

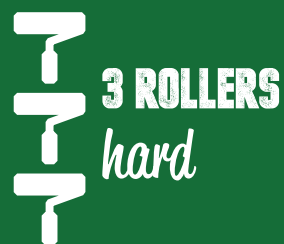
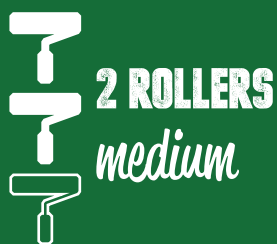
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PROJECT SKILL RATING GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

PLANNING TO REDECORATE A ROOM IN YOUR HOME BUT HAVE NO CLUE HOW TO STRIP WALLPAPER, RESTORE INTERIOR WOODWORK OR EVEN PUT UP A SHELF?

Not everyone is the 'Do It Yourself' expert they claim to be, but you can pretend to be the next Nick Knowles (star of DIY SOS if you're not a lover of DIY programmes either) with our fool-proof and discreetly downloadable guide to how to decorate.

We'll take you through the basics so you can make mincemeat of dowdy wallpaper, polish dull wooden floors to perfection or professionally hang those pictures you've been meaning to put up since you moved in. '28 Tips on How To Decorate' offers step-by-step advice in plain English (that's right no tradesmen jargon) so you can tackle those home improvement tasks around your home. Each 'how to' even outlines what tools and equipment you need to complete the job in hand and also offers a skill rating so you can build yourself up to those more difficult jobs.

We understand that in these difficult economic times, not everyone can afford to hire a professional decorator but with our guide, you can at least attempt to do it yourself.

28 TIPS
on how to decorate

**GET ALMOST PROFESSIONAL
RESULTS FOR HALF THE PRICE**

A step by step DIY guide from localtraders.com





HOW TO PREPARE YOUR WALLS

You will need

- *Brush or vacuum cleaner*
- *Sugar soap or homemade alternative of warm water and detergent*
- *Sponge*
- *Bleach*
- *Sandpaper*
- *High quality primer*

As with most DIY projects, preparation is everything! When decorating your home, conducting great prep is the difference between a super smooth finish and a sloppy one.

Start off by dusting the surface of your walls with a towel, brush or vacuum cleaner. Next wash down your walls with warm water and a high quality detergent, use a weak solution consisting of 3 teaspoons of household detergent to one bucket of warm water. Alternatively, you can use sugar soap to remove any stubborn stains like grease, soot or smoke damage. Whether you are using sugar soap or a homemade cleaning mixture, use a damp sponge to apply the solution, which should be regularly rinsed. Don't be afraid to cover old ground either, clean the wall area at least 2 to 3 times to remove excess dirt.

You may encounter mould when preparing your walls for painting and it is important to remove this before applying a fresh coat of paint. These troublesome grey-green speckles could spread across the entire room if left untreated. Invest in a quality mould and mildew remover or create your own solution for a cost effective alternative that works just as well. Mix one part bleach with three parts ammonia-free detergent for a mould

removing potion. Apply the solution to the problem area and leave for 10 minutes, then rinse away the solution. When cleaning your walls ensure that they are thoroughly dry before you move onto the next stage of preparation.

Now it's time to remove any imperfections on your walls such as chips, cracks and blisters. Use a scraper to remove any flaking paint, and smooth away any lumps and bumps with some high quality sandpaper. There are a number of abrasive papers you can utilise to get the smooth finish you are looking for. As well as wet and dry sanding papers, the latest product is Polycell Liquid Sander, the solution is painted or brushed onto the surface of your walls and left to dry to reveal a surface perfect for painting.

Walls that have had gloss paint applied to them previously need some extra attention during preparation. Glossy surfaces don't have the same adhesion when painting over them so the new coat will find it hard to stick. Use sandpaper to roughen the surface as well as remove any imperfections. Whether you are preparing a glossy or matte surface, fill any cracks and chips with filler then smooth with sandpaper for a ready to paint surface.

The final stage of preparation is applying primer, also known as the professional painter's 'secret weapon'. Using the preparation methods mentioned above, applying a high quality primer is the final stage of hiding away imperfections. Attention must be paid however to which primer is best for your wall. For water and smoke damaged walls use an oil-based primer, whilst new drywalls should be treated with a water-based alternative.

Whether you're freshening up a room or going for a complete design overhaul, preparation is an essential part of a long lasting and beautiful finish.

Take a few hours out of your weekend to prepare like a pro



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HOW TO PREPARE INTERIOR WOODWORK

You will need

- *Wood filler*
- *Knotting compound*
- *Sugar soap*
- *Electric sander*
- *Filler knife*
- *Fine sandpaper*
- *Cloth*
- *White spirit*
- *Wood primer (quick drying and water-based)*

Preparing your woodwork should always be a part of your home decoration preparation, after all prep is the key to a complete and professionally finished result. Messy woodwork can be the fine line — between a beautiful home interior and a 'not so beautiful' one so prepare your woodwork today with a few tips straight from the experts.

Cracks and holes in your woodwork are unsightly to say the least so repair these with a good quality wood filler. Large knots can be off putting too so use a knotting compound to seal these. If you are working with a painted surface and wish to spruce it up with a fresh coat, wash the surface down with sugar soap before you commence work. The sugar soap will remove any dirt, grime and dust that can go unnoticed to the naked eye but creates a poor result once the new coat of paint has dried.

For a professional finish, prepare your woodwork with an electric sander and remove any flaking paint with a filler knife. Finish by sanding down the whole surface with a fine sheet of sandpaper, paying particular attention to the areas where the newly applied filler has dried. Give the surface a quick wipe down with a cloth dampened in white spirit to remove any fine dust, then seal the surface with a water-based and quick drying wood primer. This sanded and sealed surface is now ready to be painted; the sanding will not only smooth the rough surface but also provide extra adhesion for the new paint to stick to.

When repainting start with vertical strokes and brush out the paint horizontally to get right into the grain of the wooden surface. Finish the first coat using light strokes, painting in the direction of the grain. Allow the first coat to dry before you apply the topcoat.

WHAT IF THE NEW COAT DOESN'T COVER THE OLD ONE?

Painting over woodwork in a different colour takes patience and a lot of paint. But the trick to a beautiful finish is to do multiple coats rather than cover the surface in one thick layer of paint. Why not spend some extra time preparing the wood for painting? It may take a couple of extra hours to sand down the painted surface to bare wood but the end result will be second-to-none.



73 HOW TO PROTECT YOUR FURNITURE

You will need

- *Masking tape*
- *Dust sheet*
- *Polythene sheeting*

Decorating is an essential part of transforming a house into a home, but it is important to overhaul your decor without putting your stamp on all of its contents!

It's not always possible to remove every item of furniture from the room that you are decorating so every item left behind needs to be properly protected. No matter how handy you are with the paintbrush, accidents happen and paint droplets can turn up in the strangest of places. Take preventative measures for peace of mind and a pleasant painting experience.

Flooring is one furnishing that needs to be protected, some homeowners choose to lift the carpet and remove it all together but you can use masking tape and dust sheets to keep your carpet or wooden flooring in prime condition. Mask the carpet where it meets the skirting board, after all the edge of your flooring is an area that just attracts paint and other spillages. Use a thick strap of masking tape for extra assurance and cover the rest of the area with a clean dust sheet. Keep a bucket of warm water to hand to wipe away any splashes from the woodwork, any spillages will be hard to remove once dry.

When it comes to protecting furniture, gather all movable items in the centre of your room and cover with polythene or dust sheet, you can then

easily manoeuvre around the room whilst painting or wallpapering. Some furnishings like kitchen fittings and fixtures can't be moved; use poly sheeting to cover these items and secure with masking tape for the ultimate protection. It also doesn't hurt to double up when using polythene sheeting; some products are thin and can become easily torn when decorating.

Don't forget to remove any curtains and their fixtures before you commence, also if light fittings cannot be removed, wrap these in polythene sheeting and secure with tape to protect them from rogue paint and wallpaper paste.





4 HOW TO STRIP WALLPAPER

You will need

- *Stanley knife*
- *Scraper*
- *Stripping solution (homemade or shop brought)*
- *Sponge*
- *Steamer or steam stripper*

Stripping wallpaper can be a pain and is a feat that has lead many of us to choose paint over wallpaper when overhauling our interiors. However, with the correct equipment and the right techniques you can tackle the most stubborn wall coverings. New wallpaper adheres to stripped surfaces much better so it pays to strip your walls properly.

The important thing to remember is to treat your wall with care when removing old wallpaper, stripping is the main cause of damaged walls. Whether you are opting for a traditional scraper or a steamer, the easiest method of removal is to firstly score the wallpaper with a Stanley or craft knife, this will allow the stripping solution or steam to soak into the wallpaper thoroughly. Be careful not to score too deeply as this may damage the wall underneath. Score the wallpaper in strips for easy removal.

Once scored, if you are not using a steamer, apply a stripping solution to loosen the wallpaper. The stripping solution can be made using hot water and washing up liquid. You can also use 1 part vinegar to 3 parts hot water or use fabric softener with hot water for a sweeter smelling solution. For more stubborn wall coverings, you can buy a ready-to-use stripping solution. Use a sponge to apply the solution to the wallpaper, section by section. Leave to soak for 10 to 15 minutes and see whether the wallpaper can be removed with a scraper. If it still won't budge, apply the stripping solution once more.

When stripping wallpaper it is important to note what type of wall you are removing it from. Drywall and plaster are the most common forms of interior wall material. Drywall is thinner than plaster so is more vulnerable to water damage so try not to over-soak the wallpaper with stripping solution.

DRYWALL VS. PLASTER

Plaster has been used as an interior wall material since the Roman Times, but as home building evolved so too has our choice of wall material. Even though plaster is much sturdier, many modern homes use drywall. As well as being cheaper, drywall gives builders the freedom to cut the wall material to shape and there is no need to wait for the surface to dry, so you can wallpaper or paint straight after installation. Drywall does have its downfalls; plaster is thicker and long lasting whilst drywall is prone to water damage and mould.

When using a scraper be careful not to dig in, the soaked wall below will be more vulnerable to damage when damp. A steamer is a great investment for easy wallpaper removal, they are affordable to buy or can be hired for a small cost from a local tool hire company. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to steam your walls effectively.



Remember: don't leave the plate of the steamer on the wall for too long, prolonged heat can leave the plaster or drywall underneath damaged.

TOP TIP!

When choosing your new wallpaper, why not try the dry-strippable varieties. When it comes to redecorating, this type of wall covering can be loosened and peeled away for easy stripping.

35 HOW TO REMOVE ARTEX

You will need

- *Dust sheets or polythene sheeting*
- *Protective gear (goggles, mask and hard hat)*
- *Chisel*
- *Hammer*
- *Steamer or steam stripper*

Please note you must consult a licensed asbestos specialist before removing artex.

Artex is essentially a homeowner's nightmare! The textured coating was all the rage in the 1970's and 1980's but has plighted generations since by being very difficult to remove and earlier artex can be health risk too.

Before the mid-1980's artex was made using a high level of white asbestos in order to strengthen the mixture but as many people now know asbestos is a dangerous substance that can cause respiratory problems if the harmful fibres and dust are inhaled. If you don't know whether your artex coating was applied before the mid-eighties, you must get it tested by a local asbestos specialist. If it is found to be made with asbestos, your artex should be removed by a licensed contractor, who will dispose of the harmful material correctly.

If the test for asbestos comes back negative and you are particularly brave, then you could choose to remove the textured coating yourself. Removing

artex is a very messy job so be sure to cover every inch of your room with dust sheets or polythene, also ensure that you are protected by putting on goggles, a dust mask and hard hat. Make sure the room is well ventilated too. Use a chisel and hammer to remove the artex or if the coating is not too textured, you can remove it with a steam stripper.

Artex can make interiors look and feel dated and many homeowners just put up with it for a hassle-free existence. There are other alternatives to having it removed completely, many contractors recommend having the artex skimmed or caulked over. Once dry, you can then decorate as normal.





6

HOW TO STRIP PAINT

You will need

- *Dust or polythene sheet*
- *Goggles, gloves and protective overalls*
- *Chemical stripper or heat gun*
- *Scraper*
- *Curved scraper or steel wool*
- *Shavehook*
- *Old paintbrush*
- *White spirit or bucket of warm water*

When overhauling your decor, it's not just the walls that need attention, your woodwork needs to be prepared and painted to complete the look. When wallpapering your walls, you wouldn't dream of applying new wallpaper on top of your old covering, the same applies when painting woodwork like skirting boards, handrails, panelling or doors. Strip your woodwork, just as you'd strip your walls, for a perfect result.

Paint can be sanded away but the easiest and fastest method is to use a heat gun or chemical stripper. Before you begin however make sure you protect yourself and your surroundings. Cover flooring and furnishings with a dust sheet or polythene, and put on old clothes or protective overalls, goggles and gloves to protect yourself from the harsh chemical stripper. Also, work in a well-ventilated area by opening all windows and switching off your central heating.

If you're choosing the traditional chemical stripper method, consider which type of chemical stripper suits you. These strippers come in liquid, spray, brushable or aerosol form, so it's up to you which application method

you prefer. The most common form is the liquid stripper, pour this into a small container before application and dab onto the woodwork with an old paintbrush. The trick when using a chemical stripper and applying the solution for maximum absorption is to go with the grain, especially when it comes to removing paint from more ornate wooden features. It may help to have a damp cloth to hand to wipe away any spillages; the chemical can damage other furnishings and upholstery.

You then need to give the stripper time to react with the paint; the reaction time varies from product to product so please consult the manufacturer's instructions. After leaving the solution for the allotted time, test whether the paint comes away with a shavehook. The paint should come loose using gentle scraping, if the paint doesn't come away easily then leave the solution a little longer. Use a curved scraper or steel wool to remove paint from handrails, mouldings and staircase spindles. Please note that steel wool should not be used on oak woodwork, the metal creates black stains on oak so use a nylon pad instead.

After you have removed all the paint from your woodwork, apply warm water or white spirit to the wood to neutralise. Leave to dry for 24 hours before you apply a fresh coat of paint.

When removing paint or varnish from larger areas, like doors and panelling, it may help to use a heat gun. These are relatively cheap to buy (the average price is around £20) and are available from any good DIY store. Delicate areas however can be easily damaged by the prolonged heat from the heat gun. Hold the gun a couple of inches away from the wood and scrap as you go from side to side. For a flawless result, use a shavehook to get into the nooks and crannies where paint loves to congregate.

ARE YOU UP AGAINST LEAD-BASED PAINT?

Lead-based paint isn't used today but was particularly popular before the 1960's, so if you have an older home, chances are you're going to come across a lead-based alternative. Lead-based paint has to be treated a little differently – buy a home testing kit and see whether your wood work is covered using lead-based paint. If it is then use the chemical stripping method to remove, not a heat gun.

7 HOW TO MIX PAINT



You will need

- *Range of paints in same finish (also known as 'mixers')*
- *White paint (again in same finish as mixers)*

In a world where everyone has to be different, your interior should be no exception. Creating a custom interior is a wonderful idea but not as easy as many people think...

Before you go crazy and mix every colour you can get your hands on, buy some tester pots of paint, most DIY stores offer a full range of paints in these smaller quantities. When choosing your paints, make sure you choose paints that have the same finish, i.e. matte, silk, emulsion or gloss. Also, if you have no clue of what colours you want to mix, refer to the colour theory, which consists of primary and secondary colours. Primary colours, like red, yellow and blue, can be combined to form a secondary colour.

The key to mixing paint and finding a colour that suits your taste is to experiment! Many budding decorators choose to throw the colour theory out of the window and just go for it. However, don't throw caution to the wind completely; try to stick to mixing 2 to 3 colours or you may risk creating an unrefined custom colour.

If you do find that the colour you have created is too dark, have some white paint to hand (again of the same finish as the paints you are mixing) and add some to the mixture to lighten the tone. It's important that throughout your experimentation phase you keep track of what colours you have mixed with what and how much of each colour you used to create your personalised shade.

Make up a few custom colours that you like before you test them out.

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