



Secrets from the professional

Sanding, Sanding and more Sanding

Step 1 – Proper preparation

The durability of paintwork largely depends on a proper preparation. There is a reason why professional painters spend the majority of their time cleaning, sanding, repairing and dusting. The actual paint job is the 'finishing touch'. If you want to achieve the same professional and durable result, it is recommended to follow their example. After all, even the best paint in the world does not adhere to a poorly or hastily prepared basis.

TIP

- Clean existing paintwork first, and then sand it. Do not reverse this order, as you will only spread grease and dust.
- Special paint cleansing agents are available to remove any grease deposits from the paintwork. It is very effective and less harmful to man and environment than ammonia water or thinner.
- When cleaning, clean the windows at the same time. This prevents the still vulnerable paintwork showing black stripes after the next shower.
- Carefully check the woodwork for any damage. Blisters, peeling or bursts are potential symptoms of wood rot. Use an awl or screwdriver to check whether the wood still provides sufficient resistance. If not, carefully remove any affected areas up to where the healthy wood shows.
- Fill holes and seams before or after applying the primer, depending on the type of filler and paint you use. Epoxy resin based fillers must be applied on the bare wood. Use ordinary filler and kit *after* applying the primer. Limit the use of ordinary filler when working outdoors, particularly when you use single pot systems (primer and finisher combined in one). Make sure that you use a special outdoor quality sealant that allows painting over.





Secrets from the professional

Step 2 – Professional material

Whoever decides on having his house painted, will pay around five percent in material costs: sanding paper, kit and filler, primer and finishing coat. The rest is labour costs. So by doing it yourself, you can make considerable savings. Therefore, do not try and cut back on that last five percent, but invest in quality material instead. This enables you to work faster and smoother and it definitely shows in the final result.

TIP

- Sanding material comes in a wide range of different types and qualities. Special sanding paper is available for bare and untreated bases, for existing paint coats and for sanding in-between applying new coats.
- Opt for the right sanding paper *and* the right grain at every stage of sanding:
 - Untreated wood: sand down along the grain using grain size 120/150.
 - Remove coats that are in a poor condition using a sharp scraper and manually or machine sand using grain size 60.
 - Sand down existing paintwork using grain size 150/180.
 - Sanding in-between coats: use 120 after applying the primer, use 240 before applying the finishing coat.
- Pointed angles can be difficult when trying to apply a sufficient coat thickness. Therefore, round off any sharp angles when sanding.
- Always dust well after sanding using a special painter's duster, and to ensure a guaranteed dust-free result, clean the surface using a special adhesive cloth.
- Buy a professional and high-quality brush. Provided it is cleaned well after use, it will last for years and makes a world of difference when painting. A good time to 'break in' a new brush is when applying the primer, as the more you use it, the better it performs.
- Cleaning brushes: pour some thinner in a jar and submerge the brush to remove any surplus paint. Pat-dry the brush with paper towels and clean it with water and green soap. Subsequently, roll it in paper into a pointy end, then leave to dry. Close the jar with thinner and paint residue and remove as domestic chemical refuse.





Secrets from the professional

Step 3 – Ralston paint

A (professional) high-quality paint contains quality materials, such as mediums, dyes and fillers that determine the workability and lifespan of the paint. When painting, you will instantly notice the difference in coverage and flow. The proof of durability does require more patience. Typical ageing symptoms such as discolouration, loss of gloss, detachment or tearing will take a long time to develop, as professional Ralston paints will last a minimum of 6 to 8 years.

TIP

- Carefully stir the paint before you start. This is important to the colour, but also to ensure an even gloss.
- Do not paint in direct sunlight, as this can cause blisters in the paint. When working, it is best to follow the sun's shade line. Do bear in mind revolving elements (doors and windows) and plan to do those at the beginning of the day, if possible.
- Sides of doors and top-hung windows that open outwardly must be considered part of the outdoor work. The front door usually opens inwardly, thus that side must show the colour of the interior paintwork.
- Do not continue to stroke in the wet paint for too long a time. A high-quality paint will automatically flow and close into a smooth, even coat.
- Masking tape must preferably be removed when the paint is still wet, in order to prevent ripping of parts of dry paint when removing the tape.
- Adhere to the recommended times before applying a subsequent coat. A paint coat can feel dust or touch dry, but not be suitable for painting over as yet. Particularly paints that can be diluted with white spirit need time to full-harden.
- Frequent cleaning of the paintwork helps to extend its lifespan. When cleaning the windows, also include the frames.
- Check the paintwork for damage such as cuts, nail and screw holes and peeling paint on an annual basis. Damage can allow moist to build up under the coat, causing wood rot.
- Each year, also check sealants and/or putty on both the inside and outside. Repair where necessary as condensation from the windows is a wood killer.
- Finally, closely monitor climbing plants and cut them down before they can attach themselves to the paintwork.

