



Surface Preparation

You care about your home's appearance, but you don't want to be a slave to it. Painting and staining do not always have to be annual events.

Most paint and stain problems could have been avoided with proper surface preparation. These problems include uneven paint coating and the longevity of the paint or stain to sticking to the surface. To prevent this from happening to your project, it is important to follow the manufacturer's application instructions for their product.

General Tips:

- The surface to be finished must be dry and not showing signs of rot. If it has recently rained or looks like it may start to rain, avoid painting or staining outdoors.
- The surface must be clean and free of dirt, oils, peeling paint or stain.
- Generally speaking, the temperature should be above 50 degrees. Check the can's label for ideal application temperatures.
- Latex paints can be applied over oil based paints, but for best results oil-based paints shouldn't be applied over latex.

Finishing a New Surface— New surfaces can be finished with either latex or oil based paints or stains. If you are painting or using a solid stain, a high quality primer will give you the right base for smooth and durable painting. For transparent staining, a wood conditioner can be used to ensure even absorption.

Finishing over an Existing Coating— When the surface is already finished, selecting the right paint or stain is important. First, determine what type is on the current surface to be finished. If the surface is finished with a latex or acrylic, it is best to continue to apply latex paint over an old latex surface. Semi-gloss and gloss paints must also be dulled by sanding before applying a new top coat to ensure proper paint adhesion.

Primers—Before painting or staining, a good coat of primer is required to achieve the best results. You won't need the most expensive primer for new drywall, but if the surface is wood or has drywall that has been painted a dark color, a high quality primer will give you an even coating of paint. Also, if the surface is dirty, stained by oils, smoke or other substances, some primers will stick better than others to give you a fresh surface ready for painting. Softwoods will require the use of a wood conditioner or primer in order to insure the stain will soak in evenly. Curtis Lumber's Paint Experts can help you select a primer that is best suited for your projects needs.

Sanding— It is important to make sure the surface you are covering is free of imperfections before painting or staining. This is true for wood, drywall joint compound and any other smooth surface with lumps, bumps and the like. Depending on the surface, different types and grits of sand paper are used to smooth out the imperfections. Use coarse sandpaper for sanding off large rough spots and progress to a finer grit until the surface is smooth. After sanding is complete, it is a good idea to dust off the surface. For smaller items and items that require a very smooth surface, such as furniture, use a tack cloth to make sure all of the dust particles are removed.

Patch, Caulk, & Fill Holes— Before you paint or stain, be sure to fix any holes or gaps that may exist. Cracks in drywall can be repaired with drywall tape and spackle, painters caulk can be used to fill gaps left between molding and trim, and large holes can be covered with drywall patches covered with a spackling or joint compound.

Curtis Lumber is the place to start your project off right and painting is no exception. Our paint experts will help you identify the tools and methods to ensure proper surface preparation and superior paint adhesion for years to come.