

Rag Rolling – Decorative Technique

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Rag rolling can be classified as cloth distressing, meaning one or more colored glazes are applied over a base, which allows some of all the colors to show through. The effect can be dramatic or subtle, but it is always interesting and unique.

In rag rolling, a subtractive approach is usually taken. That is, first you apply a colored glaze and then roll a rag over the surface to remove some of it to expose the base color below. In the additive approach you layer one color on top of another other leaving open areas so some of the previous colors show through. Either the additive or subtractive approach can be used for rag rolling. Ask us about Sponge Painting for more information on the additive approach.



Tip: Painting Walls

If you're painting walls, work with a partner. Use latex glaze thinned 10 to 15% with water.

Materials Checklist

- Rags (for rolling and cleanup)
- Drop cloths
- Painter's tape and/or tape-and-drape masking products
- EZ-Kare Interior paint
- Paint roller or pad
- Paint roller tray
- Oil-base glaze
- EZ-Kare Flat Paint for coloring the glaze
- Latex gloves
- Level
- Straightedge
- Pencil
- Goggles

Step 1: Prepare Rags

Rags for rolling should all be of the same lint-free material (cotton, burlap, muslin, etc.) without seams. For walls, fold the two sides of a 2-ft.-long rag toward the middle and roll it loosely with lots of wrinkles. The resulting roll can be any width under 1 foot depending on how wide you want the striped pattern to be. You'll need lots of rags so you can switch to a clean one whenever the one you are using gets too saturated with paint.

Step 2: Protect Other Surfaces

Place drop cloths on the floor and mask baseboard trim or other areas that you don't want to paint using blue painter's tape or a mask-and-drape masking product.

Step 3: Apply a Base Coat

Apply an even base coat of EZ-Kare Flat Paint over a primed or already painted wall using a paint pad or roller. Allow it to dry completely and re-coat as necessary according to the label.



Tip: Rag Fabrics

Experiment using different fabrics as your "rags" and try the techniques with different colors until you get the results you like. Applying a dark glaze over a light base coat gives the finish greater depth.

(Steps 4 – 7 on back)

Step 4. Apply Glaze

Have a helper apply a glaze to a limited area so it won't dry before you can work the glaze with your rag. Start at a corner and cover a 2-ft.-wide top-to-bottom strip.

Step 5: Rag Roll

Dip a rolled rag in water and wring out excess. Hold it against the wall with outstretched hands applying even pressure as you slowly roll it down the wall. The harder you press the more paint you will remove. When one stripe is complete, repeat the procedure. Try to make the edges of the stripes just meet each other, not overlap. When you roll at inside corners, mask off the adjacent wall so the edge of your paint-saturated rag won't rub against it.

Step 6. Complete the Wall

Repeat steps 4 and 5 completing one wall at a time. Try not to stop in the middle of a wall. If you do need to stop, look for a natural break such as a corner or the edge of a door.

Step 7. Apply Another Color Glaze

When the glaze coat has dried repeat Steps 4, 5, and 6 with another color glaze, if desired.



Tip: Rag Techniques

It's important to not stray from going vertical in Step 5. You'll need to start at a corner or at a vertical line lightly penciled on the wall using a level and 6-ft straightedge, such as a 1x4 board.

As a rag becomes saturated, it will not take off as much glaze as needed; it may even add glaze where you don't want it. Rinse your rag with water and wring out the excess or switch to another rag often.

For more decorating tips visit www.truevalue.com and be sure to use the paint calculator on the site before your next painting project.