



PAINTING CABINETRY

Chalk Paint decorative paint by Annie Sloan is a good choice for painting timber cabinetry or cabinets finished with melamine or laminate. When keeping the steps simple — prep, paint, wax, and cure — Chalk Paint™ produces a quality finish that you will be proud of for years to come.

Practice your finish first on a small piece of furniture to ensure that you are comfortable with your technique.

Remember that **hand-painted cabinet finishes do not have to be perfect**. Chalk Paint™ is meant to give character and interest to cabinetry rather than a perfectly smooth 'factory-like' finish.

The **simplest way to paint cabinetry** is to paint them in place. Chalk Paint™ does an excellent job on the actual cabinets, and it can also be used to paint the hardware.

If you decide to remove the doors and drawer facings for painting, use this simple **marking system** to ensure that every component is returned to its original position:

- Make a schematic drawing, assigning a unique identifying number to each door and drawer location.
- Take the doors and drawer facings off and remove the hinges and pulls. Use painters' tape to mark the back of each component with its corresponding location number. On drawer facings indicate which edge is the top. Each hinge or pull and its corresponding screws should be placed in a plastic bag and marked with its location (i.e., 'hinge for door 8, top location').
- If you are painting the interiors of the cabinetry, remove all shelves and support clips and mark each location accordingly.

Good preparation and a clean surface are critical to painting a finish that you will enjoy for years to come. When painting with Chalk Paint™, preparing your surface is easy. Most times just a good cleaning will do, but there will be times when an extra step or two may be required. Use the following information to guide you in preparing your cabinets:

Preparing new or raw timber cabinets:

- Lightly sand the cabinets with fine grit sandpaper to smooth any rough spots or edges.
- Fill any holes, cracks, or gouges with filler or spackling, let dry, and sand smooth. Seal your repairs with clear shellac.
- Seal knot holes or open timber grain with one or two coats of clear shellac to block any tannin from bleeding up through your new paint layers.

Preparing previously finished cabinets:

- Smooth any layers of thick uneven paint or varnish with medium grit sandpaper.
- Ensure that the cabinets are clean and free of any surface debris. Any heavy waxy, greasy, or oily residues should be wiped away first with a soft cloth moistened with mineral turpentine. Use an eco-TSP substitute or grease-cutting cleaner and warm water and scrub the surface using a Scotch Brite or other mild abrasive pad. Use a soft brush to work into open grains. Rinse thoroughly with warm water and leave to dry.
- Fill any holes with filler or spackling, let dry, and sand smooth. Seal any repairs, including areas that may have been touched up with a stain pen, with clear shellac.
- Seal timbers that have open grain with one or two coats of clear shellac to prevent any tannin in the grain from bleeding up through your new paint layers.

Preparing laminate or melamine cabinets:

- Ensure that the cabinets are clean and free of any surface debris. Any heavy waxy, greasy, or oily residues should be wiped away first with a soft cloth moistened with mineral turpentine. Use an eco-TSP substitute or grease-cutting cleaner and warm water and scrub the surface with a Scotch Brite or other mild abrasive pad. Rinse thoroughly with warm water and leave to dry.
- Sand the cabinets thoroughly with fine grit sandpaper to break the surface tension. Do not skip this very critical step.
- Apply one very thin coat of Chalk Paint™ (diluted with approximately 10% water to help achieve a thin coating) and leave to dry for 48 hours.

Paints of any kind do not bond to a thermofoil finish. Often used for making kitchen cabinet doors and drawer facings, this commonly available synthetic material is a thin, tight, heat-sealed plastic wrap used to mold over an MDF substrate. Thermofoil cabinet doors can be a solid colour or imitation timber grain. It is

available in a range of textures and sheen levels, the most popular choice being solid white with a matt sheen. A thermofoil finish should never be painted. However, on older one-piece styles, it can be removed for painting purposes. Heat first with a hair dryer, and then, starting on one edge, slowly lift or pull the thermofoil finish away, exposing the underlying engineered core. Then follow the steps above for preparing new or raw timber cabinets.

Apply enough coats of paint for good coverage, allowing each coat to dry completely before applying the next. After each coat has dried, inspect the surface for any loose bristles stuck in the paint or any unsightly accumulation of paint along edges and in corners. Remove these imperfections carefully with fine grit sandpaper and apply another coat of paint.

When painting a traditional 5-piece cabinet door, begin by painting the center panel. Then paint the outer rails and stiles, beginning on the outside edge and working your way in towards the center panel to avoid a heavy build up of paint on inside edges and corners.

Seal your newly painted cabinets with **two or three coats of Soft Wax** for protection and a beautiful mellow look. Soft Wax is easy to apply and makes a good bond to the paint for durability. Remember that any protective coating can be susceptible to scratches, stains and watermarks. When these occurrences happen to a wax coating, they are quickly and easily fixed with just a bit more wax rubbed into the marked area.

Allow your new finish to cure. Curing, a chemical process that takes significantly longer than drying, is what strengthens your finish and gives it its durability. This process will take 5 to 21 days. You can use your newly finished cabinets while they are curing; however, treat them gently and with respect. Wipe up spills immediately, and avoid objects that would scratch or otherwise damage the finish, any excess moisture, and harsh cleaners and abrasive pads. A little bit of care and patience during the curing process will reward your customers with a finish they will enjoy for years to come.

Cabinets painted with Chalk Paint™ and finished with Soft Wax are **easily maintained** by wiping the surface with a soft cloth and mild soap and water to clean, and refreshing with a light application of wax when needed.