



DESIGN DECISIONS

Paint Properties

Read labels before selecting paint. Ask a professional to assist in understanding that type the paint is, what it can be used for and how to prepare the surfaces before painting. Many paints may need a primer coat first. Choose compatible primer coats. Walls that have stains, water stains or have a dark or bright color will need to be primed first.

Select all the supplies you will need to protect yourself and other areas in the room. Buy quality brushes or rollers suited to the type of paint and surfaces you are painting.

Product	Characteristics
Paint Ingredients:	
Water-based: Water base with other materials. May be latex, vinyl, or acrylic	Water is non-toxic. However, other ingredients are present. Read the label. Water thinned. Not flammable. Lower toxicity or non-toxic. Fewer odors than solvent as fewer or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Apply easily with a brush or roller. Dries fast. Clean-up with soap and water. Read label and follow directions. Ask for low-odor low-VOC if odors are a problem.
Solvent-based: Uses organic solvents such as mineral spirits, alcohols, acetates etc. Comes as alkyd, oil-based, polyurethane paint	Can be toxic and flammable. More difficult to clean-up as must use a solvent such as mineral spirits. Used for areas that have a lot of hard use, such as a bathroom or kitchen. Washable. Stronger odor.
Paint Appearances:	
Gloss - luster or shininess of the dry paint	Paints are usually classified as flat (dull), satin, semi-gloss and high gloss. Higher gloss is easier to clean but is more likely to show uneven painting and surfaces. Glossy paints may make color seem more intense; flat paint colors are more subdued. Flat paints may be more difficult to clean.
Enamel - can be water or solvent based.	Usually smoother and dries to a harder surface than other interior paints making them more durable and cleanable.



Product	Characteristics
<p>Surface primers: The <i>base coat</i> when painting new surfaces</p>	<p>Primers are used to seal new or repaired surfaces before applying the top coats or wall covering. The paint container label will suggest proper primers. Primers are used over difficult to cover paint colors such as dark or bright colors and for surfaces that that need to be prepared for the paint coat.</p>
<p>Special paints and coatings: Paints made or formulated for specific purposes. Example: textured paint, faux paints, glazes, rust inhibitors, etc.</p>	<p>Specialty paints are available for most surfaces and for special materials such as metal, plastic, etc. Read the label carefully and follow safety and ventilation directions. Some of these paints can be flammable, higher toxicity.</p>

Compare the cost of paint to that of wall coverings or stenciling a room.

Determine the square footage of the room. Visit a paint store. Read labels to find out how much area the gallon or quart will cover. Figure how many gallons or quarts of paint are needed and how many coats of paint you will need – one coat or two? If you have a very light paint on the wall now and paint it a darker color, you will need a tinted primer and several coats of paint.

Sample one:	Cost per gallon	\$ 20.00	x	2 gallons	= \$40.00
Sample two:	Cost per gallon	\$ 25.00	x	2 gallons	= \$50.00

Prepared by: Shirley Niemeyer, Extension Specialist; Jeanette Freisen, Cathy Johnston and Sue Pearman, Extension Educators; University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension

Find more at <http://4h.unl.edu/designdecisions>

© The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska on Behalf of Nebraska 4-H. This document may be reprinted for educational purposes only.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.