

PAINT HAS NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD!

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF PAINT FINISHES

By LORRA RIVERS

FAUX FINISH: A paint finish or process that involves the manipulation of paint or stains with a variety of tools used to replicate the original material.

DECORATIVE PAINTING: A paint finish or process that involves the manipulation of paint with a variety of tools used to create dramatic and artistic surface effects.

These two terms are often used synonymously with faux finishing being the more recognized term. Regardless of the term used, the end result is typically the same, beautiful walls that create a presence or ambience for a room.

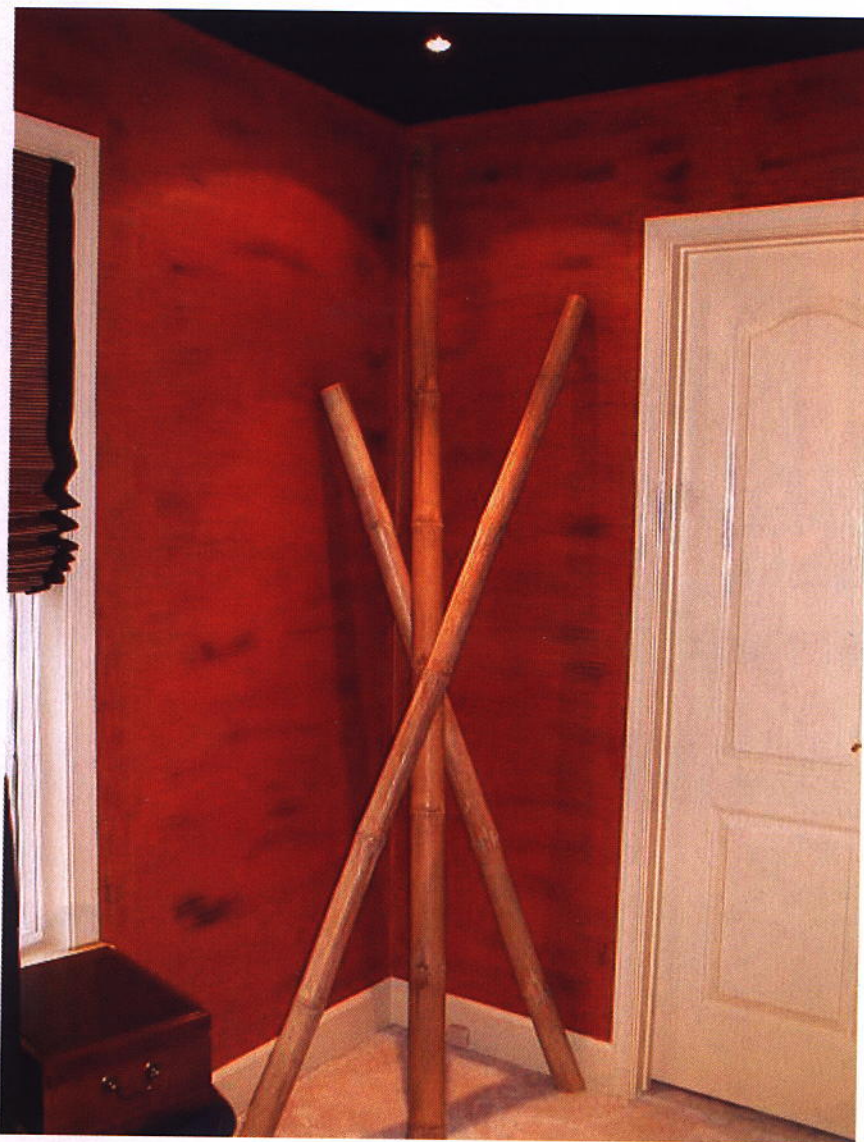
In addition to the furnishings and accessories that contribute to the character of a room, walls saturated with color provide the finishing touch and atmosphere. Colors can be reminiscent of nature's wonders, jewels of the Nile or a rainbow spectrum. Further enhancement of these walls with pattern and/or texture, will make the room pop with theatrical drama or soft elegance, the choice is yours. And let's not forget the ceiling, for it is the crowning jewel of a room and deserves the same special attention.

Decorative/faux painting is not only for wall surfaces. That wonderful flea market furniture find can have new life breathed into it with a fresh coat of paint and a crackle finish applied. Floors painted in checkerboard patterns or stenciled with motifs to replicate custom inlaid wood are also achievable with paint. And as

was previously mentioned, ceilings do not have to remain white. With the proper use of color and/or pattern, a painted ceiling will not necessarily make a room recede. It has the potential of becoming an illusion of draped fabric, a beautiful blue sky with clouds or a Michelangelo-inspired masterpiece!

Although wallpaper is still a staple in the wall covering industry, decorative/faux

the best of installations, seams eventually open up. And perish the thought of growing tired of the look, for there is no greater chore than removing old wallpaper. Enter the world of decorative painting. Seams are a thing of the past, for it is a paint finish. The durability issue is resolved because the walls are base coated with scrubbable paint sheens such as eggshell, satin or semi-gloss. Over time, if the paint finish is no



finishes have been gaining steady ground for many years. Wallpaper has the appeal of providing beautiful colors and patterns in a format that has a "user friendly" application. Furthermore, in many instances it is scrubbable, making it desirable for use in high traffic areas. The downside to this material is that in

longer desirable, simply paint over it. The "user friendly" aspect of decorative painting is such that certain finishes are achievable by even a novice with a degree of patience (see featured "how-to" paint technique). Artistic talent helps, but is not a prerequisite. Admittedly, there are paint techniques

RUBBING

Step 1: Base coat walls to be finished, with two coats of latex paint (eggshell, satin or semi-gloss; flat paint is not recommended because of its porosity). Allow paint to dry for two days.

Note: This technique is especially appealing for imperfect walls because its pattern does a great job in camouflaging the imperfections.

Step 2: Using painter's tape, mask off the ceiling, baseboards, trim and any adjacent walls that will not receive the paint technique.

Step 3: Mix a ratio of 1:1 latex paint and latex glaze in a container. The consistency needs to be such that when the glaze is applied to the wall, enough time is allowed to move the paint glaze until the desired effect is achieved.

Note: Glaze is a translucent paint medium utilized to extend the drying time of the paint so that enough working time is given to achieve the paint effect.

Glaze does not affect the intensity of the color, rather it alters the translucency or opaqueness.

Step 4: With a small chip brush, apply the glaze in a crosshatch pattern over approximately a 2' x 2' area. With a bunched up rag, go back over the same area spreading the paint out in a circular rubbing motion being sure to allow some of the base color to show through. Continue to the next section feathering or fading the edges so that each section blends into the next

without demarcation lines. Continue until all wall surfaces are complete. For ease of operation, this technique works best with two people, one applying and the other rubbing the glaze.

Note: There are two types of rubbing, on and off. The technique described above is rubbing-off, whereas the glaze is applied to the wall with a brush and then rubbed. In rubbing-on, a small amount of glaze is applied directly to

the rag and simply rubbed onto the wall surface. The resultant color will be more intense with rubbing-off due to the fact that more glaze is being applied to the wall.



that require a degree of skill, a working knowledge of artistic tools and supplies and an abundance of patience. This is when the services of a decorative/faux painter may need to be called upon.

There are many different types of techniques used in decorative painting. Some examples with descriptions are listed below.

● **Sponging**- One of the easiest and fastest methods involving the use of a variety of sponges, the most common being the sea sponge, to apply paint glaze to a surface. The result is a finely textured or a large flecked effect, depending on the sponge used and the manner of application.

● **Ragging**- technique typically involving the use of a crumpled rag to apply a paint glaze to a surface producing a crushed velvet or soft suede effect. Such materials as plastic, cheesecloth or chamois can also be used producing very dramatic effects.







● **Rubbing**- technique involving the rubbing of a paint glaze on a surface typically with a rag producing swirled clouds of color. (Featured "how-to" technique)

● **Dragging**- technique involving dragging a brush through wet paint glaze producing fine striations. This finish can also produce a linen, silk shantung or grass cloth effect, depending on the direction of the dragging and the tools used.

Other examples include stippling, stenciling, rubber-stamping, striping, color washing, tissue paper, torn paper, and combing. Any combination of the

aforementioned techniques can be used producing very dramatic effects. Each finish has the ability of taking on various patterns or textures depending on the tool used. The sky is truly the limit, with one's degree of creativity or willingness to expand their horizons the only hindrance.

Likewise, there are many different types of faux finishes. Such techniques as marbling, wood graining, crackling, pickling, distressing, venetian plastering and gilding to name a few, all lend themselves to producing beautiful replicas. Objects such as time-worn antique furniture, nature's beautiful stones and wood, or exqui-

site metal patinas are all achievable with faux finishes.

And now for the featured "how-to" technique of rubbing, but remember, patience is a virtue, and with it, this particular effect will give those tired walls a new jolt. The world of decorative/faux painting is gaining in popularity at a rapid pace. The artistic touch that it lends to a space is exceptional and unique.

An opportunity to creatively express one's signature style is now an exciting possibility. Being open to something "out of the norm" or "different" could result in a masterpiece of a finish that will make everyone who sees it give their stamp of approval with sounds of oohs and aahs and will make you simply smile!

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