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since 1973

Interior Paint Information & Care Instructions

This topic is designed to help explain the paint that is used inside of your home and what needs to be done to keep it looking fresh and new.

Flat paint is used on the walls and ceilings of your home. Below are some of the reasons that flat paint is used:

- **Easier to Touch Up:** As your home begins to settle, screw pops and minor settlement cracks will begin to appear. One of the main reasons that flat paint is used is because it tends to be easier to touch up and leaves a better finished product. It doesn't leave noticeable marks, streaks or an inconsistent sheen known as flashing. Glossier finishes on walls and ceilings tend to show brush strokes, marks and flashing more clearly.
- **Non-reflective Finish:** Flat paint has a smooth, non-glossy finish that doesn't reflect light, which can help create a more subtle, even look on walls. This is especially desirable in areas where you want to avoid shiny, glare-prone surfaces, such as living rooms or bedrooms.
- **Calming, Soft Aesthetic:** The muted appearance of flat paint contributes to a calm, cozy atmosphere in a room. It's often preferred for spaces that require a more relaxed, understated vibe.

To keep your flat paint looking new, here are a few tips:

- **Keep Walls Clean**
  - **Clean Regularly:** Use a soft cloth or microfiber duster to gently remove dust and cobwebs from your walls to prevent buildup.
  - **Spot Clean:** For stains or smudges, use a damp cloth with a mild soap solution. Gently blot, don't rub, to avoid damaging the paint. For tougher stains, use a sponge with diluted vinegar or a gentle cleaner, but test it on an inconspicuous area first.
- **Avoid Scrubbing Too Hard**
  - Flat paint is sensitive to abrasion, so avoid using rough sponges, abrasive scrubbers, or harsh chemicals. If you must clean a stain, use the softest cloth or sponge possible and apply gentle pressure.
- **Use a Protective Covering**
  - **Furniture or Wall Protectors:** Consider using furniture or wall corner protectors to avoid accidental scuffs or marks, especially in high-traffic areas.
  - **Touch-Up Paint:** Keep a small amount of leftover paint for touching up small imperfections as they arise. This will help you maintain the freshly-painted look.

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- **Avoid Moisture**
  - Flat paint tends to absorb moisture, leading to potential mold or stains. Keep your walls dry and avoid steam or water exposure by using ventilation or exhaust fans, especially in bathrooms and kitchens.
- **Keep Pets and Kids in Mind**
  - If you have pets or young children, be prepared for more wear and tear. It's a good idea to touch up any marks immediately to prevent them from setting into the paint.
- **Repaint as Needed**
  - Over time, flat paint may begin to show signs of fading or wear, especially in high-use areas. When necessary, consider repainting the wall to refresh its appearance and maintain a new look.

Semi-gloss paint is used on the interior trim and doors of your home. Below are the main reasons that a semi-gloss finish is used:

- **Durability and Ease of Cleaning:**
  - **High Durability:** Semi-gloss paint has a harder, more durable finish compared to flat or satin paints. This makes it ideal for high-touch areas like doors and trim that are prone to wear and tear.
  - **Easier to Clean:** The smooth, slightly shiny surface of semi-gloss paint makes it easier to wipe away dirt, fingerprints, smudges, and other marks. It's particularly beneficial in spaces like kitchens, bathrooms, and hallways, where these surfaces are frequently touched.
- **Highlighting Architectural Features:**
  - **Crisp, Defined Look:** Semi-gloss paint gives trim and doors a clean, crisp look that helps to highlight the architectural details. It provides a contrast against matte or flat walls, making the trim stand out.
  - **Enhanced Aesthetics:** The subtle shine of semi-gloss adds dimension and depth to trim and doors, making them look more polished and finished. It can complement various interior styles, from traditional to modern.
- **Long-Lasting Appearance:**
  - **Resistant to Marks:** Semi-gloss paint resists scuff marks, stains, and dirt better than other finishes, so trim and doors painted with it tend to stay looking fresh longer.
  - **Less Frequent Touch-ups:** Because of its resistance to dirt and wear, semi-gloss paint requires fewer touch-ups compared to lower-sheen finishes.

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To keep your semi-gloss paint looking new, here are some tips:

- **Regular Dusting and Cleaning**
  - **Dust Frequently:** Use a soft microfiber cloth or duster to remove dust from the trim and doors regularly. Dust buildup can make surfaces look dull.
  - **Spot Clean as Needed:** For fingerprints, smudges, or other light stains, use a damp cloth with a mild soap solution. Wipe the surface gently to avoid damaging the paint. Dry the area afterward with a clean, soft cloth to prevent water spots.
- **Use Gentle Cleaning Solutions**
  - **Mild Soap and Water:** For routine cleaning, a mixture of mild dish soap and water is generally safe. Avoid harsh chemicals that can damage the paint's finish.
  - **Avoid Abrasives:** Never use abrasive scrubbers (e.g., steel wool or rough sponges) on semi-gloss painted surfaces, as they can scratch or dull the finish.
  - **Test Cleaning Products:** Before using any new cleaner, test it in an inconspicuous area to ensure it doesn't affect the paint.
- **Handling Stubborn Stains**
  - **Magic Eraser:** For tougher stains, a slightly dampened Magic Eraser can be effective. Gently rub the stain, but be cautious not to apply too much pressure, as it can sometimes dull the finish.
  - **Non-abrasive Cleaner:** If you have more persistent marks, use a non-abrasive all-purpose cleaner. Just be sure to wipe the surface down with a damp cloth afterward to remove any cleaner residue.
- **Touching Up**
  - **Keep Leftover Paint:** Store any leftover paint for future touch-ups. Semi-gloss finishes can show scratches or chips more easily than flat finishes, so having matching paint on hand will allow you to fix small issues.
  - **Use a Fine Brush:** When touching up, use a small, fine brush to apply the paint neatly without over-applying it to the surrounding area.
- **Protecting from Damage**
  - **Avoid Heavy Scraping:** Be mindful of sharp objects that could scrape or gouge the paint. If a door or trim gets a small scratch, touch it up promptly to prevent it from worsening.
  - **Use Furniture Pads:** For areas like baseboards or trim where furniture is placed nearby, use furniture pads on the bottom of chairs or other pieces to avoid scuffing or damaging the paint.

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- **Prevent Moisture Exposure**
  - **Keep Dry:** Even though semi-gloss paint is moisture-resistant, it's still a good idea to avoid prolonged exposure to water. In areas like bathrooms, ensure good ventilation to prevent humidity from affecting the paint.
  - **Wipe Water Spills Immediately:** If any water or liquids spill on the trim or door, wipe it up right away to prevent water spots or damage.
- **Repainting and Maintenance**
  - **Periodic Repainting:** Depending on wear, you may need to repaint the trim or doors every few years. If the finish starts to look worn or damaged, lightly sand the surface before applying a fresh coat of paint to ensure better adhesion.
  - **Sanding for Re-coating:** If you're repainting, lightly sand the surface to remove any imperfections and create a smooth finish before applying a new coat of semi-gloss paint.

By following these care instructions, you can help preserve the beauty and durability of the interior of your home by keeping walls, ceilings, trim and doors looking fresh and polished for years to come.

Technical Services Team