



### CHOOSE THE RIGHT PAINT

Latex (water-based) paint is suitable for most projects. Unlike oil-based paint, it cleans up with water and is non-flammable. It also contains smaller amounts of toxic chemicals.

Oil-based paint is generally used for undercoats and primers and for special applications, such as floors and marine surfaces. It must be cleaned up with turpentine or mineral spirits.



### TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Paint often looks different on a large surface and under natural or incandescent light than it does on a paint chip in the store. It pays to buy a quart of your color choice and try it out before you purchase the full amount you will need for your project.



### BUY THE RIGHT AMOUNT

You will save money and waste less paint by calculating the amount you will need beforehand. Use a paint calculator for a more accurate estimate.



### PROPERLY DISPOSE OF CANS

If there is a small amount of paint left in the can, use it for touch-ups or small projects, or use it up on a board. Remove the lid from the can and let any remaining paint dry out. Throw the empty can away with your household trash.



### KEEP LEFTOVER PAINT FRESH

Leftover paint will stay fresh longer if you hammer the lid with a mallet so there is a tight seal and store it in a cool, dry place away from extreme temperatures. (Be sure it is out of reach of children and pets.) Write the date it was opened, the color, brand, type of paint and the room it is for on the lid.



### USE UP LEFTOVERS

You can use up leftover paint on small projects, combine it with other colors to make a larger quantity for use as a base coat, or, if you have an ample amount of a lighter color, take it back to the retailer and have it re-tinted.



### GIVE AWAY WHAT YOU CAN'T USE

If you have a large amount of leftover paint there may be someone who can use it, such as:

- \*church groups or other organizations or
  - \*friends & neighbors.
- You can also advertise it on the Mariposa Freecycle website at no cost:



<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MariposaFreecycle/>



### AS A LAST RESORT...

If you must dispose of leftover paint, do not throw it in the Landfill. First determine whether or not it is latex or oil-based. If it is latex and there is less than 1/2-inch in the can, you can let it air dry and then throw it in with your household waste. (It is illegal to dispose of flowing liquids in the Landfill.)

If there is more than 1/2-inch of latex paint, mix it with some clay-based kitty litter or cement and let it solidify. After it hardens, it can be disposed of with your household trash. Leave the lid off so that it can be easily identified as a solid. If the label has come off and you are unsure whether it is latex or oil-based, treat it as oil-based. (See back for more information.)



### PROPERLY DISPOSE OF OIL-BASED (ALKYD) PAINT

Oil-based paints, paint thinners, mineral spirits and solvents are flammable and give off dangerous vapors called volatile organic compounds (VOCs). They are considered a hazardous waste and must be brought to the Mariposa Landfill or the Don Pedro Transfer Station during an HHW collection event. Appointments are required. Events are posted on the website and announced in the local media.

### REUSE PAINT THINNER, TURPENTINE, & MINERAL OIL



After using turpentine or brush cleaner, put it in a sealed container and leave it in a cool, safe place away from children and pets until the paint particles have settled to the bottom. Pour the clear liquid into a clean, empty container that has a lid.

Air-dry the paint residue in a well-ventilated area. When it has dried completely, dispose of the container with the lid removed with your household trash.



### REMEMBER...

...NEVER POUR WATER USED FOR PAINT CLEAN-UP IN A STORM DRAINAGE DITCH, ON THE GROUND OR IN YOUR GARBAGE.

...NEVER PUT OIL-BASED PAINT PRODUCTS DOWN THE DRAIN.

...DRY LATEX PAINT IN CANS BEFORE DISPOSING OF THEM WITH YOUR HOUSEHOLD TRASH.

...CALL US IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS.



Mariposa County  
Department of  
Public Works  
Solid Waste & Recycling  
Division

[www.mariposacounty.org/solidwaste](http://www.mariposacounty.org/solidwaste)  
**209-966-5165**

Funded by a grant from the  
Department of Resources  
Recycling and Recovery  
(CalRecycle)



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# BE PAINT WISE

According to the U.S. EPA, enough paint is left over in the U.S. each year to cover 909 square miles, equivalent to about 2/3 of Mariposa County.

*You can save money and reduce the amount of paint you throw away by following a few simple steps.*