

DIY guides

Now you've chosen your colours, get to grips with the basics before you pick up your paintbrush. Our indispensable guides will help you throughout the whole process so you can achieve a professional-looking finish.

Getting started ● Preparing surfaces
How to paint, inside and out ● What tools do I need?
Wood and metal ● Safety and the environment



Getting started

It's a good idea to spend some time planning your project so that it runs smoothly. These simple tips can help.

Before you start

- Plan the order in which the work needs to be done.
- Always use the right equipment for the job.
- Make sure you have good ventilation before you start painting or varnishing.
- If you are using more than one pot of paint in the same colour, mix them together in a larger container in case of slight colour variations.

While you are painting

- Always keep pets and children away from the area in which you are working.
- Wear adequate eye protection.
- When taking a short break, stand the paint in a cool safe place and wrap your brush in cling film.
- Large surfaces such as walls and ceilings should only be painted with water-based paint.

When you have finished

- If you've finished working and you've been using solvent -based paints, get your brush clean with **Polycell** Brush Cleaner or **Polycell** Heavy Duty Brush Cleaner.
- Brushes should be stored flat or on their handles. Standing them on their ends will bend the bristles and spoil them.
- To reseal a can of paint so that it is airtight, wipe the rim of the can clean, replace the lid, place a block of wood over the top and tap it down with a hammer.

Preparing surfaces

Prepare all the surfaces you are about to paint as best you can to get the most professional-looking finish.

Walls and ceilings

- Take up rugs and vacuum the floor to remove any dust. Where possible, remove furnishings and accessories such as lampshades and pictures.
- As long as old plaster is in reasonable condition and completely dry, only limited preparation is required. Simply fill in any small cracks with a **Polycell** Filler and dust the surface down before painting.
- Small cracks and dents can be filled in with multi-purpose filler, but larger ones need more careful treatment. There is a wide range of **Polycell** Fillers available to help you prepare for the perfect finish.
- Remove old wallpaper before painting. The easiest way to do this is with a steam stripper. Alternatively you can use **Polycell** Wallpaper Stripper to make stripping easier.
- Walls should then be washed to remove all residues of paste.

Filling holes in plaster

- Small holes up to 50mm in depth can be filled with **Polycell** No Sanding Polyfilla.
- Large holes in plasterboard must be properly filled with **Polycell** Deep Gap Polyfilla.

Preparing wooden frames for painting

- The window frame must be clean, sound and dry. It is important to clean out all cracked and defective putty between the glass and the frame. It tends to become brittle with age and can fall out.
- Scrape out all the loose material. Treat any mould with **Weathershield** Multi-Surface Wash.
- When the window frame is clean and dry, prime areas of bare wood with **Dulux** Primer for Wood or **Dulux** Primer & Undercoat for Wood. Use a proper putty knife to fill the gap between the glass and the frame with multi-purpose putty. Leave the putty to harden thoroughly before painting.

How to paint, inside and out

Start painting go from the top of the room and work down in the following order:

Ceilings

- Start in a corner near the window and paint along the edges with a small brush.
- Then, working from the wet edges, paint in broad bands away from the light with a larger brush or a roller.
- Apply each fresh load of paint next to the last application, so you are always working from a wet edge.

Walls

- Use a small brush to cut in, starting at a top corner. If you are right-handed work from left to right and vice versa. Continue the rest of the wall with a larger brush or roller.

Doors

- Remove door accessories and wedge the door open.

- Paint the door before the frame. If you are painting each side in a different colour, ensure all the surfaces on view when the door is open are the same colour.

- When painting exterior doors you should also paint the top & bottoms and behind the hinges if possible.

Windows

- It is best to paint windows in the morning to maximise the drying time. Depending on drying conditions this will enable you to close the windows at night.

- If you can, remove the stay and catch before you paint the window (leave in a screw to use as a make shift handle whilst painting).

- Window frames should be painted in a certain order to achieve the best results. Also, this will make painting the window easier.

1. Glazing bars
2. Top and bottom horizontal rails
3. Inside vertical rails
4. Outside edges
5. Outside frame

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Radiators

- Radiators should be painted when completely cold. Use a solvent-based paint that is suitable for metal. Avoid water-based paint as it may become sticky when warm.
- The inside of metal gutters is best coated with a layer of bitumen-based paint for protection against damp conditions; the outside of metal pipes should be painted with **Weathershield Exterior Gloss**.

Skirting boards

- Protect the floor with a piece of card fitted between the skirting board and the floor. Move it along as you progress around the room. Alternatively use masking tape.

Painting outside

- Before you start, make sure you have a plan or timetable. You may need to split the workload into sections using existing features such as bays, parapets, lintels, down pipes and window frames as natural breaks to disguise joins.
- Don't paint in strong sunlight as water-based paints will dry too quickly, nor on windy days as dusty particles being blown around in the air will find their way onto the wet paint work.

What tools do I need?

Use the right tools for the job you are about to do and you'll get the best finish.

Brushes

What type of brush?

- Buy the best quality brush you can afford. Cheap ones have short stubby bristles and are usually wedged with a piece of wood in the middle. They lead to uneven coverage and tend to shed bristles.
- A good quality brush has densely-packed, long, firm and tapered bristles that spring back into shape when you flex them. These hold the paint well and help to apply it where you want it.
- A combination of a 150mm brush with a 50mm brush for edges and corners is usually better than a 200mm brush, which can be unwieldy when fully loaded.
- Before putting a new brush into paint, wash the brush to get rid of dust and loose bristles. Dip up to a third of the brush into the paint and gently tap the brush on the side of the tin to prevent drips. Hold the brush as if you were holding a pen.

Rollers

Using a roller

- A roller with interchangeable sleeves is good for painting large areas. Choose one that is comfortable and not too weighty. Different finishes are available. The basic rule is that the smoother the surface you are painting, the shorter the pile required.
- Shaggy, sheepskin-style rollers are best for textured and uneven surfaces.
- It's worth investing in an extension for reaching places such as hallways and ceilings.
- Use a radiator roller for painting behind radiators.
- Tip the paint into a roller tray first. Make sure the tray is wide enough to hold the roller.

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Special effects applicators

Specialist tools

- Create light textures and paint effects such as stippling, sponging, rag rolling or colour washing with these specialist tools.

Bristle stippling brush

- A moulded block-handled brush with short pure bristles. When used to apply paint over walls or woodwork it will produce a soft cloudy effect.

Graining tool

- A soft rubber moulding with a graining face and edge combs on a reversible handle. The grain is drawn slowly down through the paint while being rocked backwards and forwards to produce 'knots' in the grain.

Natural sea sponge

- When paint is sponged on or off a surface, natural sea sponges produce a soft, delicate freckled print. Wet the sponge first with warm water to make the sponge soft and pliable.

Wood and metal

Paint your wood and metal surfaces carefully. Not only will you get a lasting finish, they will look stunning too.

Painting wood

- Most made-up joinery is supplied either bisected for staining, or pre-primed for painting. Untreated soft wood will need a light sanding, dusting and treatment with an appropriate primer.
- For a smooth surface when painting interior wood, use **Polycell** Fine Surface Polyfilla. Then rub it down with a fine abrasive paper. Fill larger holes and cracks with a flexible wood filler such as **Polycell** Wood Flex Polyfilla and sand down when dry.
- Using the right primer is essential for a good finish and **Dulux** has a whole range for different surfaces.

Stripping wood

- There is no need to strip existing paint coatings unless they are in a very bad state. It is always better to continue painting and build up the surface than to start again from bare wood.

- If you do have to strip down to bare wood, use **Polycell** Advanced Paint Stripper or **Polycell** Maximum Strength Paint Stripper.

Staining and varnishing

- Varnish protects bare wood and gives it a deep shine that reveals the beauty of the grain. There are many different ways that varnish can be used on wood, inside and outside your home.

Redecorating painted woodwork

- For a long lasting finish when painting woodwork, it is best to build up a complete layering system, starting with **Dulux** Primer for Wood on bare wood, followed by an undercoat and a topcoat.

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Painting metal

- Metal surfaces such as railings, fireplace surrounds and pipe work deserve as much attention as the rest of your home.
- Make sure you coat sharp edges well as these are the areas most likely to receive a battering.
- A ferrous metal (iron or steel) that is rusty will soon shed a coat of paint. Make sure your preparation is as thorough as possible.
- The best way to deal with rust is by prevention. Good results can be achieved by using **Dulux** Metal Primer, followed by two or three coats of **Dulux** Gloss or **Dulux** Satinwood (interior use only).

Safety and the environment

With most decorating jobs, you'll be using substances containing chemicals. It's good to use them responsibly and minimise any environmental damage.

Handling paint and chemicals

- Only buy as much paint as you need for the job in hand. If you do need to store it, use a secure cupboard well out of the reach of children.
- Don't throw your white spirit after use. Allow it to stand and the sediment will fall to the bottom. Then pour off the clean spirit and re-use it.
- Don't pour paint or white spirit down the drain as the chemicals they contain can disperse and contaminate the water supply.

Removing lead-based paint from surfaces

- If you live in a property built before 1960, surfaces such as doors, windows and skirting boards may have once been painted with a paint that contains lead pigment. This can be harmful if absorbed into the body through the skin or by inhalation of the particles. Lead can be hazardous particularly for pregnant women and where young children are present.

- Properties built after 1960 may also have been painted with a special lead containing metal primer in parts. Redecorating surfaces that have been painted in the past with lead-containing paint is not dangerous provided the surfaces are correctly prepared.

- Removing lead paint may prove to be difficult and dangerous. **Dulux** recommend you employ the services of a reputable professional decorator.

Safety

- Even though paint products are safer and easier to use, many contain chemicals that can be harmful if incorrectly used. A few simple precautions will ensure that good results are obtained safely.
- Always read the label and instructions for the use of paints, thinners and other decorating materials before you begin work.
- Make sure that there is plenty of ventilation in your work area. Wear gloves if you have sensitive skin. If any paint comes into contact with your eyes, wash it away with plenty of water.