



Painting Kitchen Cabinets

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If you are remodeling your kitchen, or just want to give it a quick face-lift and don't want to spend a lot of money, consider repainting your cabinets. You can change the look of your entire kitchen by painting your wood or veneer cabinets a fresh color. We recommend using the EZ-Kare line of paint because it's durable enough to withstand the everyday use cabinets get.

The easiest way to do this project is to leave the inside of the cabinets alone since it is only seen when the cabinet is open. Also, if you paint inside the cabinets you would have to take everything out of them. Even without painting the insides, this project takes three days so plan to do it when you have the time.

Tools & Materials Checklist

- Screwdriver
- Newspaper
- TSP (trisodium phosphate)
- Sponge
- Bucket
- Sandpaper (coarse & fine grit)
- Masking tape
- 2-Qts. Primer (water or oil-base)
- 1-Gal. Oil-base paint (satin, gloss or semi-gloss)
- 2-1/2" Natural bristle brush
- Paint tray
- Two tray liners
- Roller handle
- 2 or 3 roller sleeves (lamb's wool)
- Paint thinner
- Can (coffee can or large soup can)



Caution: The fumes from the paint and the primer can get intense so you need to make sure that some windows or doors are open. Don't make this a winter project.

Step 1. Remove Cabinet Hardware & Protect Surrounding Areas

Remove the cabinet doors and all hardware (handles, hinges and knobs) using a screwdriver. If your cabinets use magnetic closures, take them off as well. Some doors have inside hinges that are not exposed; in this case it would be acceptable to leave them on the door but mask over them with tape.

Step 2. Clean Cabinets

Clean with TSP. This is a powder, so you need to mix it with water in a bucket. Wash the doors and the exterior of the cabinet facades and the front and sides of the cabinet using a sponge. Let the cabinets dry, then sand them with coarse-grit sandpaper. You want to give the surface a rough texture so the primer grips. Sand until the shiny surfaces are dull.



Tip: Sandpaper Know-How

Sandpaper comes in a range of grit or coarseness. There are very coarse papers to very fine. This range is numbered with the coarsest having the smallest number and the finest the largest. A good coarse paper is number 80. A good fine paper for this project is a 200 to 300.

Step 3. Prime Cabinets

Apply primer with a roller and brush to the front and back of the doors first, then do the cabinet facades. When you have used the roller to cover as much as you can, go back with a brush and prime any areas you couldn't reach.



Tip: Oil vs. Water-Based Primer

Generally, the oil-based primer works well because the paint really sticks to it. However, there are now water-based primers that work just as well, plus their odor isn't as strong. Check with our store's Paint Pro for advice.

Steps 4 – 9 on back

Step 4. Prime & Paint Hinges (Optional)

You can spray paint the hinges while they are off the doors to match or contrast with the color of the cabinets. It's quicker and easier if you use aerosol primer and paint in order to get in all of the small crevices and holes on the hinges. Let them dry overnight.

Step 5. Cleanup

Clean the brush you used for priming by using paint thinner. Throw away the roller tray liner and the sleeve.

Step 6. Paint First Coat

Apply the first coat of paint to the cabinet facades and front and back of the doors. Follow the same pattern that you used when priming the cabinet. Let the dry for 24 hours.

Step 7. Do a Partial Clean-Up

Pour some paint thinner into a can and soak the brush overnight. Put the sleeve into an air-tight zip-lock bag so you can use it again tomorrow. Pour any excess paint back into the can and close it up.

Step 8. Apply Final Coat

Lightly sand any bubbles that formed from the first coat of paint by using the fine-grit sandpaper. Be careful not to remove the paint you just applied. Apply the final coat of paint. By now you should know where the roller can't reach so you can do the brushwork first, then use the roller. Reuse your old roller - unless it hardened overnight. After you have finished applying the final coat let dry for 24 hours before reattaching the doors. And be careful for a couple of weeks since it still susceptible to scratches.

Step 9. Final Cleanup

Clean the brush in the can of paint thinner. Throw the roller sleeve and tray liner away. Clean the roller handle with paint thinner. Some states don't allow you to dump paint thinner down the drain, so make sure you check first.

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