

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

How to Paint a Ceiling

Ceilings or “lids,” as they are called in the paint industry, can dramatically influence the look of your home or business. They vary widely — from small and low to extremely large and lofty. Color choice can make all the difference: when painting a ceiling in a small room, light colors can make the room appear larger, while using a darker color on a high-ceiling creates a more intimate, dramatic feel.

There are numerous challenges when it comes to painting ceilings. For example: What are the surface conditions? (repaint, new drywall, newly scraped or textured, patched, or stained?) What is the room’s critical light source? (This is where the angle of incoming light hits a painted surface at an acute angle, casting shadows that highlight any surface irregularities.) You can reduce the effect of critical light and achieve the best finish by performing proper prep work and applying a dead flat paint.

Additional tips:

- New drywall should be primed before applying the finish coat
- Prime Level 5 drywall with VINYLASTIC® Plus. Please see our Technical Bulletin regarding *How to Paint Level 5 Smooth Wall*
- Prime Level 4 drywall with VINYLASTIC or ULTRA-GRIP® to ensure drywall is sealed before applying the topcoat
- If a ceiling has water-stains, make sure to repair the leak before applying a stain-blocking primer

Depending upon the substrate, apply the proper primer to seal the surface before top-coating. Once the ceiling is thoroughly prepped and primed, apply the finish coat.

Ceilings can be rolled or sprayed, as both are good application techniques. When using an airless sprayer, it is essential to apply it in a crisscross, overlapping pattern to avoid sheen uniformity issues. Ensure you use the correct pressure to avoid tails. Also, a new spray tip will help produce top-quality results.

For best results, apply a dead flat paint to minimize sheen uniformity issues. Interior products such as ULTRA-SCRUB® (ULSB10), SPARTAWALL® (SWLL10), SPARTAZERO® (SZRO10), ACRI-WALL® (ACWL10), and VERSAFLAT® (W6240) are the recommended options. Avoid using topcoats with angular sheens as critical lighting can magnify surface imperfections.

Interior painting projects should always include painting the ceilings, giving the new paint job a crisp and finished look. We recommend using Dunn-Edwards DEHW08 (Classic White) as it will improve hide/coverage and make the room look larger.



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