

How to Paint Cabinets for New Doors

You'll Need:

- Cabinet-Grade Paint
- 3-4" Foam Roller
- 1-1.5" Brush
- Small Paint Tray
- Putty Knife
- Wood Putty
- Sharp Utility Knife
- Painters Tape
- 120-180 Grit Sandpaper
- Sanding Block
- Plastic or Drop Cloth
- Scrap Wood or Doors (for paint testing)
- Painters Rags and Water
- Hammer
- Screw Gun w/ Assorted Drive and Drill Bits
- Pry Bar
- Nail Set
- Simple Green Degreaser

Bonus Items:

(optional, will help speed up the process)

- Electric Sander
- Shop-Vac
- Bondo for filling large voids (i.e. if your old cabinets used double demountable hinges)
- Fan for drying freshly washed cabinets
- TSP, or similar surface cleaner

Remove Old Doors

Remove all doors, trim, and moulding. Remove any remaining nails, or hammer them below the surface.

Clean + Degrease

Clean and degrease areas where excessive dirt, water, or oil can build up to make sanding easier. Typically, you'll want to check areas around sinks, cutting boards, above the stove and/or microwave, and where trash cans are stored.

Sand

After all surfaces are dry, sand the cabinet surfaces you are painting to a dull or hazy finish. This will help with paint adhesion.

PRO TIP:

You do NOT need to sand through any existing finish if it is solid and not peeling or chipping.

Make Repairs

Use wood putty and a putty knife to fill in any holes, cracks, and indentations in your cabinets. When the wood putty is dry, sand until areas are smooth and level. Vacuum or brush out the inside of the cabinets to remove any dust. Use a damp rag to wipe down all surfaces.

This is a good time to double-check your prepped areas to make sure you haven't missed any repairs. Check above drawers as knives tend to leave behind damage in these areas.

PRO TIP:

If you don't want to see the woodgrain through the paint, you can fill the grain by applying a thin layer of spackling paste with a wide putty knife. Make sure you sand and clean the surface again before painting.

Paint with Trim Brush

Before you begin, use painter's tape to mask off all areas that shouldn't get painted. Don't worry about painting the interior of your cabinet. Many new cabinets today have a different color interior and it won't be as noticeable once your items are back in the cabinet.

Pour a small amount of paint in the paint tray and use a trim brush to paint any areas that are hard to cover with a roller, including edges of the cabinets that meet walls, appliances, under counters, floors, and inside corners of the face frame.

Lightly paint any areas where moulding has been removed (these areas typically have never had paint or wood stain) and areas where you made extensive repairs.

Paint 1st Coat with Roller

Practice First! On a piece of scrap wood or old door use your roller and practice applying even coats of paint.

Start with a fresh roller of paint. When the roller is less saturated, roll narrow areas – this will prevent drips of paint. Keep the roller loaded with paint when painting large flat areas such as ends of cabinets or sides of a pantry. Use light pressure when rolling to prevent lines or microbubbles.

Dry, Sand, + Apply 2nd Coat

Follow the paint manufacturer's instructions for drying time.

Once completely dry, first check for areas that may need any additional wood filler or leveling. Then, use a sanding sponge to lightly smooth out the first coat of paint. Make sure to use a damp rag to wipe up any sanding dust.

Cure + Remove Tape

Allow the paint to cure a few days before pulling masking tape or putting up doors to reduce the chances of damaging your freshly painted masterpiece. Unlike wall paint that dries in hours, cabinet and trim paint cure to a hard durable finish over a longer period.

Repeat same paint process as first coat using a trim brush first then the roller.

PRO TIP:

When removing the masking tape, keep a sharp knife handy to cut along areas that may have a heavy build-up of paint to prevent tearing off paint or damage to walls.

Install New Fronts

Once paint is completely dry, continue the Refacing process by installing the new Front + Center Doors and Drawer Fronts!