



# PAINT BY **NUMBERS**

Painting your property yourself can save you thousands of dollars, but you need to ensure you do a good job – **Sharon Newey** shows you how

## EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST FOR INTERIOR PAINTING

- 220-grit sandpaper
- 35-50mm brush and/or a cutting-in brush
- Roller handle, paint tray and roller sleeve
- Paintwork cleaner or detergent
- Gap filler
- Dropsheet, carpet guards, meths (for clean up on light switches etc)
- Extension pole for roller
- Masking tape
- Pole sander
- Rubber gloves (for use with the caustic cleaners like sugar soap)
- Sugar soap



**HANDS UP IF** you're hands on. Once upon a time, many landlords were decidedly hands on, in that they did much of their own maintenance and repairs. Nowadays, many rental property owners would rather get others to do the maintenance; in fact, legally much of this work needs to now be done by a Licensed Building Practitioner under the new Restricted Building Work (RBW) legislation. And, of course, any money spent on this can be deducted against the rental income.

But the one area that is still within reach of those who want to do their own maintenance is painting. Often, this is a case of sprucing up areas that have sustained more wear and tear than others, like hallways and living areas, so doing it yourself can be simpler.

### **A TOUCH-UP**

Walls that have been painted previously are relatively straightforward to repaint.

Using a soft cloth, wipe down the walls using an interior paintwork cleaner or mild detergent and warm water. Fill dents, defects and holes, and lightly sand. Fill any cracks between walls, skirtings and/or scotias.

Sand old enamel paints (these were often used in older kitchens) with 220-grit sandpaper. And while you're in the kitchen,

use sugar soap to remove any grease and oils from around the cooking area.

Spot prime and use a sealer such as Resene Sureseal to cover any water stains or ink marks.

Use a paintbrush to cut into the corners and along the edges of the walls, windows, doorways, light switches and power points.

With a roller, start from the top left of the wall and apply paint to an area approximately two metres high by three roller widths. Roll the first stroke upwards to control dripping then work in a W pattern. Roll over as much of the cutting-in brush work as you can. Continue until you reach the skirting board.

Every two metres, lay-off the paint by rolling any excess paint onto the next section of wall then running the roller lightly down the wall, slowly removing the roller from the wall about 50cm from the skirting. Once you're at the bottom repeat the motion, but going up the wall overlapping slightly on downward stroke.

Apply two coats of interior wall paint such as Resene Spacecote Low Sheen or Resene Zylone Sheen. An average open-plan kitchen and living room will use between four and six litres of paint.

Is steam likely to be an issue? Most modern homes with open plan kitchen/living areas have excellent ventilation



Living areas and hallways most often need repainting

systems and splashbacks, so while solvent-borne paints are not normally needed, the tougher the paint system the better.

When dealing with ceilings in kitchen areas and in rooms that are open to the kitchen, remember that steam from kettles and cooking may become a problem for flat ceiling paints. Use something tougher for these areas and something that can be regularly wiped down.

### GEARING UP

If you own a number of rental properties or you are planning more painting projects in the near future, it pays to invest in better quality accessories, say an aluminium extension pole instead of a wooden one, and accessories like dropsheets.

### PAINTING PLASTERBOARD

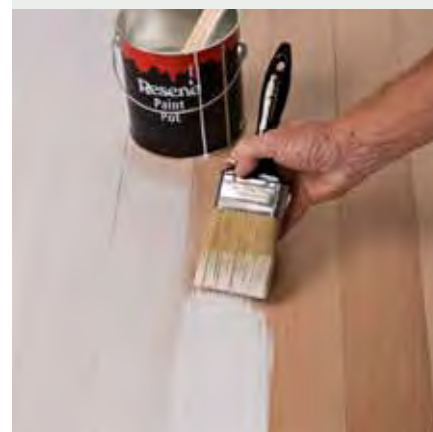
Paper-faced plasterboard is produced in several differing grades. Some are reinforced for added bracing strength, have additional waterproofing for wet areas or are thicker for soundproofing etc. The paper itself is easy to paint, but most issues occur because of the differences between the plaster stopping and the wallboard paper. You need to use a basecoat of plasterboard sealer before applying your top coats.

When the plastering is commissioned you need to specify what type of finish you want, generally expressed on a scale of zero to five, five being a very smooth and blemish-free finish suitable for painting. If you intend to wallpaper or use anaglypta then paint, you will only need a level three finish.

**NEW PAINT TECHNOLOGY MEANS WATERBORNE ENAMELS ARE JUST AS TOUGH BUT WITHOUT THE MESSY CLEAN-UP**

### PAINTBRUSH TIPS

- Use a 75mm wide flat brush for interior walls and ceilings and a 25-63mm brush for trim and joinery. Nylon brushes are best with waterborne paint whereas natural bristles are best with solvent-based paints.
- When the brush is clean, work it back and forth across your fingers to remove any dust, dirt, loose bristles or unwanted particles.
- Decant half of a full paint can into another clean can – it's much easier to work with a partly full can.
- Dip a third to half of the bristles in the paint and tap, don't wipe, the brush against the inside of the can.
- When applying the paint, hold your paint brush like a pencil. Paint with the tip of the brush not the side, holding the brush at a 45-degree angle to the surface being painted. Apply in long vertical strokes.
- Avoid excessive rebrushing when using waterborne paints.
- Wrap the bristles in cling film while you take a break.



Painting can be a cheap way to add value, but you need to do a good job



### ROLLER TIPS

- Rinse rollers in water to remove dust and loose fibres before you use them.
- If the roller handle has been used before, place a drop of oil on the bearings (ie, the two plastic end caps) to make painting easier.
- Tip the paint into the clean tray up to the level marked. Then roll the roller into the paint to saturate all of the fabric. Use the ribbed section of the tray to squeeze out the excess paint and to make sure the roller is evenly covered.
- Always paint across the shortest distance to get a better finish. Invest in a roller extension pole if you are painting ceilings

or the upper parts of walls. It's much easier and your back will thank you.

- When taking a break, stop painting at a natural break in the wall or ceiling, i.e. a corner. Submerge the roller head in the paint in the tray, then put a plastic bag over the entire tray to seal it.
- Wash trays and roller straight after use. Roll out as much excess paint as possible and immerse in a bucket of water, working through the pile with your fingers. Repeat with fresh water until clean then dry the sleeve naturally. Once clean, store the sleeve upright to avoid flattening the pile.

### PAINTING OVER WALLPAPER

Older rental properties may have wallpaper on the walls. Once dented, torn or damaged it, is very difficult to repair. If the wallpaper is generally in good condition, it can simply be painted over. Note that once painted, however, the wallpaper will be more difficult to remove.

Some vinyl wallpapers will allow migration of plasticisers into the paint film and this will result in the paint remaining slightly sticky or tacky. Typically, if a test pot is used during the colour selection process and it doesn't get tacky then other coatings will also be fine. However it can take upwards of three weeks for this tackiness to become apparent. To avoid the wait, use a vinyl wallpaper sealer over solid and paperbacked vinyl wallpapers before applying top coats.

Some edges may need sticking down. Also small bubbles, often only apparent after the first coat of paint, may be cross cut with a sharp blade and the edges glued down.

When stopping holes in wallpaper press in the surrounds with the handle of a putty knife before stopping the hole, otherwise you may be left with a lump on the surface. Any small dents, defects and holes can be filled and lightly sanded with 220 grit sandpaper. Seal water stains, crayon and pen marks with Resene Sureseal

You may find the junction of the skirting and wall difficult to cut in because wallpapers usually slightly overlay the junction and a relatively ragged edge results.

Often it is best to paint the skirting board and the wall the same colour for the most even finish.

### SKIRTING BOARDS

Skirtings and architraves should be sanded to provide a good surface, and painted in enamel for better wear and tear. This doesn't have to be the old oil-based enamels. New paint technology means that you can use waterborne enamels that are just as tough but do away with the messy turps clean-up and high odour.

Apply a low-tack masking tape to the edge of the skirting where it meets the floor or use a piece of stiff card to protect the floor. If the wall is a different colour, also mask the wall above the skirting. Remove the masking tape before the paint dries. Paint the edge of the walls with a brush, then roller as close as you can to the corner.

Information extracted from [www.resene.co.nz](http://www.resene.co.nz). See the website for more information and fact sheets on all aspects of painting and wallpaper hanging. ■