



3/05/2010

## Brush up on the value of paint

You might be surprised to learn that something as simple as a fresh coat of paint can go a long way toward improving the look of your home...and selling it quickly. Potential buyers see a fresh paint job as an indication that a home has been cared-for and well-maintained, and nothing makes your home look cleaner than freshly-painted walls and trim. Best of all, painting is one of the easiest and most inexpensive ways to rejuvenate your décor, and the return on investment for a painting project is 94%, as reported by a recent "HomeGain" survey.

A new coat of paint will add enjoyment and significant value to your house. If you have not painted a room in over 10 years, then it may be time to head to the paint store. And when you do, don't just buy paint. Make sure you have everything you need to do the job right.

### Preparation

Do skip or take short-cuts in preparing the walls for painting. The paint will only look as good as the wall it's covering, so first remove nails or anchors, then patch holes, sand and prime as needed. In addition, washing walls with a solution of trisodium phosphate (TSP) is a great idea if walls are dirty.

If you are removing wall paper, be sure to take time to clean the surface thoroughly to remove all paste residues. If you are dramatically changing wall colors, consider using a tinted primer for the best color saturation and coverage.

### Color Selection

Choosing the correct wall color can be a daunting task, but keeping a few basic rules in mind will make it easier and help you avoid expensive mistakes.

First, know your goals. If you're planning to sell the house, neutrals are best. If you are not selling, you can be more creative. Do not be afraid of color regardless of your goal, but keep in mind that too many colors in one area can visually interrupt the flow of the space, and that trendy colors, while fun, can be off-putting to some buyers.

For example, I always take my color cues from the room itself; specifically, what will remain in the room after the furnishings have been removed. For example, if there is a tile surround or backsplash, or beautiful golden oak floors, look for a color that will enhance, not clash, with those permanent features.

At Impact! we are big fans of Sherwin Williams paints. My favorite neutrals for staging are Realist Beige, Practical Beige, Sand Dollar, Latte, Ivorie, Interactive Cream, Trusty Tan and Blonde.

### **What about White?**

Builders are notorious for using a color (and I use that term loosely) that decorators call “builder white”. It is flat and boring and does nothing to add personality or warmth to a space. I believe white is appropriate for trim and ceilings only. And although ultra-modern homes often have a solid bright white palette, this dramatic effect only works when with modern details. It’s not a look that works in most homes and with most people’s furnishings.

### **Trim**

Regardless of the color you choose, your trim should have a semi-gloss finish. Generally, I recommend a solid white or off-white, depending on the wall color. Interior doors and windows should be painted in the trim color. More homeowners are opting to paint trim the same color as the walls; this can be a good look, as well, but semi-gloss should also be used for this treatment.

Painting trim is a time-consuming process. One primary advantage of using white for trim is having ability to change the wall color at a later time without having to repaint the trim.

### **Ceilings**

I have worked in many houses where we have painted the ceilings the same color as the walls, which can be a beautiful, dramatic affect. If you’d like to experiment with this look, try it out in a smaller space such as a powder room. I recently repainted my office using a darker version of my wall color on the ceiling. It’s a little daring, but it’s receiving rave reviews. And since resale isn’t a concern, it was fun taking a little risk and I love the way it looks.

### **Bold Accents**

Even if you are selling, don’t be afraid to add a few bold accents. If a space does not have any architectural details, then a strong color is a good option. Combined with more neutral furnishings, an accent wall can have a dramatic affect. Another easy and effective way to add drama is to add an accent color to a chair rail, or a painted fireplace.

It’s easy to pick the right accent colors when working with neutrals. Simply pick a darker shade on the same color sample card for a sophisticated but tasteful look.

Another approach is to find an inspiration piece, such as your drapes, throw pillows or a piece of art, and pull colors from that as a starting point.

Finally, bathrooms or the master bedroom are good places to be a little bolder—and a little trendier—with color. My favorite trendy colors are Sherwin Williams Moody Blue, Under seas, Softened Green, Cobble Brown and Hearts of Palm.

**Do it Once, Do it Right**

Know your limitations: if you're not a good painter, don't attempt to do the job yourself. Pay a professional. A sloppy paint job will detract from the perceived value of your home...and will be a waste of your time.

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