



CLEVELAND
RESTORATION
SOCIETY

PAINING YOUR OLDER HOME

YOUR GUIDE TO PROPER PAINT PREPARATION

Your home is important to you and when starting an exterior painting project you want to take the proper steps to ensure the paint application will last a long time and the right person is selected for the job. Here are some simple steps that should be done when preparing the wood surface for paint...

1. Remove any loose paint

When removing any loose or failing paint, it is important to always use the gentlest means possible in order to prepare the surface. Sandblasting and high pressure water blasting are strongly discouraged as they can severely damage the wood or stone surface. Grinders, wire strippers, and aggressive planers should also be avoided.

Scraping

Scrap away any loose or failing paint. The essential painting surface is one that is solid and shows no signs or cracking, flaking, peeling, or blistering paint. Bare wood is ideal, although not required. If new paint is applied to old paint that is cracking or flaking away from the surface, the old paint will eventually fail and pop off, taking the new paint that was applied to the surface with it. This will significantly reduce the life of any paint application.

Sanding

Sanding helps to even out the old paint surface and blend any areas that may seem jagged or chipped after scraping. Additionally, a proper sanding will eliminate dirt build up, and will provide a surface that will offer good adhesion with the new paint.

2. Prepare the painting surface

When priming the paint surface, an oil based primer is typically recommended for its superior bond and durability; however a latex primer is sometimes preferred by some because of its convenience and ease in clean up.

Check the moisture content

It is essential that the wood surface be dry and free of moisture before you paint on the surface. Painting wood that retains moisture or is damp in any way will lead to rapid paint failure. Make sure the wood surface has had time to dry out, or check the surface with a moisture meter to be confident that it is dry enough to paint.

Prime the surface

All bare wood must be primed. Primer is an important part of ensuring good paint adhesion. Primers also help to provide even coverage, and help the paint surface to cure properly. It also helps to prevent the wood from absorbing moisture from the paint itself. Primer helps to block stains from penetrating the finish coat and they create a uniform surface for the paint application. Primers are also important to apply if you are switching from latex to oil, or from oil to latex paint. Primer should not be left exposed on an exterior surface for long periods of time. It is not a finish coat and should be covered with paint soon after application. As long as they are manufactured by the industry, oil-based primers offer the best surface to paint as they seep into the wood fibers and lock in for best adhesion.

Make sure the surface is clean

Before any paint is applied, make sure that your surface is clean and free of dirt and debris. Any type of residue, dirt, staining or dust will lead to paint failure. A clean, dry, primed surface is the key to a successful paint application!

3. Apply your top coat

Identify the timetable

Be sure your contractor knows when you are looking to start AND complete the project. Be sure to make seasonal considerations. This will help lay out expectations between you and your contractor which will allow the contractor to determine availability for the job. It is important to remember that construction causes inconveniences and you should expect to change your daily routines to some degree during the project.

Request a bid

Ask for a bid from your contractor and request that it be returned to you in writing by a specific date. Ask that your contractor provide plenty of detail and that he break down the components of the bid when possible. A bid should be given to you on company letter head or invoice with the company's name, Federal Identification Number and contact information listed on it. Be sure that the estimate includes proposed start and

finish dates, along with the payment schedule. Full payment should not be administered to the contractor until the project has been completely finished.

Check references

Check the references of your most preferred contractors by phone and in person. A good contractor should be comfortable supplying you with a list. Don't be afraid to go to the addresses provided and look at the work that was performed. Gauge the customer's satisfaction and be sure to ask the reference the following questions:

- Were you satisfied with the work?
- Was the project done in a timely manner?
- Did the contractor and crew keep a broom clean job site?
- How did the contractor handle any problems that arose?
- Did the contractor need to come back to fix or complete anything?
- If they needed to come back for minor repairs did they do so in a timely manner?
- Would you work with them again?

3. Hire a contractor

Choose the contractor

Once bids are returned compare them with your scope of work and budget. If all bids exceed your budget scale back your scope of work. Don't automatically get frustrated and assume you have to continue to shop around. Be realistic about the cost of services and remember the cheapest bid isn't always the best bid. Trust your gut instincts when making your decision and choose someone you are comfortable with. Once you have selected your contractor get a signed contract and be sure to go over the work schedule, the payment schedule and how change orders will be handled. Change orders should always be signed and occur before the change takes place. Remember throughout the project that flexibility and good communication is the key to successful project!

Questions you should be asking...

Ask your contractor about his qualifications:

	Yes	No
Are you licensed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you insured?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you registered with the city I live in?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have references?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How long have you been in business?	_____	
How much experience do you have working with older homes?	_____	
What kind of labor and material warranty do you offer?	_____	

Ask your contractor about the project:

	Yes	No
Have you done a project similar to this one?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can the job be completed in the requested period of time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will a supervisor be on site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you arrange for building permits and debris removal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What are the payment terms?	_____	
How many people will typically be on the job site?	_____	

Ask the contractor's reference:

	Yes	No
Were you satisfied with the work that was done?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was the project done in a timely manner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor and crew keep a neat and clean job site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did any problems arise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor need to come back to fix or complete anything?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If they needed to come back did they do so in a timely manner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Would you work with them again?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ask yourself about the contractor:

	Yes	No
Did I get a good impression of the contractor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was the contractor punctual?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor return my calls promptly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was the contractor organized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was the contractor specific?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor answer all of my questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor return a bid to me on time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor require follow up?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor break down the pricing in the bid?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the contractor break down the project schedule in writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Did the contractor break down the payment schedule in writing?

Were the contractors references positive?

Ask yourself about the project:

What is my total budget _____

What is my time table? _____

Are there any special circumstances or requests that I need to make the contractor aware of? _____

In order of importance what is the scope of work and how much is budgeted for each project:

Project _____ Amount Budgeted _____

Project _____ Amount Budgeted _____

Project _____ Amount Budgeted _____

Project _____ Amount Budgeted _____

Project _____ Amount Budgeted _____