

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Touch-up

Touch-up refers to the application of paint to a recently (less than 1 year) painted surface. These may be missed areas (holidays) or areas of repair. No touch-up is perfect, but if done correctly, it should blend in acceptably with the surrounding painted area.

There are several variables that can affect the appearance of touched-up areas

1. The application technique used by the painting contractor will affect the appearance.
2. Temperature and humidity differences from the time of the original painting.
3. Darker colors are usually harder to touch-up.
4. Paints with a sheen (non-flats) are harder to touch-up.
5. Excessive film build can make a touch-up more noticeable.
6. Surface porosity and texture differences, especially when there is a critical light source, make touch-up more difficult.
7. Dirt or other surface contaminants can negatively affect the touch-up.
8. If the original coat of paint was not applied at full film build, then it may not show the true color or sheen.

What are the best practices when performing a touch-up?

1. Use the same batch of paint and apply the touch-up in the same manner in which the original paint was applied. In most cases, if the original coat was sprayed, it is not possible or practical to perform the touch-up using the same application procedure. However, it may be possible to set aside a small amount of the originally sprayed material for touch-up use.

If there is no original paint available, make sure the touch-up paint used has been tinted properly (correct base, correct color formula and product).

2. If given a choice between a brush and roller, always use a roller to perform the touch-up. The preferred roller is a "weenie" roller with a good quality synthetic cover. Choose a nap thickness of ¼ to ½ inch.
3. Make sure the surface area is clean and free from any dirt, dust, grease or oils.
4. The surface must be dry and free from all loose or peeling paint.
5. When loading the roller, use the least amount of paint necessary. This will help to limit excessive film build in the touched-up area.
6. When performing a touch-up on a smooth wall with a brush avoid feathering into the originally painted areas. Feathering with a brush will produce a flat "halo" (outline) around the touch-up. Feathering with a synthetic roller cover will aid in blending slight differences in color and sheen without producing a noticeable halo.
7. When performing a touch-up on a smooth wall with a water-based non-flat paint, the paint should be thinned (about 5-10% clean water) in order to help minimize the sheen difference from the original application.
8. If a given surface requires an excessive number of touch-up applications, it may be best to repaint the entire wall from corner to corner.

Dunn-Edwards® or any other paint manufacturer cannot guarantee that all paints in all colors will provide adequate touch-up. It is extremely important that we educate our customers on how to properly perform a touch-up and the variables that can affect how well a touch-up blends into the original paint.

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4885 East 52ND Place, Los Angeles, CA 90058
(888) DE PAINT (337-2468) | dunnedwards.com

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