

# TIPS FOR spray-painting

before | during | after



## before

- **What you need:** item to paint, primer (spray), paint (spray), protective cloth to put on the ground, stuff to protect parts of the item you don't want sprayed, disposable rubber gloves.
- **Spray with purpose.** Look at your item in the spot where it's going to be and determine the best color for that item in that location.
- **Best spray paint:** Rust-Oleum Painter's Touch, "Ultra Cover coverage" found at Home Depot for about \$3.50/can. Try amazon.com too. Several colors to choose from. The caps are pretty accurate of the actual color.
- **Surfaces.** This spray paint is ideal for indoor and outdoor items -- wood, metal, wicker and more. Even if an item is slick, using a primer and a top coat will help that paint stay put.
- **Effective time use.** Consider spraying several things at once.
- **Protect the ground.** A painter's cloth is great. Plastic may be a problem because the item may stick to plastic once sprayed with wet, sticky paint.
- **Plan for timing:** In the summer you're better off painting early in the morning so the paint doesn't "bake" ... and neither do you!
- **Clean item first.** Use a damp cloth to wipe it down; something that won't leave lint, etc.
- **Paint only what you want to paint.** Remove or protect any pieces or parts of the item that should not be sprayed.
- **Clothing.** Be sure to wear clothes you don't care about or turn them inside out.
- **Don't go overboard.** You may find yourself slightly obsessed with painting once you get started. Have fun! Paint lots of things (within reason). **But** I don't recommend painting heirloom items. Some things are meant to keep in their original form.
- **Get out the camera.** Take before & after pictures for fun. You'll love looking back on the progress.

## during

- **Wear disposable rubber gloves.** And protect your feet too. It can get messy.
- **Paint outside.** Only outside. Resist any temptations to spray something inside. **Don't do it.** :)
- **Ideal conditions:** Definitely not windy, and not **too** hot & sunny. But you for sure need enough light to see what you're doing. It's sooo easy to miss the missed spots.
- **Spray paint travels.** Be aware that the spray paint really can spray far. It's true. Make sure you're not accidentally spraying things you don't want to spray. Including your children.
- **Use primer.** You just should.
- **Technique.** Follow the directions and use quick back & forth movement. Don't hold the can too close to your item. That will result in dripping and streaks. You don't want that.
- **Get underneath.** Get that can angle for the underneath parts of the item. Or start with the item upside down to get all the nooks and crannies underneath first ... and then flip it over.
- **Top coat.** Especially for items that will be handled, do a clear top coat. If you're distressing, you can wait until after the distressing is done. Wipe clean again. And then spray that top coat.

## after

- **Allow to dry.** Leave it alone all day or all night or for 24 hours. Be patient. It will be sitting on your shelf in no time. You don't want any accidental paint transferring going onto your furniture.
- **Consider distressing.** There are a few ways to do this. Wipe away as you go (good luck!) or wait until it's completely dry and do some sanding or metallic leafing or staining, etc.
- **Top coat.** Did I already mention this? It's a lovely finishing touch for your item.
- **Uh oh.** Don't love that color on that item for that spot after all? It's okay! Spray it again.
- **Be on the lookout.** When you're out and about and you come across some bargain shopping, have "spray-painting glasses" on. You can find really super deals on household items that are really cool (great shape or texture) but the color is all wrong. Remember: You can spray it!

DISCLAIMER | These tidbits are not based on any professional knowledge or resources. I'm totally amateur with spray-painting. But through my experience with lots and lots of spray-painting this past year (yep -- I got hooked in a big, big way) ... these thoughts & tips are based on what has worked for me and what has *not* worked for me. [Becky Higgins 2010](#)