

Turn eyesores into beauties

Tips on how to paint those unusual areas in your home

Take a look around your home. Do you see any unusual areas that could use some sprucing up, like your bathroom tiles or a brick wall? Why not paint them? It's not as hard as you might think. Just follow the directions below and you'll turn those eyesores into beauties.

Plastic Tiles

Many older bathrooms have been decorated with plastic tiles. Although they might have been the rage at the time they were applied, you might find them garish now. Instead of removing them, a messy and time-consuming job, why not paint over them in the color of your choice. To do so, just follow these steps.

1. Lightly sand the tiles to roughen up the surface and make the new paint stick.
2. Remove the dust with a tackcloth and clean the tiles with a TSP solution.
3. Apply an oil-based primer.
4. Apply the topcoat.

Interior Brick

Painting interior brick is a snap. With the proper surface preparation, your paint job should last 10 years, if not longer.

1. Use a TSP solution and a

scrub brush or power washer to thoroughly clean the brick wall. Rinse it twice and allow it to dry completely.

2. Brick is porous, so apply a masonry primer or sealer to make the surface less absorbent.

3. Apply two to three coats of 100% acrylic latex paint using a thick-napped roller.

Cabinets

Cabinets take a lot of abuse, especially in the kitchen. Nicks and soil build-up can make them appear dull and unattractive. Paint them to revitalize their appearance. Here's how.

1. Remove all the cabinet doors and drawers, identifying each so you won't get them mixed up later.

2. Prepare the surfaces for paint. Professional opinions differ on this matter.

Some believe stripping the old finish is the only way to guarantee a quality finish, while others believe a good cleaning and a light sanding is all that is necessary. If you choose the for-

mer method, strip the surfaces, sand them lightly and remove all dust with a tackcloth.

If you elect to do the latter, clean the surfaces with a T S P

solution, lightly sand them and remove the dust with a tackcloth.

3. Fill any nicks or scratches with a paintable putty and sand them to a smooth finish. Clean the areas and remove the

dust with a tackcloth.

4. Apply a coat of stain-blocking primer to hide unsightly marks.

5. Apply the topcoat. Oil paints have traditionally been

used for cabinets, but today's latex paints have improved so much that they too can provide great coverage and durability. If you choose latex paint, be sure to get 100 percent acrylic formulation, not vinyl/acrylic, and purchase the highest quality you can afford. Gloss paints tend to hold up better to frequent cleaning than semi-gloss. For the best coverage, apply the paint with spray equipment or a high-quality synthetic-bristle brush, making long strokes. Foam brushes and rollers are not recommended. Depending on the original color of the cabinets, you may

have to apply two to three coats.

Concrete Floors

An inexpensive way to give

an old basement floor a finished look is by painting it. In four easy steps, you can be on your way to a new look.

1. Check the floor for moisture. Not all basement floors are suitable for painting. Too much moisture will cause the paint to blister and peel. Take this simple test. Secure a piece of 3'x 3' poly sheeting to the floor with some electrical tape. Let it sit for 24 hours. Remove the tape and check the underside of the sheet for moisture. If it is damp or wet, your floor is not suitable for painting.

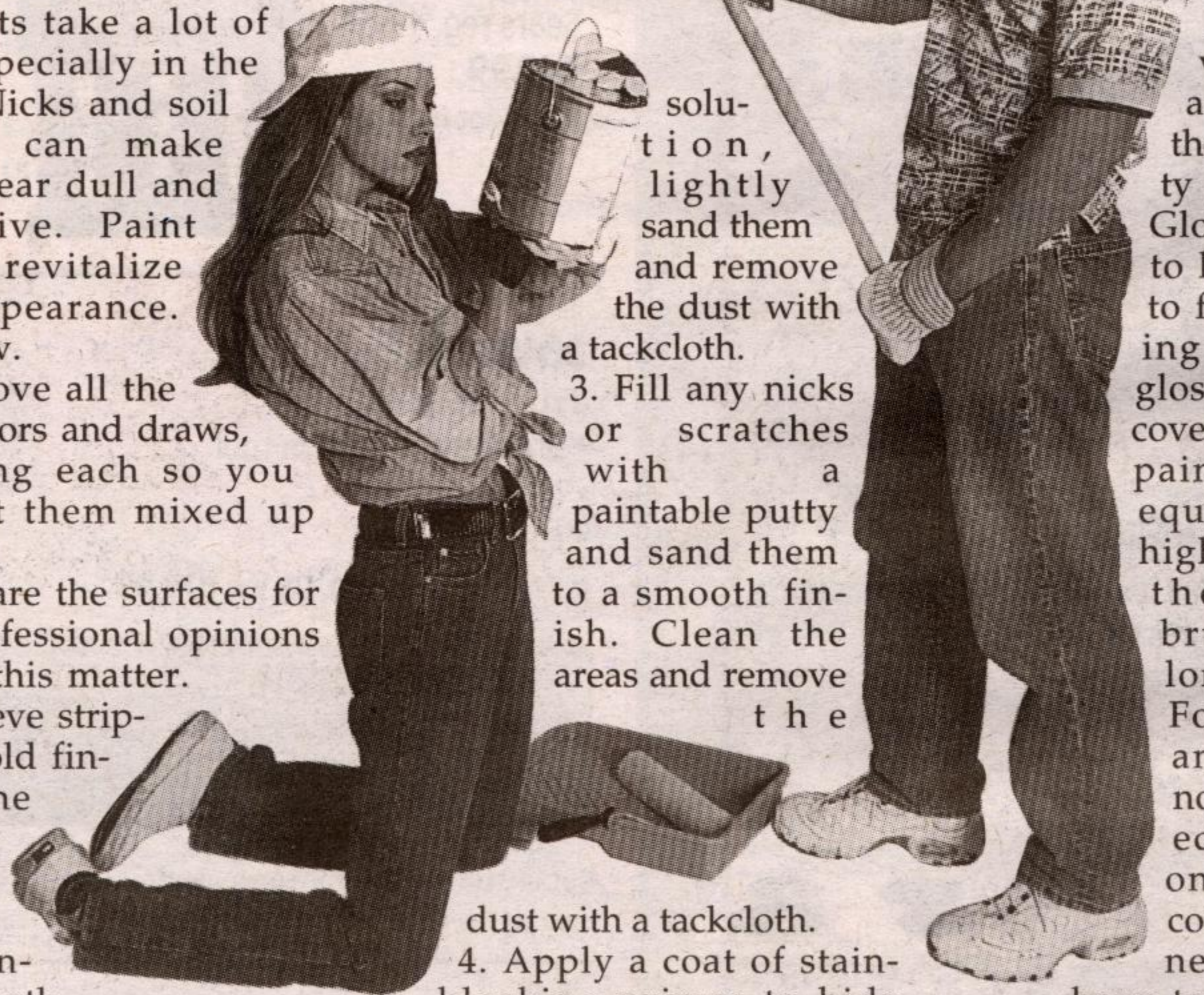
2. Clean the floor. The concrete must be completely free from dust and grease before painting. Mop the floor with a TSP solution from end to end, paying special attention to corners. Rinse thoroughly.

3. Select paint especially designed for concrete in the color of your choice. Read the manufacturer's instructions to see if an etching solution is recommended prior to application. If so, proceed as directed.

4. For the best coverage, use a 3/8" nap on a nine-inch roller. Allow the first coat to dry thoroughly before applying a second coat.

You can paint almost anything. Keep this in mind as you spruce up your home this fall.

—By Doris A. Black



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