Different Surfaces May Require Varied Paints

Manufacturers have recently introduced a wide range of exterior paints in an effort to make each new kind more durable and foolproof than its predecessor.

As a result, even "experts" do not agree about which paint should be used for what purpose, but some general guidelines should prove helpful in selecting the material appropriate for each part of the house exterior.

Oil-base or water-base latex house paints can be used on the walls or body of a wood house. Oil-base house paints dry to a medium gloss, while latex has little or no gloss. Oil-base housepaints are slow drying — requiring from 24 to 72 hours between coats. This creates a problem of bugs and dust adhering to the tacky surface. While oil is heavier and will generally tend to cover better with one coat, it can be applied only on dry surfaces. Latex can be put on almost immediately after a rain.

Latex house paints can often be recoated in a matter of hours. (Two coats are recommended by manufacturers for long-term appearance, durability, and adequate coverage.) Latex colors also resist fading, and are more resistant to peeling when trapped moisture inside the walls might affect oil paint.

Latex is also simple to work with. Tools and hands can be washed with water. Latex paint spreads easier than oil-based paint and, because it dries so quickly (some brands in 30 minutes after application), bugs do not have a chance to stick.

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IF THE WOOD surface to be painted is mildewed, it should be washed and sterilized with a solution of two cups of household bleach and one cup of trisodium phosphate per gallon before painting. The dry surface should be painted as soon as possible after washing to prevent new mildew spores from incubating.

Oil-base house paint is not recommended for masonry walls as it does not stand up well on this material and has a glossy finish. (A dull finish is desirable on brick or stucco.) Latex house paints, on the other hand, dry dull, resist alkali, and let trapped moisture vapor escape without causing blistering and peeling. As latex will not adhere well over old coats that are chalking badly, the recommended primer must be used, and the old surface cleaned off thoroughly.

A powdered cement-base masonry paint is still available. This must be mixed with water before use. Although more economical than the ready-mixed variety, it can be used only on unpainted brick or cement, or on masonry previously coated with the same kind of paint. It is sloppy to use as it must be applied to a wetted-down surface.

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TRIM PAINTS are available in both oil-base and latex types, and are harder-drying and glossier than house paints. If regular house paints are used on trim, the color is apt to fade quickly, and surfaces that get hard wear, such as doors, will be harder to keep clean.

Oil-base trim paints thin with turpentine and usually have an alkyd base. Their hard finish makes them suitable for use on toys, outdoor furniture, and play equipment, as well as on house trim.

Latex trim paint is comparatively new. This has a semi-gloss finish, and is generally not quite as hard-drying as the turpentine-thinned trim paints. This may make it, however, more resistant to cracking on surfaces where frequent flexing or expansion could cause the harder-drying oil-base paint to crack.

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SHINGLES CAN be painted or stained. Once painted, however, they cannot be stained until the original paint has weathered off. Some heavy-bodied oil stains are available especially for shingles.

These have a consistency somewhat between a paint and a stain, and can sometimes be applied successfully over a previously painted surface—if that surface has been exposed to the weather for some time.

Stains, because of their penetration, cannot peel. If you are interested in a rustic look, a stain retains the woodsy look of the shingle and avoids a built-up appearance.

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PAINT, on the other hand, looks fresh longer, and permits easy color changes. Light stains, for example, will not cover dark woods. Light paints will. If paint is used on shingles, it should be one that dries dull.

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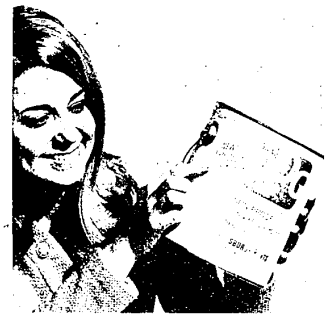
Most latex house paints are excellent, but a special type of flat-drying, alkyd or oil-base paint is also available for those who prefer the heavier body and added covering power of an oil-type paint.

Asbestos shingles can generally be treated and painted as masonry surfaces. Some types require a special primer.

Wood gutters take house paint, while metal gutters and leaders require trim paint or house paint.

Galvanized metal and aluminum require a special primer on the bare metal to prevent peeling. These primers come in both oil latex and can be painted over with either an oil-base or latex house paint.



EXTERIOR LATEX house paints usually react with sulfides in the air, producing black or smoky gray stains. New Pittsburgh Syn-Proof Paint resists discoloration from pollutants, says the manufacturer. Like most latex paints, it also resists mildew growth, and reduces cracking, peeling, and blistering.

Here Are Answers To Queries

Q. Is it necessary to drain my pool each week?

A. No, definitely not. Not many years ago, it was necessary to empty a swimming pool every few days, scrub it, and refill it. By the time the water had warmed up, it was time to repeat the draw-and-fill cycle. Now, modern circulating systems and chemicals make pool care easier than ever.

If the pH factor is maintained, your pool water will stay clear and beautiful, as well as clean, for several years! When in doubt, consult your local pool service company.

Like a home or car, a pool requires periodic cleaning and other maintenance. A surface skimmer, a couple of brushes, and a vacuum cleaner, often included in the cost of the pool, are all it takes to keep the pool clean. The long-handled, net-like leaf skimmer will remove floating leaves, paper, and the like. A tile brush will clean the poolside at the water line, and a wall brush will dislodge anything sticking to the sides.

The pool vacuum cleaner will remove sediment from the bottom. Some newer pools even have built-in automatic cleaning systems that eliminate th need for vacuuming. Weekly maintenance includes removing the screen of the automatic surface skimmer and the hair-lint strainer in the pump to remove debris.

The filter must be backwashed occasionally and, in some types, chemicals must be added from time to time.

Q. How can I avoid getting water marks or "bathtub ring" on my pool?

A. When draining, scrub walls of the pool. Then, when refilling, fill to the top of the pool and drain off the excess.

Q. What is total alkalinity?

A. Total alkalinity is one of the most important indications of the pool's health. Easily tested with a special kit, total alkalinity reflects the water's ability to respond to pH adjustment. Measured in parts per million, it is the ratio of alkaline chemicals to the water. A good reading is between 50 and 100 parts per million, according to standards of the National Swimming Pool Institute (NSPI).

Q. What is pH?

A. Expressed on a scale of 0 to 14, pH measures the balance between the chemical additives and the pool water. This balance must be carefully controlled in order to assure swimming comfort. A pH higher than seven is alkaline; lower, acidic.

NSPI recommends that a pH between 7.2 and 7.8 is ideal for disinfecting the pool water, but is not so strong as to cause discomfort to swimmers.

Q. Should a pool heater be turned off and disconnected when not in use?

A. Not necessarily. The pilot light of the heater will use only pennies of gas during the summer months and the water being circulated through the heater will not harm it. If the heater will not be used for a long period of time, turn off the gas burner and set the thermostat to the lowest possible reading.

HERE ARE a few quickie tips:

• Never clean the tile with steel wool. Particles of the steel will drop to the pool's bottom, causing unsightly rust marks.

• Always store vacuum hoses out of sun and weather for longer life.

• Never turn underwater lights on when your pool is empty. Most pool lights are water cooled and may "explode" if not submerged.

• Always check your pool after swimming parties for hair pins and remove them immediately.

• To avoid overflowing your pool when adding water, it pays to use an oven timer or alarm clock to remind yourself to turn off the water.

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