first using a brush then use a gloss roller to apply primer to the flat surfaces. Pay particular attention to the edges. Lightly sand between coats.



8

Stack or lay the doors flat to dry



9

Lightly sand between coats, wipe with damp cloth, dry and wipe with a Painters Tack Cloth. You can also get a good grip without any sanding by applying a coat of ESP to the doors with a clean lint-free cloth.



10

Apply two coats of oil eggshell paint using a gloss roller. As with the primer coats if the door has inset moulding paint this first using a synthetic brush. Lightly sand between coats, wipe with damp cloth, dry and wipe with Painters Tack Cloth.

11

Stack carefully to dry.

12

Reassemble carefully and hey presto! – a brand new kitchen!!



New knobs make all the difference!



The original chrome handles were retained in this example



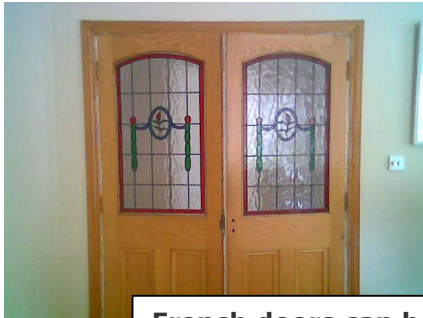
The method described is of course not just restricted to kitchens; doors, staircases, wardrobes, windows – even fireplaces - can all be transformed using the same basic approach.



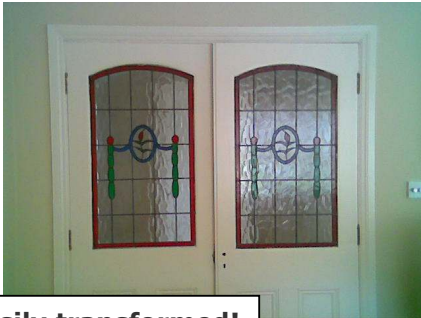
Before. Note the careful masking of the brickwork!



The finished result



French doors can be easily transformed!



 **PROJECT.
FIREPLACE**

Even a dark wooden fireplace can be given a complete new look by painting with a high-quality eggshell-finish paint.





1

The wood was given an initial sanding to remove grit and dirt buildup.



2

Hoovered to remove dust from sanding.

3

Washed down with Sugar Soap.

4

Applied Safe-Release or low-tack masking tape to delicate areas not being painted

Low-tack masking tape will not damage the black hearth area



5

Applied Zinsser Allcoat Multi Surface Primer & Finish



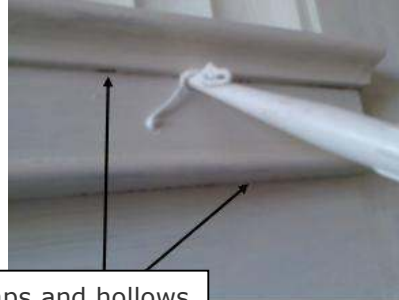
This is the result of the initial primer coat



Use a small brush to reach narrower and intersecting areas

6

Fixed gaps and hollows. You will notice that when the primer is applied, gaps between the various pieces can become much more apparent. Hollows also appear much more noticeable. This will greatly spoil the final appearance if they are left. Apply acrylic filler where necessary - making sure that you moisten your finger with water before smoothing into the gaps.



Apply acrylic filler to gaps and hollows



The finish coats were applied using a **Level 2 and 3** approach. See "**Contemporary Makeovers**" chapter for a detailed description.



PROJECT. WARDROBES



Just a little dated
with the gold trim!



After, with
contemporary
knobs added

Updating laminated wardrobes is simple and straightforward...

- 1** Sand to remove as much roughness as possible
- 2** Hoover thoroughly
- 3** Wash down with Sugar Soap and rinse off
- 4** Prime with Zinsser Allcoat Multi Surface Primer & Finish
- 5** Fill any gaps, hollows You will notice that when the primer is applied, gaps between the various pieces can become much more apparent. Hollows also appear much more noticeable. This will greatly spoil the final appearance if they are left. Apply acrylic filler where necessary - making sure that you moisten your finger with water before smoothing into the gaps.

6 Carefully paint the mouldings first



Drips form at the intersections!



Apply primer using a gloss roller. Apply firmly and evenly.

! When you paint the mouldings using a brush there is a tendency for the paint to be applied thicker than if it was applied with a roller. Be careful not to let it dry otherwise you will end up with a distinct line in the finished look! Spread it out with the gloss roller as soon as you can.



Thicker edge

Painting Narrow Edges



The problem with painting narrow edges is that you get a build-up of paint on the surfaces either side of it which makes for an unsightly finish. Sand or slice-off the build-up and repaint. If you are using a brush - use light strokes and keep the brush flatter against the edge to avoid paint build-up. If using a gloss-roller -squeeze out most of the paint onto the tray and roll very lightly.



Sand lightly before the final finish coat

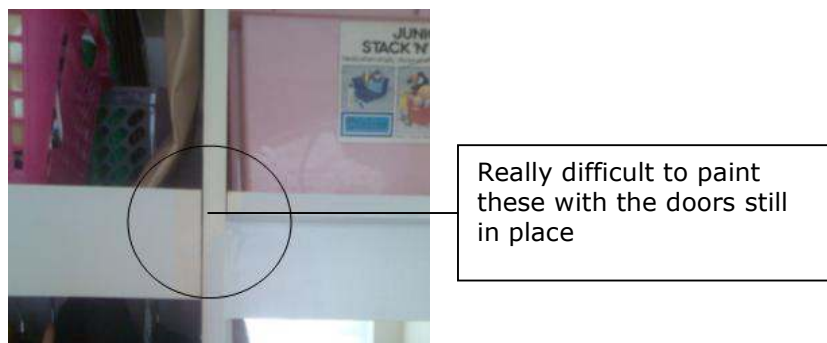
BUT... if you want a mirror-glass finish...



The finish coats were applied using a Level 2 and 3 approach. See "**Contemporary Makeovers**" for a detailed description.

Removing the doors

It is almost impossible to paint the narrow edges of the supporting framework without removing the doors. To get the best possible finish take them off and paint the narrow edges. Use either a gloss-roller or a narrow brush.



AND REMEMBER!

- Don't try and finish everything in one go
- Let each coat of paint dry thoroughly before applying the next
- Build up to the final finish carefully - three coats of evenly applied paint will give an infinitely superior finish to two coats of thick paint



WALLPAPER. PAINTING OVER / STRIPPING

PAINTING OVER

Provided wallpaper is in good condition it is possible to paint over it. I prefer to turn a wall white first to ensure the pattern is not visible.

Method:

1. Paste back any loose or torn wallpaper using either PVA adhesive, acrylic filler or wallpaper paste. Pay special attention to joins in the paper
2. When dry, sand any rough edges
3. Apply Zinsser Allcoat Multi Surface Primer & Finish. Repeat with a second coat
4. Apply a coat of ceiling emulsion to obliterate any pattern showing through
5. Apply two coats of emulsion as normal



Be aware that if paint is applied over textured paper the finish will look like paint applied over textured wallpaper. If this is not a factor then the approach works just fine.

STRIPPING

Tools:

- Steam-Stripper
- Broad filling/stripping knife
- Power Sander, Pole Sander, Sanding block

Provided the walls are sound the best and quickest method is to use a steam-stripper and a stripping knife. If they are not, use a



These generally come with a number of accessories such as large and small steam-plates and nozzles.



Do not hold a steam plate in one spot for a prolonged length of time otherwise you run the risk of damaging the plaster. It is far safer to make several attempts to remove a section; after a short while you will be able to judge the adhesion and adjust accordingly. Steam can be dangerous. ALWAYS follow the manufacturers instructions.

1. If the wallpaper is vinyl coated you need to pull off the vinyl outer layer otherwise the steam will not penetrate the surface. This is a) **dangerous** as the scalding steam is reflected back towards you and b) just useless in getting the paper off the wall!
2. Place a dropcloth at the bottom of the area you are going to strip. Wet, sticky wallpaper is messy!
3. Decide where you're going to start and in what order you're going to work. Place the steam-plate on the first section, hold there for a short time then move the plate to the next section and while holding it there begin to prise away the wallpaper from the previous section. Try and get into a system that you're comfortable with.

RADIATORS!

Many wallpaper removal jobs are spoiled by a lack of attention to removing the paper from behind radiators. Make sure you get down deep behind the radiator and remove as much wallpaper as possible. A long-handled radiator-roller without the roller attached is useful for prising paper off. Sand as best you can – a pole-sander attachment fitted to a short-handled extension pole should allow you to get a reasonably smooth finish in preparation for painting.

SANDING

Removing the wallpaper is only the first step! **The walls must be completely smooth** if you want a professional looking finish and the only way to do this is to sand them. There are two approaches:-

1. Power-Sander
 - Pro's – Fast, not as safe as a pole-sander since high areas to be sanded can only be reached using a ladder
 - Con's – even with a dust attachment there is a huge amount of dust which will get everywhere
2. Pole-Sander
 - Pro's – fast, **far less dust**, safer
 - Con's – arguably more effort required
 - Generally most work can be done from floor level



If you are using a power-sander it is advisable to seal any gaps in wardrobes with masking-tape to avoid clothes getting dust all over them! My advice is to use a pole-sander instead!



In either case wear appropriate safety protection!

BORDERS

There may be an occasion where you are going to paint over existing wallpaper which has a border either low-down or high-up. These need to be removed as they will spoil the finished appearance completely.

Some borders will be relatively easily removed but vinyl ones are not so easy. The vinyl needs to be removed in order to reveal the backing paper which can then be scraped-off using either a steam-stripper or solution.

To get the best finish possible make sure that the adhesive is cleaned-off completely – use Oops!, white-spirit or nail-varnish remover if necessary.

This can be the result of removing a border!
For the solution see "Problems – Loose or Torn Wallpaper"



REMOVING A BORDER HIGH-UP ON A WALL

Sometimes you may need to remove a border around the top of a wall. In the picture below a vinyl border was removed but the backing paper left behind. This was repaired as follows:-

- 1** The border area was sanded – particularly the join to make it as smooth as possible



- 2** A solution of PVA Adhesive was applied to seal the backing
- 3** Two coats of Zinsser Allcoat Multisurface Primer and Finish were applied
- 4** A coat of white ceiling emulsion was then painted on
- 5** Two coats of finishing emulsion finished the job perfectly

Oh No!

Everything is going nicely with your stripping but then... a section of plaster comes away and leaves you with a large area to be repaired. The damaged area will either be fairly shallow or may be quite deep. Either way the repair is the same except that deep damage will require two, or even three, separate fills.



The plaster has "blown" due to the heat of the steam

The problem is easily solved by applying a ready-mixed plaster

**Method:**

1. Clean out the area and remove any loose material
2. Apply a ready-mixed plaster to the area. You can use a plasterers trowel or the spreader which either comes with, or can be bought separately to, skim plaster.
3. Unless the damage is shallow don't try and get a finished surface in one go; fill the area roughly first, score the surface with criss-cross lines to give a good bond to the next fill. Leave to set thoroughly.
4. It helps if the spreader you use is wider than the areas longest measurement. This means you can get an even spread across the whole area without having to remove "tram lines".
5. Let each fill dry thoroughly. Fill any imperfections with lightweight spackling. Lightly sand if necessary.
6. Prime the damaged area with a suitable primer then paint as normal.



QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

Which direction should I paint a Hall, Stairs and Landing?

Personally, if the staircase is on the left as you walk into the house I prefer to start in the hall, then paint the stair wall followed by the landing walls i.e working my way up. If the staircase is on the right I prefer starting at the landing and working down. Reason being that I prefer the work flow in those orders - but at the end of the day it doesn't actually make a big difference.

Order of work when painting Hall, Stairs and Landing?

Personally I do ceilings first, then walls, then woodwork. Remember that you can break down the area into the three distinct sections so you're not all over the place, particularly when tackling a large area.

Do I paint walls or skirting first?

Personally I do walls first, then woodwork. However, if you're unsure about being able to "cut-in" accurately you may find it better to paint the woodwork first, wait for it to dry completely, then apply masking tape to the edges you've just painted and proceed to paint the walls. The downside of this approach is a) it takes much longer because you have to wait for the woodwork to dry and b) paint remains soft for a time until it cures completely. Apply ordinary masking tape too soon and you risk pulling off the paint you have just applied. Safe-release masking tape can potentially get around this but it is more expensive and may still not be foolproof.

How much paint do I need?

Impossible to answer accurately since every situation is different. In my experience a small room will need 2.5 to 3 litres of paint; a large room at least 5 litres and an average hall, stairs and landing in the region of 5 to 7 litres. If you're not sure, err on the higher side. And remember... if you're using a paint colour which is not off-the shelf and has to be mixed, buying a 10 litre bucket may work out cheaper and be more consistent in colour than buying 5+5 or even 5+3!

Mixed Paints

If you are painting the same colour throughout the house you will almost certainly need to use paint from several cans or buckets. Although they are ostensibly the same colour you may find a slight difference in tint or shade. As long as you complete each room or HSL section from the same can or bucket it normally doesn't make a difference BUT if you have to go back and re-touch a damaged area (as often happens when heavy furniture is moved back into tight spots) a difference in shading can ruin all your good work. Label the can and make a note of which areas it was used on and keep the "empty" can until the end just in case. For future touching-up you can pour a little into a lidded container for storage and dispose safely of the initial container.

Tips for painting gloss on varnished stair spindles (Balusters)?

Use Zinsser Bullseye 1-2-3 or Allcoat Multi-Surface (or any good-quality water-based primer) first then paint on the finish coat in either gloss, eggshell or satin finish.

Difference between oil-based and water-based paints?

Check "Types of Paint"

Paint is peeling from bathroom ceiling.

Check "Problems & Repairs", click on "Peeling, Cracked or Blistered Paint" and view the ensuite ceiling section.

Ideal colour for hall stairs and landing with stairs and landing varnished?

Colour is a matter of personal taste taking into account the amount of light entering the area, the type and colour of the flooring e.g. light wood or dark carpet, and ceiling height.

How to paint over wallpaper?

Check "What Are You Painting" and click on "Over Wallpaper" for a complete guide to how it's done.

Can you paint doors using eggshell paint?

Yes of course, eggshell paint is extremely hard-wearing if applied correctly; **and now you can get an eggshell or satin finish OUTDOORS by using a water-based external paint.**

How to use a mini gloss paint roller?

Check the A to Z Useful Products, Items and Tools" chapter and go to the gloss-roller section.

How do I paint a stair landing - it's so high up?

Check the A to Z Useful Products, Items and Tools" chapter and go to the "Stairmate" section.

Can you spray wardrobe doors?

Yes of course. Provided you have the room, the equipment and the skill. Spraying paint is easy, *spray-painting definitely is not* and is best left to a professional. You can achieve an almost sprayed-on finish if you follow the Level1, 2 and 3 approach. Check the chapter "Contemporary Makeovers".

How do you remove wallpaper from behind a radiator?

Check the chapter "Wallpaper. Painting Over / Stripping.

Can I paint over varnish?

Yes of course. Sand roughly to provide good "key" for new varnish. Hoover to remove dust particles. Wash with Sugar Soap. Apply a good water-based primer and allow to dry thoroughly. Depending on the type of finish you want apply either eggshell or full-gloss paint. Repeat coats until you achieve the desired level of finish.

Varnish Preparation***Over new wood i.e. never varnished before***

Sand smooth. Hoover to remove dust particles. Wipe with White Spirit to clean wood fibres. Stir varnish thoroughly. Spread evenly using brush or gloss roller.

Over previously varnished wood

Sand roughly to provide good "key" for new varnish. Hoover to remove dust particles. If floor surface wash with cleaning fluid. Dry thoroughly. Wipe entire surface with White Spirit. Stir varnish thoroughly. Spread evenly using brush or gloss roller.



Best way to varnish stair spindles (balusters)

As above, remembering that you can use a gloss roller as described in the "Hall, Stairs and Landing" section for awkward to reach ones.



Paint for a fireplace?

Usually a good quality gloss or eggshell paint (either oil or water based) will give an excellent finish. However certain fireplaces may require that the immediate fire surround and grate be painted. In this case you MUST use a paint that is certified to a certain number of degrees heat resistance. Your local DIY Decor Store will be able to advise you.



What's the best paint for bathrooms?

Many manufacturers have special ranges of paint that are more resistant to condensation found in bathrooms, kitchens and shower enclosures. The downside is that can be quite a bit more expensive and the range of colours can be limited. An alternative is a product like Zinsser Perma-White which is a) right on the money for damp resistance and b) tintable.



How do I paint a ceiling without straining my neck?

Use a roller attached to an extension pole and work from the ground.



How do I fill a crack in a ceiling?

Check the chapter "Problems". You will find all the information you need.



How do I strip paint or varnish?

Two methods: - 1. Chemical paint stripper 2. Electric Heat Gun

If using a chemical stripper such as Nitromors or Paramose you need to take appropriate precautions. Chemicals are caustic and may burn eyes and skin; they will also remove the surface of whatever they drip onto. So take precautions: wear gloves and eye protection and place drop-cloths at the base of whatever you're stripping.

Heat-guns, while not caustic, punch out somewhere between 1600 and 2000 watts of heat. Wear gloves and protect your eyes.



How do I paint over tiles?

There are proprietary tile-primer paints available in most countries. In reality all you need is a top-quality water-based primer such as Zinsser Bullseye 1-2-3.



What's the best way to strip balusters?

Check out the chapter "*Stripping Paint & Varnish*". This gives an example of a real-life front door but the principle is the same. Presumably the balusters are either painted or varnished - the only difference is that there are parts of them that can be quite hard to reach. Personally I would use either a chemical or water-based stripper and use a bit of ingenuity when it comes to accessing the hard to reach parts - perhaps an old toothbrush, steel-wool etc.



Top layer coming away while stripping wallpaper from plasterboard?

Plasterboard aka "Drywall" or "Gypsum Board" is gypsum plaster sandwiched between two thick sheets of paper and is a popular method of internal wall construction. In my experience you cannot remove paper from plasterboard successfully because of the paper sheets. When you steam or strip the top layer of wallpaper it will also pull away the binding sheet, leaving an

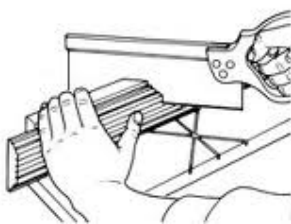
unsightly and uneven surface which is impossible to paint successfully. Plasterboard is easily identified by tapping the surface; if it sounds hollow and light it's plasterboard so don't even attempt to strip the surface.

Instead check out the "Over Wallpaper" page.



How do I remove a dado rail and repair the damage to the wall?

Dado rails are usually nailed-on but in certain cases may have been glued on. Examine the surface of the rail for signs of nails - bear in mind that some people use a mitre joint instead of a butt joint for the very purpose of hiding the nails from view. The rails will have been cut at a 45 degree angle instead of 90 degrees so that one section overlaps the next. If this looks like the case then prise away the top joint and see if there's a nail underneath. Use a hammer and chisel to carefully prise the rail away from the wall. Any damage can be easily repaired using a lightweight filler such as spackling.



Mitre joint



Can I use Silicone sealant in place of Acrylic filler (Caulk)?

Certainly wouldn't recommend it. For one, silicone is extremely sticky and cannot be removed from you or the surface with water. It is extremely difficult to apply cleanly unless you are a practitioner of the art and lastly - it cannot be painted over in the same way that caulk can.



How do I use my ladder sideways on a staircase?

Use a Stairmate.



Will wallpaper come down with just steam?

Almost certainly. Steam is pumped out at 100 degrees Celsius; wallpaper really doesn't stand much chance BUT NEITHER DOES PLASTER so be careful not to let the steam-plate sit too long in the same spot!



Should I use a brush or a roller to emulsion my ceiling?

These days a roller is almost always used; a brush is simply too time consuming and tiring. HOWEVER... there are certain ceilings e.g those in Victorian properties which may be damaged extensively if you use a standard 9" roller - the suction is too great and will pull off the existing paint. Two alternatives - 1. use a mini-roller *carefully* 2. use a wide brush!



How do I fix wallpaper which is separating?

Use PVA adhesive.

the complete **diy** guide to painting your home

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so you want to do it yourself...
but look as though it was done by a
professional?

ILLUSTRATED
TRANSFORM
MASK

REPAIRS

TECHNIQUES

STEP BY STEP

TIPS

FINISHES

TYPES OF PAINT

PRACTICAL

“The difference between an average finish and a
finish you can be **truly proud** of is enormous.

Achieving it doesn't take a huge amount of
skill – it just takes a little care, some knowledge,
some advice, and **patience**”.

brian cahill