

COMMON PAINTING TERMS

Acrylic: a painter's binder/vehicle (film forming component; only component that has to be present) which helps the coating last longer and keep its color. It's a synthetic polymer, often used in high-performance latex or water-based paint.

Acrylic Latex Paint: A paint thinned out by water, which uses acrylic resin as the vast majority of the binder/vehicle.

100% Acrylic Latex Paint: Water-thinned paint that only uses acrylic resin as the binder. It has the best adhesion, breathability, flexibility, alkali resistance, color and sheen retention, and toughness.

Acrylic Resin: Best color/gloss retention, alkali and oxidation resistance, hardness, adhesive and cohesive strength, and film durability (aka acrylate resins).

Adhesion: If dry paint can stay on a surface without common problems such as flaking, cracking, blistering, and bubbling, it is said to have good adhesion. Adhesion is often viewed as the most important component of paint. Wet adhesion (a paint's ability to endure despite wet conditions) is important for exterior bids.

Airless Spraying: Spraying paint at a high velocity (instead of using a brush or a roller). Advantages are applying more material evenly onto a substrate.

Alkyds: Resin usually used in painting the trim (inside and outside), though they're sometimes used as binders. Have good leveling properties and dry as a pretty durable film. Sometimes, however, they can get yellow and thinner with time. Alkyds can be prone to failure on exterior jobs if there's even the slightest moisture involved. Its color and glossing abilities are only fair. Oil-based.

Binder: Film-forming component; only component that has to be present. Makes paint stick to the surface.

Blistering: when there is an air bubble in a coat of paint, which results in "pimples" or "balloons" on the surface. This happens when paint is added on to an un-dry previous coat; or the substrate has moisture which is trying to escape. Blistering is also the effect of excessive heat drying new paint too quickly.

Bond: If a contractor damages anything, he/she is required to pay for said damages within a certain amount of time (around 30 days). This is court-ordered (it's more of a determinant for contractors than security for homeowners. Make sure your contractor is insured.

Brush: a paint application tool. There are a lot of different kinds of brushes, so picking the right one is paramount to the finished product. It also means how a paint is applied: sprayed, rolled, brushed, etc.

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Caulk: to fill/close seams of crevices or joints (of a window, shelf, door, etc.). It's semi or slow-drying. Can be done before or after painting.

Chalking: When a friable powder on the surface of a paint forms; it's caused by the deterioration of the binding medium because of weathering. Can be effected by choice and concentration of pigment or by choice of the binding medium.

Color chip: A paint color sample on a card.

Color retention: a particular paint's ability to resist fading and keep its color.

Consistency: A paint's resistance to flow. High-consistency paint flows slowly; low-consistency paint flows slowly.

Cracking: a crack in the paint in which you can see the surface below.

Cutting-in: A brushing technique used to create a sharp edge; usually used around ceilings and trim.

Contract: It is a written document that states what the painting contractor will do and how much the overall job will cost the customer. Our approach is to review the quotation with our customer and both parties will sign it to indicate acceptance. This is an actual legally binding document.

Durability: How well the paint withstands an environment. Exterior paint has to deal with weather and the sun; interior paint deals with direct sunlight, heat, and moisture.

Efflorescence: Soluble salts (most often white) on the surface of coatings, mortar, plaster, stone, or brick. -

Elasticity: A paint's ability to contract and expand without damage or appearance changes. Fluctuations usually happen because of temperature changes. Elasticity and durability go hand-in-hand. Acrylic binders have great elasticity.

Enamel: Latex or oil-based; high-gloss, hard paint.

Extender: Less-expensive ingredient than titanium dioxide; will extend a pigment's abilities. Cannot be used without pigment. ie.: Calcium carbonate, silica, clays.

Fading: Loss of a paint's color (gets lighter); usually due to light exposure or heat.

Faux finish: Specialty finish (i.e., marbling, sponge painting, color washing; aka "textured" walls); much more expensive finish. It's advisable to see samples of rooms completed by the contractor before signing a contract.

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Film formation: A paint's ability to have a perpetual dry film. It repels water.

Finish coat or topcoat: Final coat of paint.

Flaking/scaling: Little pieces of paint that fall off the surface.

Flat: Non-glossy paint finish; not as durable as a gloss or semi-gloss finish. Non-reflective. Used to hide surface imperfections. Usually used on walls & ceilings and other areas that aren't subjected to a lot of wear and tear, like areas where children play.

Fungicide: Helps prevent mildew/mold.

Gloss: A paint's shine / light reflected off of a finished surface. The higher the gloss, the more durable the finish. Semi-gloss or high-gloss paints are often times used in rooms where the walls can be washed like kitchens, bathrooms, or kids' rooms. Harder, stain-resistant, easier to clean, but can make imperfections more noticeable. Used in high-traffic areas and on trim.

Hiding power/opacity: How well a paint can block out the surface beneath it.

Holidays: Aka: skips, voids, vacations, misses. Small spots left uncoated on a paint's surface.

Insurance: Contractors have insurance which covers injury and property damage that happen during a contractor's work.

Lacquer: Quick drying, clear or tinted coating which is reduced with Lacquer Thinner.

Lacquer thinner: Solvent that thins or cleans up lacquer.

Latex paint: Most common type of paint; water-based. Can be glossy, flat, or semi-gloss. Generally inexpensive. Easier paint to use. Can be cleaned with soap and water, dries fast, doesn't smell as bad, non-flammable, flexible, allows moisture to evaporate (which reduces blistering, peeling, and cracking), and they're easy to touch-up.

Leveling: A coating's ability to create a smooth, unwrinkled coating without brush marks.

Masking: Covering (temporarily) a surface next to another surface that's being painted. i.e., using masking tape when painting the trim/jamb.

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Masking paper: Cheap paper used to mask a surface next to the area being painted.

Masking tape: Tape used temporarily to cover small spots next to a surface being painted. Also holds masking paper in place.

Mildew resistance: Ability of paint or finish to resist mold and mildew.

Mildewcide: Chemical agent in paint that slows mildew; mildew is a common problem in humid climates.

Oil-based paint: Paint which are reduced by paint thinner(mineral spirits) or turpentine.

Opaque coating: Layer of paint that hides the surface color below it; does not necessarily cover the surface texture.

Paint remover: Product that softens paint and finishes, which allows previous product to be scraped off so that new product can go on in its place.

Peeling: When paint comes off in large pieces. Usually caused by moisture or grease beneath surface. -

Pigment: Provides color, opacity, durability, hardness, and corrosion resistance.

Polymer: Binder produced from petrochemical feedstocks.

Primer: First coat of paint. Can be a different color than first coat. Can be used to cover a difficult-to-cover color previously applied to the surface.

Prep work: Work done before the actual painting process. This involves things like: sanding, filling cracks and holes, caulking, etc.

Quotation: It is the document that states the scope of work, product(s) to be used, schedule to completion, dependencies and payment plan.

Recoat time: Time between applying coats of paint. - Resin: Less transparent and fusible products, natural or synthetic. Can vary in color.

Roll: A technique that rolls paint on using a roller instead of a brush or sprayer.

Sanding: The process of using sandpaper to make a surface smooth

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Satin finish: A latex's paint's semi-gloss finish. AKA eggshell finish – it's called this because the sheen it provides is like that of an eggshell. Provides harder, more durable, stain-resistant surface than flat finishes. Good for: kids' rooms, hallways, stairways, family rooms.

Sealer: Seals the surface.

Semi-gloss: Very durable, easy to clean, more stain-resistant than satin. Used on heavy wear surfaces that get cleaned regularly, like kitchens or bathrooms; also on wood trim and cabinets.

Sheen: Amount of light reflected by the surface of finished paint. 4 types of sheen: flat, satin, semi-gloss and gloss.

Silicate: A substance used with titanium dioxide as the extender pigment.

Solvent: "Volatile" part of oil-based paints – very toxic. Before you can go back to living in your house, you must make sure they're completely dry and that your house has been aired out. Don't let your pets stay in the house either.

Spackle: Filing a crack or hole with a compound designed for that purpose before painting.

Spattering: Drops of paint that will spin or mist off the roller while paint is being applied.

Spray: Using special equipment tool to paint a room; instead of using brushing or rollers, you're spraying paint onto a surface. A very quick way to paint.

Stains: Used for wood-coloring; usually the second step in a three or four step process to finish wood trim and cabinets.

Texture: Degree of roughness on a painted or finished surface.

Thinner: Thinner + binder = paint's vehicle. Examples: turpentine or spirits.

Touch-up: Final stage of painting in which "holidays" are taken care of, i.e., touched-up.

Undercoat: Coat of paint between the primer and topcoat or applied directly onto old paint.

Varnish: Transparent or translucent finish (usually tinted).

Vehicle: Liquid portion of paint, in which pigment is dispersed. See thinner.

Vinyl: highly reactive compound. Not wise to paint over, i.e., painting vinyl windows.

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V.O.C.: Volatile Organic Compounds are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids. VOCs include a variety of chemicals, some of which may have short and long-term adverse health effects. Concentrations of many VOCs are consistently higher indoors (up to ten times higher) than outdoors. VOCs are emitted by a wide array of products numbering in the thousands. Examples include paints, lacquers and paint strippers.

Washability: Ability of paint to be cleaned without fading or wearing.

Water-based Paint: Paint reduced with water; latex paints are water-based.

Wet Edge: Edge of wet-painted area which is still workable.

Weathering: Effects of weather on paint.