



# WALL PAINT PROJECT

## PROJECT ADVICE: *PAINTING AN INTERIOR STAIRWELL*

The first consideration when planning to paint an interior stairwell is safety. The height of your stairwell will determine how you approach the job and what equipment you need.

For painting you will need a cutting in brush to paint wall corners and where the walls meet the skirting board and ceilings, plus a brush for any woodwork you need to paint. You can get extendable rollers to make painting ceilings and high sections of walls a lot easier. In many cases an extendable roller means you won't need a ladder for painting – but you will for cutting in.

### Ladders

If you can safely reach the top of walls and ceilings by standing on a step ladder or platform ladder then the job becomes simpler. You will need to be careful not to overreach when painting as this can unbalance the ladder and lead to a fall; this is where platform ladders being more stable, are the safer option. We would recommend a ladder buddy to stand at the bottom of a step ladder or tall ladder to ensure it is stable and the painter is safe.

For higher stairwells you can use telescopic extendable ladders that can be adjusted independently so that one side sits on a stair with the other on a stair 3 to 4 below. You can hire these to save a costly purchase.

The higher and grander the stairwell the more complicated and costly the job as you may require a scaffolding tower or professionally installed scaffolding. If this is the case hiring a professional decorator is the way to go!

### PREPARATION

1. If you're painting over an old paint coating, you will need to sand back any loose and flaky sections of the coating and fill cracks with a flexible filler such as caulk or a ready mixed filler. Make sure it's one that's easy to overpaint with a water-based paint and that dries quickly so you're not waiting around for ages. Once dry, use fine sandpaper to sand back to a smooth flat surface
2. Clean the walls with soapy water and leave to dry thoroughly. For stubborn stains and greasy residue use a stronger cleaning product such as sugar soap to remove
3. If you're painting fresh plaster, once it is fully dried you will need to apply a mist coat, which is watered down wall paint
4. Cover flooring with old newspaper, cardboard or a decorator's dust sheet to protect from drips and spills. Be careful that floor coverings aren't loose or they will become a slip or trip hazard and that they're not too thin so paint will just soak straight through. Mask off areas that you want to protect from paint such as painted walls or door frames with a low tack masking tape, and mask light switches and sockets or unscrew to gently ease away from the wall so you can easily paint behind

### PAINTING

1. This is a job that you don't want to do very often so invest in a high-performance wall paint that will last for years, such as Thorndown's Wall Paint which is a durable eco water-based paint with VOC free architectural grade colour pigments and a beautiful flat matt finish. It performs very well in scrub tests so will stand up to being banged and cleaned
2. Choose a paint colour that you will want to live with for a long time. Whites, off-whites and creams will provide additional light in stairwells which can be quite dark, but you can be bold and brave by choosing a darker colour that will provide drama and elegance to the space, applying to a feature wall or the entire space.



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#### NICE CANS

For your convenience, our tins have been designed with a wider top for easy painting, and more air space above the paint level for easy mixing.

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### PAINTING cont.

The only rule when choosing paint colours is to consider the colours and décor of the rooms that the stairwell leads into so it doesn't jar and clash. Playing around with samples will help make sure that the colours you're looking at work well within the space and lighting conditions, and to make sure that the colour you choose is one you love!

Stairwells usually provide you with plenty of opportunity to introduce atmospheric lighting and artwork on the walls. Wooden bannisters and railings are the perfect place to use a wood paint in a contrasting colour so if you have selected a pale off-white for the walls, try going for a darker or enriching colour on the woodwork.

3. Cut in first around all borders with ceilings, adjoining walls, corners, and skirting boards. Use a high quality synthetic paint brush that is fairly wide and aim at a cutting in band of 4 to 6 inches wide so that a roller can easily meet it and run into it without hitting the ceiling. Feather down from the edge of the cutting in band so that it makes the transition between the cutting in and rolled paint smooth and less visible.

4. Apply paint starting at the highest point first and working down, painting up and next to fresh wet paint so you don't get streaks at joins.

If you're painting with a roller then ideally, for a professional finish, you should use a laying off brush to finish each coat, although this may not be possible in a stairwell. A laying off brush has a thinner bundle of bristles with finely-tipped ends, designed to be used dry (with no paint loaded on) to feather the paint so no application marks are visible.

You can get some good tutorials online of feathering techniques but the simple idea is to run the brush lightly over the fresh paint in all directions, horizontally, vertically & diagonally, so that the paint is perfectly smoothed out on the surface.

Always make sure that your last strokes are going vertically so it's all in the same direction.

Pop the laying off brush into a pot of water in-between coats to keep paint from drying on the bristles and to ensure it glides over the next paint coating. Just have a cloth handy to dry off the bristles before you use it again so it's not laden with water.

5. Leave paint to dry for 1-2 hours before applying a second coat

6. With Thorndown paints, two coats is all you need for a rich, full coating. On lighter colours such as white or light creams a third coat can increase the intensity and solidity of the colour coating. When applying the second coat it can be harder to see where you have painted and where you need to paint next so work methodically and add more lights if you need so you can see the wet fresh paint easier. To protect the first coat from ladders leaning against and marking it you can pop socks on the tops. This will reduce the grip though making a ladder buddy even more essential to make sure you don't wobble or slip

7. With water-based paints you can wash your utensils with water using a spot of detergent if need be. Seal your paint tin lid firmly and store paint somewhere that it won't freeze. If you clean paint off the outer rim of the lid it will seal better and you won't get paint sticking and sealing it shut. Our wall paint has a high solid content so it's especially useful to do this and if your paint tin rim is covered in paint too, then clean that off with some kitchen roll or a paint cloth. The paint will then last a couple of years, or more, for maintenance and touch-ups

8. If you need to paint your woodwork or metal radiators Thorndown Wall Paint adheres really well to these too so you can use it throughout your home, or you can use our satin Wood Paint and our Stain Blocking Primer if required



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