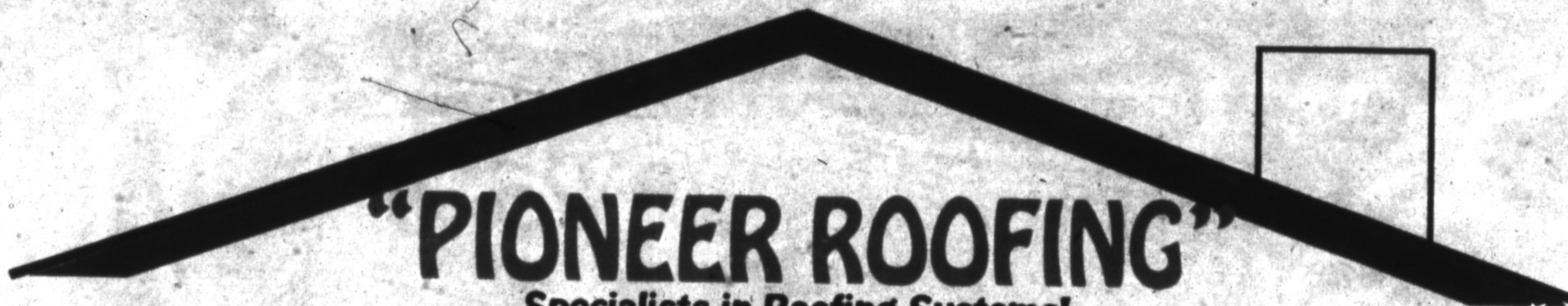


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WE "TOP" THEM ALL

Expert advice on applying exterior latex house paint

⊗If your do-it-yourself exterior painting projects look like they were done by a do-it-yourselfer, don't despair. Learning just a few tricks of the painting trade can turn you into a near-expert in a hurry.

And you don't have to learn from your mistakes. To simplify things, experts from the Rohm and Haas Paint Quality Institute offer these tips on applying latex exterior paints:

•Start by purchasing a top quality acrylic latex house paint. Top quality latex paints are especially easy to apply and typically contain additives that help ensure the paint will go on easily, evenly and with minimal spattering.

•Be sure to use good quality synthetic bristle brushes and synthetic-cover rollers when applying water-based latex paints. They maintain their shape and stiffness, regardless of the amount of water they are exposed to.

•Before starting to apply latex paint, moisten brushes and roller covers, then shake out excess water before dipping into the paint. Moist brushes and rollers apply paint more easily and evenly.

In very hot weather, be sure to rinse out the brush or roller cover occasionally to avoid paint buildup.

•When painting porous exterior surfaces such as weathered stucco or cin-

der block, moisten the surface before you begin to paint. That will slow down the paint's drying time and help the paint form a more durable film.

This procedure is particularly important when the weather is warm and breezy, since paint will dry even faster under these conditions.

•Apply paint to the dry (unpainted) part of the surface and brush it back into the area that has just been painted. In other words, brush from dry to wet to give the paint a smooth, uniform appearance.

•Extra brushing may enhance the appearance of oil-based (alkyd) paint, but it should be avoided when applying latex paint — especially when using gloss or semigloss sheens. With latex paint, just a few strokes per brushload will provide a thick paint film with the best flow, hiding and durability.

•When painting or staining wood lap siding, it's best to work horizontally by applying the coating all the way across several boards, rather than stopping in the middle of a board. Otherwise, an unsightly "lapping" effect may result, which may be apparent immediately...or show up after a year or two of weathering.

Some parts of home tougher on paint

How do you know it's time to repaint the exterior of your home? If you're like most people, you look for cracking, peeling or blistering paint.

And if your house is like most, those first signs of paint failure will show up in one of the recognized paint "trouble spots" — windows and sills, eaves and soffits, or gutters and downspouts.

Ultimately, the way to handle these trouble spots is by carefully preparing the surfaces, then applying a top quality acrylic latex paint. By following this advice, you'll get a durable, long-lasting paint job, say experts at the Rohm and Haas Paint Quality Institute.

Here are some additional thoughts on maintaining your home's paint problem areas:

Windows: No part of the home takes more abuse from the weather than your windows and window sills.

Window sills are especially vulnerable. They tend to harbor water, snow and ice longer than other parts of the home's exterior. Their face-up exposure also subjects them to intense sunlight and damaging ultraviolet rays.

Before attempting to paint window sills and windows, scrape and then sand them. Brush away dust particles, and if bare wood is exposed, apply a high quality acrylic or oil-based exterior primer. Paint after the primer dries.

Eaves and soffits: Eaves and soffits suffer from another villain: dampness.

Because these areas receive little sunlight, they can stay moist for long periods of time, creating a perfect environment for unsightly black blotches that signal the presence of mildew.

Good surface preparation requires removing all mildew before painting. This is best accomplished by washing the surface with a mild bleach solution (one part bleach, three parts water and detergent). After rinsing the areas and allowing it to dry, you can begin to paint.

Gutters and downspouts: Weather-beaten gutters and downspouts are common sore spots for paint.

Before painting new, galvanized gut-

ters and downspouts, wash the metal surfaces with soap and water, then rinse off. Old galvanized metal should be wirebrushed before washing to gently remove rust, loose paint and dirt.

If no rust is present, a primer ordinarily is not needed when painting galvanized metal. Quality acrylic latex paint can be applied directly to factory-finished metal gutters, downspouts and trim.

If rust is present, apply a corrosion-resistant primer before painting.

For more information on exterior and interior home painting, consult the professionals at your local paint store, hardware store or decorating center. 6421301

PROBLEM AREAS FOR EXTERIOR PAINT

