



## Painting Mistakes Homeowners Should Avoid

Ultimate DIYer Free Library – Painting & Caulking Series

Avoiding common mistakes saves time, paint, and frustration.

### Skipping Prep

Rushing prep leads to peeling and poor results. Prep is the most time-consuming part of any paint project, yet the lack of correct prep is the number one reason DIYers end up with poor results.

### Wrong Paint Selection

Using incorrect sheen or low-quality paint causes issues.

### Over-Rolling & Over-Brushing

Leads to streaks and texture problems.

### Ignoring Dry Times

Causes peeling, flashing, and adhesion failure.

### Fixing Paint Problems

Address drips, runs, flashing, and peeling early.

## ◆ Painting Direction & Coat Consistency

One of the most overlooked painting mistakes is **changing directions between coats too soon**.

## **Why Direction Matters**

Paint reflects light differently based on roller direction and texture. Changing direction mid-process can cause:

- Streaks
  - Flashing
  - Uneven sheen
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## **Correct Method for Multiple Coats**

- Apply **each coat in the same direction**
- Maintain consistent pressure
- Finish each section in one uniform pass

Allow the coat to fully dry before changing direction.

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## **When to Change Direction (If Needed)**

If streaks or roller marks remain:

1. Let the paint fully dry
2. Place a light close to the surface at a low angle
3. Inspect for texture or sheen differences
4. Apply the next coat in a different direction only if needed

Never attempt to fix streaks on paint that is already drying.

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## **◆ Understanding Sheen & Why It Matters**

Sheen affects durability, cleanability, and appearance.

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### **Matte / Flat (Most Popular Today)**

- ✓ Hides imperfections
- ✓ Modern, soft look
- ✗ Less washable

Best for:

- Living rooms
  - Bedrooms
  - Ceilings
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### **Satin / Eggshell**

- ✓ Balance of durability and appearance
- ✓ Easy to clean

Common for:

- Walls in high-traffic areas
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### **Semi-Gloss & Gloss**

- ✓ Highly washable
- ✓ Durable protective finish
- ✗ Shows imperfections

Used most often on:

- Trim
- Cabinets
- Doors

This is why trim and cabinetry are commonly finished in **semi-gloss**.

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## **◆ Color & Sheen Matching Mistakes to Avoid**

Matching paint by eye or even a photo almost never works.

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## Best Way to Match Paint Color

- Take a **physical sample** to the paint store
  - Quarter-sized or larger works best
  - Clean, un-faded areas give better results, but in some cases you may want the piece to be faded like the main area of a wall, not the paint behind an outlet cover because that paint will not be faded from time like the exposed paint surface. If you're doing a small repair, it will not blend.
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## Matching Cabinets & Trim

For best accuracy:

- Bring a cabinet door
- Bring a removable trim piece
- Bring a larger section if possible

This allows paint stores to:

- Match color accurately
  - Match sheen more closely
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## ◆ Save Your Paint Codes (Most People Don't)

Paint codes are more important than leftover paint.

### Pro Tips for Saving Paint Information

- Take a clear photo of the color code label
  - Save it in your phone's Notes or Photos
  - Label by room and surface
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## Hidden Storage Trick

For rooms being painted:

- Write the color code
- Tape it **behind a receptacle cover plate**
- Future touch-ups become easy

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## **Before Throwing Away Old Paint Cans**

If paint is dried and being discarded:

- Photograph the label first
- Save color and sheen info
- Dispose of the can afterward

Once the label is gone, the color is often gone forever.

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## **◆ Common Paint Fixing Mistakes**

- Touching paint while drying
  - Mixing sheen levels in the same room
  - Trying to “blend” partially dried paint
  - Guessing on color matches
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## **Ultimate DIYer Rule of Thumb**

**Let paint dry, inspect with light, then decide — rushing creates problems.**

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