

Guidance for one of your most exciting projects.



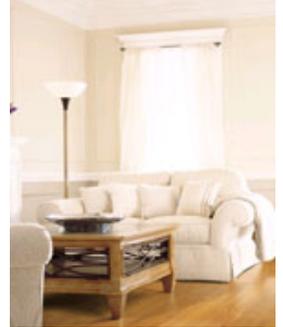
Picking the Right Interior Paint

Want the most from your decorating dollar? The key is color—paint color. It's one of the least expensive but most dramatic changes you can make in your home. It can also be one of the most frustrating. These tips on picking interior paint will guide you to a perfect paint palette.

Lowe's is happy to provide this information as a service to you.

Before you begin

- Size up your room. How you use color depends on where you use color. Each room has its own unique elements and function. First think about the structure of the room. Consider its shape and size. A lighter color can make a small room feel more spacious, while a darker color can help an immense room seem cozier.
- Take into account any architectural details, such as molding, trim, columns, and brackets. What's attractive and what's not? Varied intensities and hues can complement architecture, furnishings, and art. Remember, paint can accentuate a room's features or hide them.
- Your choice of color also depends largely on function. Will the main purpose of the room be eating, sleeping, working, entertaining, or something else entirely? A warm hue in the living room gives a more comfortable and inviting atmosphere for guests than a cooler color.



Selecting interior paint

- Before choosing your paint, think about where your room fits into the scheme of things. Where is it situated in relation to other rooms? Is it a high- or low-traffic area? Flat paint, for instance, is best suited for ceilings, walls, surface imperfections, and anywhere else that a muted low-reflecting surface is desired. Because it takes more effort to remove stains from this type of paint, a flat finish is best suited for the low-traffic areas of your home.
- Use lo-lustre, satin, and eggshell paint on areas where a sheen is desired. These paints are easier to clean than flat paint and hold up better under repeated washings. They withstand the wear and tear of high-traffic areas—hallways, woodwork, kitchens, baths, children's rooms, and playrooms—easier than other finishes.
- Semigloss and high-gloss paint and enamel are best suited for banisters, railings, shelves, kitchen cabinets, furniture, doorjambs, windowsills, and any other surface you wish to accentuate. But be careful—the higher the gloss, the more it emphasizes any surface imperfections.



Picking a paint palette

- Having trouble deciding on your paint palette? Choose a design direction. If you've already chosen an interior décor or if you're working with a room that's already furnished, focus on a favorite fabric color, piece of art or furniture, or other object. If you still can't settle on a color you like—we offer free computerized paint matching and custom color mixing.
- Have color confidence—don't be afraid to paint bold and bright. If your room is unfurnished, a vibrant color can fill it until you can.
- Consider yourself above all. Paint color should reflect your mood and personality. What are your favorite colors? If you're having trouble selecting a color—try looking in your closet. The colors you enjoy wearing are the ones that make you feel good. You are the one who has to live with the color—so live with the shades you love.



Purchasing power

- Water versus oil. When selecting an interior finish, try choosing a water-based enamel instead of an oil-based gloss paint. Water-based gloss enamels have less odor than conventional oil-based paints. They are much easier to clean up after, and they wear better over time.
- Don't purchase low-quality paint. High-quality paint performs better for a longer period of time. It's less prone to yellow as it ages, goes on smoother, and won't leave brush marks. It is also easier to wash and dirt resistant.
- Purchase test quarts to review your color and finish selections at home. Paint a piece of scrap material such as cardboard, or even a portion of your wall, to study the effects of various light conditions.



Was this information helpful? Please [let us know](#) your do-it-yourself experiences. We'd love to hear from you!

These How-To's are provided as a service from Lowe's, the Original Home Improvement Warehouse of How-To information for the World Wide Web. The information in Lowe's "How-To" clinics is intended to simplify jobs around the house. Tools, products, materials, techniques, building codes and local regulations change; therefore, Lowe's assumes no liability for omissions, errors or the outcome of any project. The reader must always exercise reasonable caution, follow current codes and regulations that may apply, and is urged to consult with a licensed professional if in doubt about any procedures. [Please read our terms of use.](#)