

How to Clean Up After You Paint

Cleaning up after you finish painting may be the least favorite job for any painter, but it's a very important step. If you remove all the paint from knives, scrapers, and brushes when you're done, they will not only be ready to use the next time you need them, but they will last longer.

1. First, scrape or otherwise remove any leftover paint from your tools and brushes.
2. Wash your paint trays and brushes with warm, soapy water in a sink or a bucket. A wire brush is handy to clean the bristles.
3. Rinse your brushes in warm water to remove the soap. Repeat until the water is clear and all the soap is removed.
4. If you've been using oil-based paints, clean your brushes with paint thinners, then rinse with warm, soapy water.
5. Let your brushes and tools dry completely, then store them either by hanging them up so that nothing touches the bristles, or by laying them on a clean flat surface.

TIP: Massage a little bit of hair conditioner into natural bristles to help preserve your brushes.

For best results, *ALWAYS READ THE PAINT CAN LABEL*. Professionals read the paint can labels to get the paint manufacturers' most up-to-date information and instructions on the use of each specific paint. Every paint is different, and the labels provide important information, such as the average coverage area per gallon, drying times, number of coats needed, and surface preparation requirements. The labels also give specific safety information that should be carefully adhered to.