

Get rid of those winter blahs with new paint colours

Entertaining at home this winter season, but don't know where to start decorating? Brush away your worries with paint, says leading architectural paint brand PARA Paints.

"A can of paint and a paint brush will go a long way in transforming your home into a haven for the holidays," says Melanie Rice, Colour Advisor for PARA Paints and member of the international colour forecaster Color Marketing Group. "With a warm, welcoming look on your walls and a few simple decorations, your home will have a festive feel."

Even if you're not looking to paint your entire home this season, you can still lift the spirit of family members and leave guests with a lasting impression simply by updating one or two of your main rooms, the hallway or foyer with a fresh coat of paint, Rice explains.

"Existing wood furniture and trim pair well with colours inspired by nature, such as autumn shades of orange, gold, russet red and brown. You can also paint one wall an accent colour to showcase a favourite print or grouping of memorabilia. Or, add colour to woodwork and doors for a quick room update," she says.

Popular paint colour choices for the winter season are earthy, warm hues such as red browns and terra cottas, as

well as ochre, gold, and burnt oranges. Dark reds are also in vogue for accent walls.

PARA Paints offers these tips:

Start with an assessment. Before choosing colours, have a good look around the area you want to paint, taking cues from existing carpets, furniture and accessories. Try using the colour scheme of a favourite painting or piece of pottery as inspiration, or draw from a fleck of colour you like in your sofa, carpet or drapery. Then, take into account the room's natural and artificial lighting, since the colours you choose will look differently during the day and night, and under different lighting fixtures. Incandescent light, for example, increases the warmth of wall colours, while fluorescent lighting cools down a colour scheme. Halogen lighting has a strong blue spectrum which enhances whites, greys and blues, and dimmed-halogen lights give off a yellow hue, altering the wall tone.

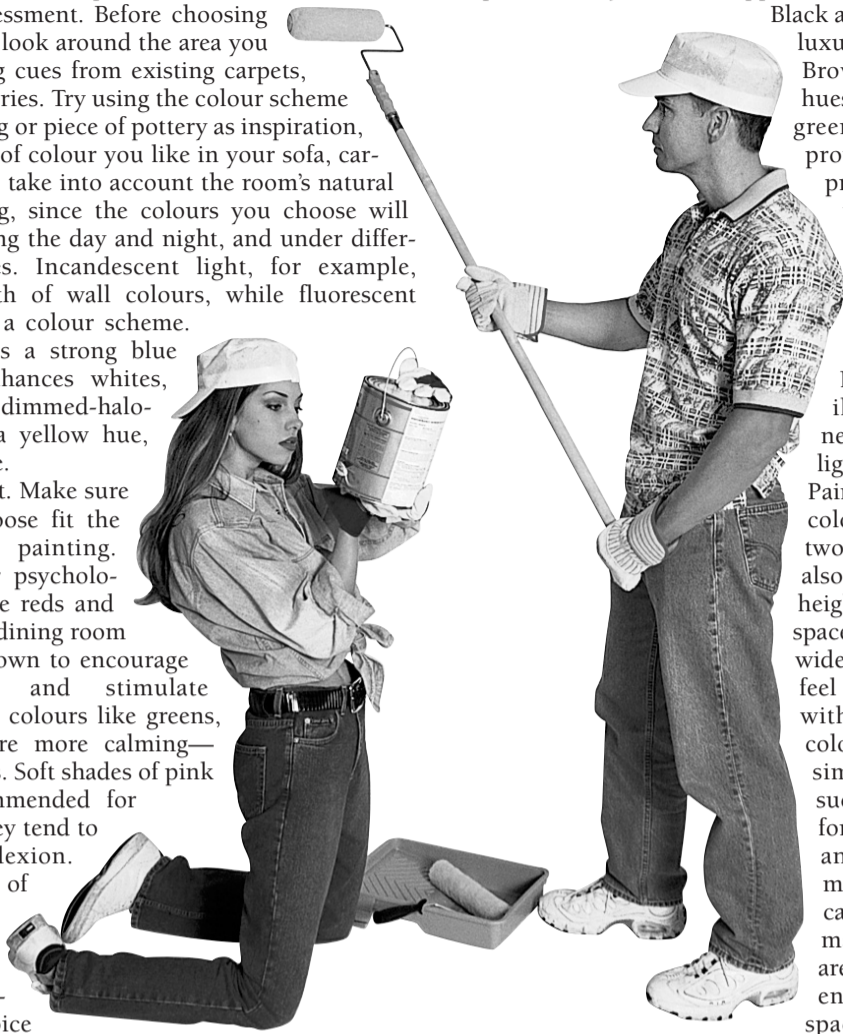
Ensure a colour fit. Make sure the colours you choose fit the room you're painting. According to colour psychologists, warm hues like reds and oranges add life to a dining room or den as they're known to encourage social interaction and stimulate appetites, while cool colours like greens, blues and violets are more calming—ideal for living rooms. Soft shades of pink or peach are recommended for powder rooms, as they tend to flatter one's complexion. Yellows with a hint of orange or brown—such as mustard or ochre—are warm and welcoming, making them a good choice for hallways.

Set a mood. Choosing vibrant colour schemes of oranges, reds and browns will spice up your entertaining functions, while pastel shades will create a more relaxing, calming

environment. If you're hoping to impress clients or your boss, stick to more neutral shades of brown, beige, gray and taupe to make your home appear elegant and sophisticated.

Black accents can also create a luxurious feel in a room. Browns in more earthy hues create intimacy, while green shades have been proven to lower blood pressure and relax the nervous system.

Maximize your space. To make a small room seem more spacious, use a light coloured paint. Lighter hues give an illusion of expansiveness by reflecting more light than darker tones. Painting your ceiling in a colour which is a shade or two lighter than your walls also creates an illusion of height, and makes narrow spaces like hallways appear wider. Want the room to feel larger still? Decorate with a monochromatic colour scheme, choosing similar light colours—such as various beiges—for walls, ceilings, rugs and furniture. Darker, more saturated colours can create a more intimate atmosphere, but aren't recommended for entertaining in smaller spaces as they tend to



close in the walls of a room.

"More information can be found at www.para.com, by visiting your local PARA Paints dealer, or calling 1-800-461-PARA.



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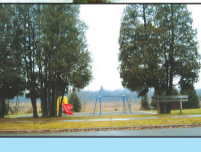
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