



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 brighten your whole kitchen by painting your wood or veneer cabinets a fresh color. We recommend the EZ-Kare line to paint because cabinets get used a lot and EZ-Kare is durable enough to withstand everyday use.

The easiest way to do this project is to leave the inside of the cabinets alone. The inside is only seen when the cabinet is open so it isn't as important. Also, if you paint the inside of the cabinet you would have to take everything out that is in 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 door handles, hinges and knobs using a screwdriver. If your cabinets use magnetic closures, take them off as well. Some doors have inside hinges that aren't on the face of the cabinet, in this case it would be acceptable to leave them on. Put newspaper on the countertops and on the floor to protect them from the paint.

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 working on the doors hold them open with the tip of your finger. When you have used the roller as much as you can, go back with the 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. Although, there are now water-based primers that work just as well, plus they don't smell as much. Check with our store's Paint Pro for advice.

Step 4 – 9 on back

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Step 4. Prime & Paint Hinges (Optional)

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

Step 5. Cleanup

Clean the brush using paint thinner. Throw away the roller tray liner and the sleeve.

Step 6. Paint First Coat

Paint the cabinet with the first coat of paint. Follow the same pattern that you used for priming the cabinet. Let the paint 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 in the first coat of paint using the fine-grit sandpaper. Be careful not to take off the paint you just put on. 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 the roller. Reuse your old roller unless it hardened overnight. After you have finished applying the final coat you are finished. The surface should dry for 24 hours before reattaching the doors but be careful for a couple of weeks since it can still scratch.

Step 9. Final Cleanup

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

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