

There is more to painting new plaster than some people think, get this vital stage wrong and you can end up in a decorating nightmare!

We've put together some helpful pointers to make this process stress free. Like plastering, a big element in painting is timing - so never rush your work and don't be tempted to slap on that second coat until the first one is dry!

ALWAYS remember, no mist coat means cracking and splitting of your paint - if not prepared correctly, the new porous plaster will act as a sponge, sucking the moisture from the paint and causing it to crack.

- Always have a good roller. Don't be swayed by the DIY store's value pack, they don't last. Buy either mid range or top end and wash them out after use every time meaning that they will last for many DIY projects to come... this applies to your brushes as well.
- Your plaster must always be dry before painting, if it's still wet it will bleed through your paint leaving horrible staining. Allow 5 - 10 days depending on the time of year. What you are looking for is for the plaster to turn from a dark brown to a light pink. This indicates that all of the moisture has drawn out to the surface and evaporated. If in any doubt contact your plasterer. Send a photo via a mobile device or PC and they will be able to tell you.
- The plaster is now dry... let's mist coat! You are looking to seal the plaster all over with a watered down coat of around 70% paint to 30% water. Don't worry about buying expensive plaster sealers, they are over priced and this does just as good a job, if not better. Use a good quality matt white paint, mix together well and pour into your roller tray or scuttle.
- The mist coat needs to be applied like a normal coat of paint, except that you're not looking to cover all of the pink stuff in one go - initially it will look like a transparent white, hence the name mist coat. Cover all of the walls / ceiling and make sure that you get the corners. Once completed leave to dry for around 2 hours. You may then start your finishing coats as per the paint manufacturer's instructions.

Some other painting tips:

- Have a plan! Start with all of your cutting in / edges and then go from the top down, working evenly across your surface. Having a plan and a starting place means that you can take note of your drying times better and that you are not running around trying to cover everything in one go...
- If you are going to use a painting tray, buy a large metal one. This means it takes all sizes of roller for the future and will last the test of time. Cover your tray each time you use it in a black bin bag and tie at the bottom or use a little masking tape to stick it in place. What you have created is a fast and easy way to clean up at the end, and your painting tray is still like new!
- Never apply the paint too thick in one go, this creates dragging and sliding of the roller. If this happens, take any excess paint off of the roller and iron out the paint on the wall or ceiling in a type writer motion (i.e. left to right) to create equal coverage.
- Watch out for roller lines. You may see lines appear on your surface during application, these are normally created by the end of the roller and a build up of excess paint. Be quick to iron them out gently with your roller, failure to do this can mean the lines dry into your finish.

In summary:

- Take time and care
- Use quality tools for the job
- Use a good paint
- Always mist coat!