

ALLOWANCE OF DRYING TIME

Interior Latex Paint

Time to be allowed for latex paint to dry and “cure” following application will depend on the nature of performance required. While an applied paint may be truly dry to touch after a matter of minutes, waiting time will vary depending on the aspect of performance being considered, and on other factors.

A. Re-coat Time:

Generally, the next coat of paint should not be applied for at least two hours following application of the previous coat. Factors that will result in needing longer dry times include

- Conditions that retard drying: high humidity, low temperature
- Application of the paint in a very heavy coat
- Use of heavily tinted paints (> about 8 fl. oz. of colorant per gallon)

Problem that can arise from too short a dry time before second coating are:

- Blistering, wrinkling or lifting
- Uneven sheen

B. Time Before Cleaning

Normally, at least two weeks should be allowed for an interior latex paint, following application, before attempting to clean the surface. Some manufacturers will require thirty days. Factors involved include:

- Gloss level of the paint: higher gloss paints have more co-solvent to evaporate, and rely on getting maximum hardness from the binder, and so require longer drying than do flat paints
- Cleaning with a wet sponge is less demanding than with a brush and detergent

Problems that can arise from too short a dry before cleaning the paint:

- Paint is abraded off; blistering may occur
- Variation in sheen (burnishing) and in color (crocking) can occur

C. Application of Masking Tape or Painter’s Tape

Thirty days should be allowed before applying masking tape to a newly applied paint. Otherwise when removed, the tape may pull up the paint. (Tape should be removed as soon as practical, and not be left on for an extended time.) An extended dry time as compared to that for second coating and for cleaning, is required because:

- The paint must attain maximum adhesion to its substrate
- The surface of the paint should have minimum residual co-solvent that can increase bonding to the adhesive of the tape