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TOGETHER

# Life

PRETTY PAINT \_\_\_\_\_  
TRIPS WITH GRANDPARENTS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ORGANIZATION IDEAS



Pink walls don't have to mean pink everything.

## Hello, Color!

The quickest and cheapest way to make a big impact in your home? Paint! Here, we offer tips and tools to update any space with a fresh coat.

**DO LIKE THE PROS** Most walls are fine to paint after a quick wipe-down with a damp towel, says Rich Laretta, owner of Spectrum Painting & Paper Hanging, in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey. If you have holes, patch them with a light spackle; give them a good sanding after the spackle dries, preferably overnight, to remove any bumps or ridges. →

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Dark colors may require two or three coats of paint, while pastels and reds may need three or four.

● **Tape like your paint job depends on it.** Mask off trim, doors, and floorboards with 1½-inch-wide painter's tape. Apply tape in 1- to 1½-foot-long strips. Also, tape cling wrap over doorknobs or other surfaces you want to avoid. To remove, pull the tape at a 45-degree angle before your final coat of paint dries (so while it's still wet), suggests construction manager Tom Bury, of Division 9 Design + Construction, in Clinton, New Jersey.

● **Skip the primer.** Walls that have latex paint don't need primer, says Rick Watson,

director of product information at Sherwin-Williams. You only need it over glossy finishes, for hiding stains, or for a drastic color change (in which case go for a gray-tinted one).

● **Get your stroke right.** Use a roller for large surface areas. For faster coverage, attach it to an extension pole (5-foot Steel Single Pole, \$8; homedepot.com). Tim Bosveld, of the paint company Dunn-Edwards, recommends rolling an "N" or a "W" shape for a uniform texture. Roll up first, not down—if you roll down, the excess paint can drip. For paint with a lower

sheen, pick a roller that's 9 inches wide with a ½- to ¾-inch nap. Use a shorter nap, like ¼ inch, for eggshells and high sheens.

● **Cut in correctly.** Brush paint along wall edges, trim, and any details your roller can't reach or cover as well, says Laurretta. (This is called "cutting in.") With a brush, you have better control and cleaner lines against trim. Wet your brush's bristles with water; shake the brush dry before you dip it in the paint, and apply at a 45-degree angle, says Lowe's Merchandising Director, Chris Stigliano.

## Safety First!

We know you know these rules, but just in case:

**1 CHECK FOR LEAD.** If your home was built before 1978 and you spot flaking paint chips (that kids might eat), you can use a kit to test the wall yourself (3M LeadCheck Instant Lead Test Swabs, \$10; homedepot.com) but it's best to let a pro handle both the test and removal.

**2 CHOOSE LOW- OR NO-VOC PAINTS.** Almost all paint lines now offer this option. Look for mention of Greenguard Gold Certification on the can.

**3 ALLOW FOR PROPER VENTILATION.** Paint with windows open, especially if your family has asthma sufferers.



## COLOR FORECAST

We found inspiration in 2017's trend reports from major paint brands to highlight these of-the-moment hues.



**Honey Locust**  
Behr



**Freshwater**  
Sherwin-Williams



**Aegean Teal**  
Benjamin Moore



**Kimono Violet**  
Sherwin-Williams



**Hydrangea Bouquet**  
Behr

LEFT TO RIGHT: ANNETTE O'BRIEN; JULIE ANSIAU; PAINTERUSH AND BLOBS; JEFFREY WESTBROOK.



To simplify the paint-picking process, consider your home's history, suggests Barbara Bestor, principal architect of Bestor Architecture, in Los Angeles. In this kitchen, the green cabinets were a nod to the room's original, paler green hue.

## Tricky Paint Projects

You can totally tackle these yourself.



### Wood Kitchen Cabinets

**1.** Remove drawers, cabinet fronts, and hardware, and label the back of each piece with painter's tape so you can put everything back in place, suggests Bosveld.

**2.** Clean the surfaces with a heavy-duty cleaner such as trisodium phosphate (available in hardware stores). Do this before sanding so you don't sand dirt into the surface, advises Watson. Let dry, then sand with 180- to 220-grit sandpaper, followed up by a finer grit (300 and up).

**3.** Apply a bonding primer, such as Stix (\$43 per gallon; benjaminmoore.com); let dry and follow up with a satin (or shinier) coat of paint using a roller with a ¾-inch or finer nap for large surfaces and a brush for edges and any detailing. Let this first color coat dry overnight before adding the second. FYI: Wood furniture requires the same treatment.

### Ceiling

**1.** If your ceilings are in great shape, congrats—but if you want to deal with the “fifth

wall,” tackle it before the rest of the room. Use a Swiffer to give the ceiling a quick clean, and protect hanging fixtures or recessed lights with plastic bags.

**2.** A flat white is the default for ceilings because it makes the room look bigger, says Sue Wadden, color director at Sherwin-Williams. Use products labeled “ceiling paint.” They're thicker so they spatter less.

### Bathroom

**1.** Clean the walls with trisodium phosphate before priming to remove mildew and soap scum. Let dry.

**2.** Choose a paint with antimicrobial additives that resist mold, like Zinsser's mildew-proof interior paint (\$27.50 per gallon; homedepot.com), or one labeled “bathroom.” Opt for an eggshell finish, suggests Lauretta, or moisture may penetrate and lead to peeling. Avoid bright colors, like yellows, reds, and greens, on the walls; they could reflect on your face in the mirror, says Quinn Larson-Pierce, a Behr color expert.

## Tools of the Trade

People who paint for a living recommend these products.



Experts agree that a 2½-inch angular brush is the most versatile essential. Try Purdy's XL Dale Angled Sash Brush. \$13.50; homedepot.com



Prevent spillage with Shur-Line's Paint Can Lids pouring spouts, which fit onto opened gallons or quarts. \$7 and up; amazon.com



3M's Pro Grade Precision Ultra Flexible Sanding Sheets allow for more control and grip over smaller areas like trim or door frames due to their film backing. \$4 and up; 3m.com



The gold standard of painter's tape, FrogTape Multi-Surface, delivers clean lines for professional results. Bonus: Its container makes an excellent storage vessel! \$7.50; walmart.com

THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: LAURE JOLLET; JEFFREY WESTBROOK(4). OPPOSITE PAGE: KIDS' ROOM: FLEVA; NURSERY: EMILY SLOTTE; PAINTLID AND BLOBS: JEFFREY WESTBROOK



**ON TREND**  
The Gray Bedroom



**6 Goofs Newbie Painters Make**

### WHAT'S THE RIGHT WHITE?

This noncolor comes in hundreds of shades (Benjamin Moore alone has more than 250!) and picking the wrong one can make a room look off. Interior designers and decorators hail Benjamin Moore's White Dove as the most universal shade because it's the best balance of creamy and cool.

### 1. They don't swatch.

Never paint a room without buying a sample and testing it out—the lighting in a store is very different from the lighting in your home. If you're not ready to mark up your walls, buy a piece of foam core and paint it, suggests Andrea Magno, a color and design expert at Benjamin Moore.

### 2. They don't make test areas big enough.

Larson-Pierce suggests a 3- x 3-foot patch; light reflects back on it and you can spot nuances and undertones. With grays, there are often purple, blue, or green undertones that you can't see in a small chip or swatch.

### 3. They put paint swatches too close to each other.

Your eyes will get confused, says Sara McLean, Dunn-Edwards' color expert.

Silvery hues are in for kids' rooms because they can grow with your child. If gray feels stark, try gray-blues like French Toile (top) or Evening Dove (bottom), both by Benjamin Moore.

### 4. They don't test on multiple walls.

Light will hit parts of your room differently, and you need to see how it will look throughout the day, says McLean. If you love a color but are afraid it's too bold, ask the associate to reduce the color by 50 percent when mixing, suggests Brooke Wagner, principal designer at Brooke Wagner Design, in Corona del Mar, California. “This uses only half of the coloring, giving you a shade that won't overwhelm you.”

### 5. They use plastic drop cloths.

These can get slippery, and you could easily fall, says Stigliano. Use canvas instead, which you can fold up and reuse.

### 6. They don't let each coat dry thoroughly.

Going back over wet paint too soon can leave marks and streaks on the surface, says Jeff Spillane, Benjamin Moore's senior product manager. Dry times vary by brand, but ideally, wait a minimum of four hours between each coat. Keep tools fresh between coats: Wrap your brush and roller (handle and all) in plastic wrap and store in the fridge until you're ready.