



Cutting In & Edge Control Made Easy

Ultimate DIYer Free Library – Painting & Caulking Series

Cutting in creates clean, professional paint lines without relying on tape.

What Cutting In Means

Painting clean edges at ceilings, trim, doors, windows, and corners.

Choosing the Right Brush

Use quality angled sash brushes matched to the surface size.

Loading the Brush

Dip 1/3 of the bristles and tap off excess for control.

Hand Technique

Keep a steady wrist and pull toward the line for accuracy.

Blending with Rolled Areas

Roll while cut-in paint is still wet to avoid picture framing.

◆ Using Painter's Tape for Perfect Edges (When Done Correctly)

While freehand cutting is a great skill, **high-quality painter's tape** can deliver flawless, repeatable results—especially for homeowners.

Not all painter's tape is created equal.

Why Quality Tape Matters

Cheap tape allows paint bleed and edge failure. Premium tapes are engineered to seal edges.

A high-quality tape:

- Prevents paint bleed
 - Releases cleanly
 - Leaves sharp, professional lines
 - Reduces touch-up work
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◆ FrogTape: Why It Works Better

FrogTape is designed differently than standard painter's tape.

What Makes FrogTape Different

- Features PaintBlock® technology
- Reacts with water-based paint
- Expands slightly to seal tape edges

This creates **crisp, clean lines** even for beginners.

◆ Correct Tape Application Technique

Tape alone won't create perfect lines if applied incorrectly.

Step-by-Step Tape Method

1. Apply tape straight and tight to the surface
2. Press down edges firmly using a putty knife or finger
3. Seal the tape edge before painting
4. Paint away from the tape edge, not toward it

◆ **The Pro Trick: Caulking the Tape Edge**

Professional painters often go one step further.

Why Caulk Before Cutting In

Applying a **very thin bead of paintable caulk** over the tape edge:

- Seals micro-gaps
- Prevents paint bleed completely
- Creates laser-sharp lines

How to Caulk Tape Correctly

- Use **paintable acrylic latex caulk**
- Apply a very thin bead along the tape edge
- Tool smooth immediately
- Allow to dry fully before painting

This method is ideal for:

- Accent walls
- Trim-to-wall transitions
- High-visibility edges

◆ **Paintable Caulk vs Silicone Caulk**

Understanding caulk types is critical to edge control.

Paintable Caulk (Acrylic Latex / Siliconized Acrylic)

- ✓ Paint adheres properly
- ✓ Ideal for walls, trim, and joints
- ✓ Easy cleanup

This is the **correct choice** before painting.

Silicone Caulk (NOT Paintable)

- ✗ Paint will not stick
- ✗ Causes fisheyes and peeling
- ✗ Should never be painted over

Silicone repels paint just like oil repels water.

◆ When Silicone Caulk IS Used

Silicone is best for:

- Wet areas (tubs, showers, sinks)
- Exterior sealing
- Expansion joints

It is **not intended for painted finishes**.

◆ Color-Matching Silicone Caulk

If silicone must be visible and color matters:

- Many manufacturers offer **pre-tinted silicone**
- Available in common trim, grout, and fixture colors
- Used when painting is not an option

⚠ Silicone must be the final surface — not painted.

◆ Removing Old Silicone Before Painting

If silicone exists where paint is needed:

- It must be **fully removed**
- Paint will fail if residue remains
- Clean thoroughly before repainting

◆ **Tape Removal Timing Matters**

For best results:

- Remove tape while paint is still slightly wet
- Pull tape back at a 45° angle
- Prevents tearing and edge lifting

Ultimate DIYer Rule of Thumb

Tape + paintable caulk + quality paint = professional edges every time

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