

Tired of solid colour paint, try painting with a pattern

If you've tired of the solid color paint on your interior walls and don't want to wallpaper, you can still add variety, pattern and a textured appearance to your walls. All it takes is a little know-how, some top quality interior latex paint, and a few common household items.

The trick is in the technique. "Sponging," "ragging" and "stippling" are some of the ways to get extraordinary, attractive results. Here's how to employ these paint application methods to create your own special look.

Sponging

To create a mottled, irregular pattern on your walls, try sponging. It's a relatively simple and enjoyable way to add visual interest and style to the interior of your home.

Start by applying a light or pastel-colored solid basecoat to your walls and allow it to dry completely. Then select two or three darker shades of paint that can be sponged on.

For the best results, be sure to use an ocean sponge, not the rectangular cellulose type.

Moisten the sponge so that it is damp, but not too wet. Then dip the sponge into the paint, being careful not to overload it.

Start your sponging in the center of the wall by gently tapping the sponge against the surface. When the center section looks the way you want it to, begin to work toward the corners. As you do, turn the sponge frequently for visual variety. (Should your sponge get clogged with paint, rinse it out and wring till damp before you continue.)

If you plan to sponge on more than one color, be sure that enough of the base coat shows through when you apply the first color. And let each color dry thoroughly before you add another.

Ragging

Ragging creates a brocade-like pattern on walls and is often used in more formal rooms within the house. Often, two or three shades of the same color are applied on top of a solid basecoat from the same color family.

Instead of a sponge, the application "tool" for ragging can be paper towels, old sheets, rags, or used clothing — virtually any absorbent fabric that is relatively light in weight.

After the basecoat is completely dry, dampen your cloth, then bunch it in one hand, making sure there are plenty of folds to provide a pattern.

Dip part of your rag in the paint, then lightly blot it against the walls. For variety of pattern, keep changing the direction in which you are blotting.

Answers To Most Frequent Exterior Paint Questions

Exterior painting is one of the most popular do-it-yourself projects today. To take the guesswork out of this home improvement project, the experts from Dutch Boy Paints offer these answers to the most frequently asked questions about exterior painting:

Q: What is the square-feet-per-gallon ratio?

A: On a smooth surface, 350 to 400 square feet per gallon should be obtained. Use less paint on textured or porous surfaces.

Q: Can aluminum or vinyl siding be painted?

A: Both aluminum and vinyl siding can be painted with a good-quality exterior latex paint. Dutch Boy recommends thorough surface preparation to remove chalking and other surface imperfections.

Q: Why can't I use house and trim paint on my deck?

A: House and trim paint is not designed to withstand traffic or standing water. To paint an interior or exterior horizontal surface, an interior/exterior porch and floor enamel such as Dutch Boy Porch and Floor Enamel is recommended.

Q: Which is better—oil or latex paint?

A: A good-quality latex topcoat will be more durable in most situations and last longer than an oil-based paint. Acrylic latex tends to retain its color and sheen longer. It is also more tolerant of surface expansion.

or use several rags made of the same material.

Again, if more than one color is ragged on, be sure all the previous paint colors are dry before proceeding.

Stippling

To produce this painting effect, you'll need a roller and brush or two brushes — one for applying your topcoat, the other for producing the suede-like texture of stippling. As for color schemes, a popular combination consists of a rich-colored topcoat applied over a basecoat just a couple of tones lighter.

First, apply the entire basecoat and allow to dry. Then, apply a 12" vertical strip of your topcoat color. Working swiftly before the topcoat dries, stab your topcoat with a large, soft-bristled brush held horizontally. The idea is to break up the color on the wall into a mass of small dots.

Continue working in 12" strips from one end of the wall to the other, blotting excess paint from the brush as necessary.

For best results

No matter how you apply your paint, there are two cardinal rules for interior painting, according to the Rohm and Haas Paint Quality Institute:

*Spend the time to do good surface preparation.

*Spend the extra few dollars needed to buy a top quality interior paint.

Applying a top quality paint to a clean, smooth surface will provide the

best paint performance long-term. Top quality interior paints are tougher and more durable than ordinary paints. They resist yellowing, fading and staining, and are quite washable, too. They also offer the benefits of easy application, with good hiding — which means one-coat coverage — and no splattering.

You are investing time and energy to get a great-looking paint job. By investing a little more in your paint, you can ensure that your decorative touches will last.



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