

Graham Paint/ 773-585-9110

Some tips for Hot Weather Painting

Good surface preparation is always the single most important task for almost any painting project. More exterior paint job failures occur from inadequate substrate preparation than any other single reason. Do-it-yourselfers sometimes want to jump right in with brush and roller to get the job done rather than spend the time to prepare properly. Most pros know that good preparation is vital to a good job but even the pros sometimes miss a thing or two.

A few minutes at the counter explaining good preparation will prevent customers returning with complaints.

Pressure washing cautions

Pressure washing has become the norm for cleaning surfaces prior to painting. Pressure washers do a good job of knocking off dirt. However, they aren't perfect (just like us humans).

Used on wood, the power washes removes dirt, and also roughens up the top layer of wood cells forming a fibrous material just like mother nature does but the power washer does it in a few minutes. **If these fuzzy materials are not sanded off, any full-bodied paint will very likely peel off.** Natural and Semi-transparent oil based stains will penetrate the wood and not be affected by the fuzzy fibers.

When power-washing vertical siding, the nozzle should be held slightly downward so the spray goes down rather than up.

What does good surface preparation mean?

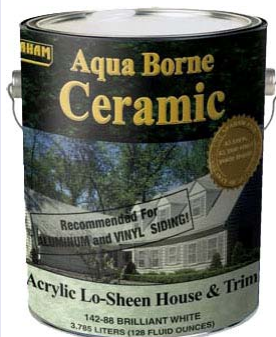
The surface must be clean and free from oil, grease, dirt, mold, mildew, and chalk. If the surface has been painted before, the existing paint must be firmly attached to the substrate. Any peeling paint must be scraped away and the edges feather-sanded.

If there are bare spots down to the wood, the wood should be sanded to remove any fuzzy wood fibers. When bare wood is exposed to the sun and air, the top cells of the wood degrade and the cells form fuzzy, fibrous material that are loosely attached to the wood. When paint is applied, the paint adheres very well to these fibers but the fibers don't adhere well to the solid wood. The fibers pull away from the wood taking the paint with it.

The reason for this is to prevent water from being forced up under the siding. Getting the inside side of the siding wet may cause adhesion problems for the paint as well as reduce the efficiency of the insulation. Also, having dirty water run down from behind the siding to the board below across the freshly painted surface is not a pretty sight.

Power washing will wash off mildew so you can't see the black any more, but it doesn't necessarily destroy the spores. Mildew must be killed with a good mildewicide or a mix of one-cup household bleach to 3 cups water. Allow remaining on the surface for 15 minutes and flushing thoroughly with water.

Should I let new wood age before painting?



Graham has you covered both ways

No. The National Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, WI. has run extensive tests and determined that one should paint wood outside just as soon as possible after it is installed. As explained above, the sun's UV rays attack the wood cells and turn them into little fibers that cause paint adhesion problems. The tests the Laboratory has run indicate they can tell the difference in paint longevity beginning two weeks after the raw wood is exposed to the sun before painting. If the wood is installed outside and painted immediately, and another lot of wood is allowed to weather outside for w2 weeks before

painting, the difference in the life of the paint can be seen, a difference of several months. The longer the wood is left unprotected, the longer the difference in longevity of the paint film.

One caveat is the wood should be reasonably dry. If the wood is too wet, paint adhesion problems will occur. Since treated lumber is often wet, it should be allowed to dry before being painted. If the treated lumber is dry, it should be painted as soon as possible.

This applies to all wood even those that resist insects and mold such as cedar and redwood. They are resistant to bugs but not to the UV rays of the sun.

Should I use Oil or Latex?



Should you use oil-based or latex exterior paint? Should you use an oil-based primer or a latex primer? These are questions that often are asked. Unfortunately, the answers sometimes given can be confusing. **In general, a good acrylic latex finish coat will always out-perform an oil-based finish coat in terms of longevity and color retention.** In general, a good acrylic primer will provide a better base for finish coats than an oil primer.

Latex coatings form a film on the top of the surface. There is little penetration into the wood fibers because the latex molecules are too large and they don't go down into the wood fibers even if the paint is reduced way down in viscosity. However, latex does adhere very tightly to firm wood surfaces. Oil-based finishes do penetrate into the wood fibers to some degree. The molecules are smaller and some work their way into the wood.

For exterior exposure applications, paints containing 100%

"In general, a good acrylic will always outlast an oil based finish outside."

acrylic resins are recommended. They have better performance than paints formulated with only vinyl acrylic resin

For new unpainted wood, the best choice is almost always acrylic latex primer and acrylic finish coat. The only times oil-based products would be used is if the wood has weathered and the top layer of the wood has become soft and punky. You can tell if this is the case if you carefully scap your fingernail across the surface of the wood and there are

several wood fibers caught under your fingernail. **CAUTION!** At one time wood splinters were shoved under prisoner's fingernails as a form of torture. If you get a splinter under your fingernail you will quickly learn why this method of torture was so effective. If this caution disturbs you, you can also tell if the wood has started to degrade by firmly applying a piece of transparent Scotch tape to the wood surface and pulling it off. If there are several wood fibers on the tape, the sun's UV rays have already

Oil or latex?

the tape, the sun's UV rays have already done their dirty work.

If these tests indicate the wood is sound, use acrylic latex primer and acrylic latex finish coat. If the tests indicate the wood has degraded, the preferred method is to remove the dead punky fibers by scraping or sanding. Test again to see if any fibers come loose. If there are no fibers coming off, use an acrylic primer and acrylic topcoat. If you don't remove the loose fibers, use an oil-based primer followed by an acrylic finish

caulking, spot-priming, etc. is required for both acrylic latex and oil-based finish coats. If the old paint is in sound condition and the wood is sound acrylic latex paint should be used. If the wood is in very poor condition, pitted, cracked and soft, oil-based primer followed by oil-based finish coat is the best choice. In this case, it is hoped that the deeper penetration of the oil-based products will help to hold things together. **As a rule of thumb, if more than 5 coats of paint is already in place, use an oil based finish.**

For masonry surfaces

Use acrylic finish coats and acrylic primers if required. Most acrylic finish coats designed for masonry do not require primers. *Oil-based finishes should not be used on masonry* because a chemical reaction occurs between the masonry and the alkyd resins found in oil-based paints. This reaction degrades the oil-based primers.

coat.

Oil-based finish stains do allow more of the wood texture to show through than does latex stains, so if you want to maximize the appearance of the wood texture, use an oil-based stain.

For previously painted wood, a primer is not necessary to be used other than spot priming of repaired areas. The usual preparation work, i.e. scrapping loose paint, filling nail holes, sanding,

For vinyl, aluminum and steel siding

acrylic finish coat should be used. No primer is necessary. It is important that chalk be removed before painting. *There is no reason to ever use oil-based paint on these substrates.*

For unpainted galvanized metal, use a 100% acrylic latex primer followed by an acrylic topcoat. *Do not use an oil-based primer on bare galvanized metal.* The zinc in the galvanized metal reacts with the oil resin causing paint failure.

“New wood outside should be painted as soon as possible.”



Graham Paint

4100 W 76th Street
Unit G
Chicago, IL 60652
USA

Phone:
773-585-9110

Fax:
773-284-0989

E-Mail:
harrytrue@comcast.net

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