

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

How to Prepare & Paint New Plaster Walls

Types of Plaster

There are five basic types of plaster:

1. Browning –used as base coat for walls
2. Bonding – used as base coat for walls, brickwork, block work and breeze block
3. Multi Finish – used a top coat for browning and bonding
4. Board Finish – used as topcoat for plasterboard
5. One Coat – used for small DIY jobs

Prior to the introduction of drywall, which reduced material and labor cost, plaster was extremely popular. Although, plaster is not used very often, the following steps should be taken before painting fresh plaster.

Dry times

It is important for plaster to thoroughly dry prior to painting. Many factors can affect the dry time. For example, humidity, temperature, and plaster thickness. Also, depending on the variables listed, it can take anywhere from one week to a month for plaster to cure. A light uniform color over the fresh plaster is the sign that plaster has dried. If the plaster is not completely dry, the adhesion of mist coat and top coats can become compromised.

Mist Coat

Prior to painting, a mist coat must be applied. This is an extremely important step that must not be skipped. To create a mist coat, use a NON-VINYL EMULSION and reduce it approximately 50% with clean water. Mist coats are much thinner than traditional paint. Apply it slowly to ensure that it is worked into the plaster. After applying the initial mist coat,

blemishes or misses in the plaster will be highlighted, allowing for repairs. If the mist coat is shiny once its dries, lightly sand with fine to medium grit sand paper (120-220 grit)

and remove sanding dust with vacuum or damp cloth. If after the initial mist coat, additional plaster is necessary, it will once again need to completely dry before reapplication of a second mist coat. Applying a non-reduced emulsion, will cause it to dry too quickly and will not properly adhere to the surface. Also, the use of a vinyl emulsion will form a skin on the plaster and may be prone to peeling as well as alkali issues.



Tape

Generally, when tape is pulled, the adhesive is stronger than the cohesive strength of the plaster, causing the plaster to fracture or pull away from the surface. If tape is needed to secure a drop cloth, use only 3M 2080 Scotch Blue Painter's Tape and avoid applying tape directly to the plastered surface.

Top Coats

Once the mist coat/s are dry, (minimum 4 hours under normal atmospheric conditions) top coat/s can be applied.



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