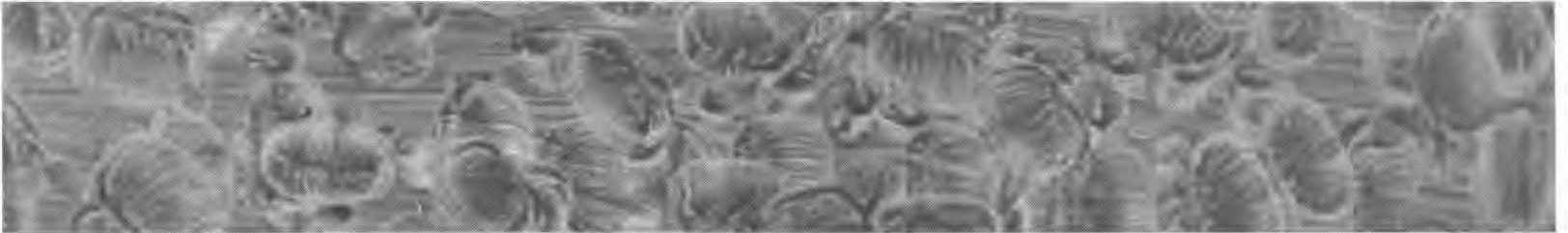


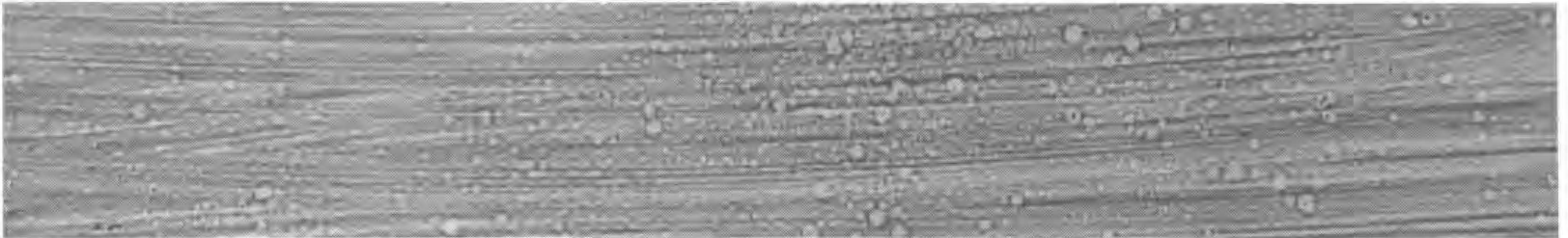
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# PAINTS AND SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR FURNITURE

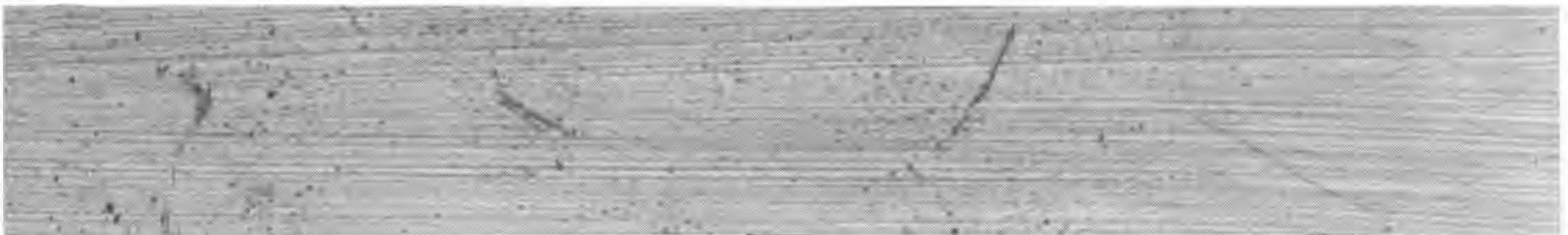
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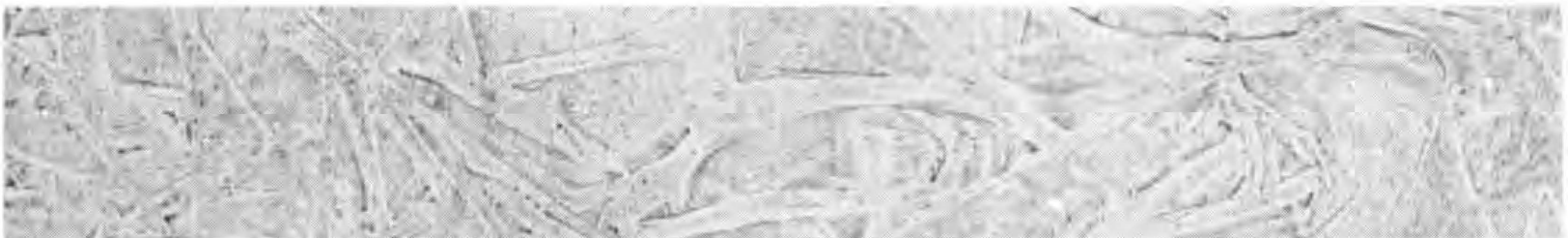
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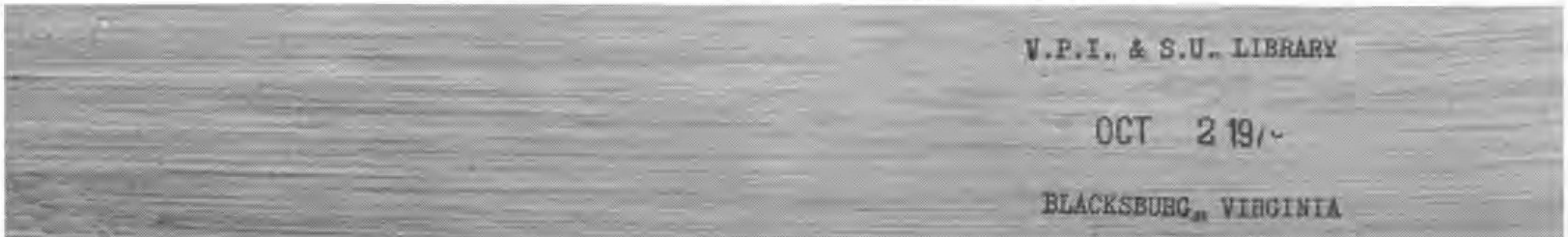
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# Paints and Special Effects for Furniture

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Paints provide an unlimited range of opaque colors with which you can brighten old and new furniture, match dissimilar pieces, or cover unattractive wood grains. And, by glazing and antiquing over paint, you can create an endless variety of exciting and imaginative effects.

There are several types of paint that may be applied to furniture. Always buy a good quality paint—bargains seldom live up to their promises.

- Enamel paints (essentially, pigmented varnishes) are available in high gloss, semigloss, and flat finishes. Semigloss enamel is generally most desirable for use on furniture.
- Water-soluble paints are quick drying, easy to apply, and give excellent, durable results.
- For glazing, antiquing, and other effects, a wide variety of antiquing kits are available at hardware, paint, and department stores.

## PREPARING THE SURFACE

All surfaces—finished or unfinished—should be sanded before paint is applied. A sanded surface gives paint “grip” or staying power and helps ensure a smooth paint finish.

If the piece is old and its finish is severely damaged (badly blistered, chipped, or peeled), the old finish should be entirely removed. Follow this step-by-step method to prepare the surface for painting:

1. Remove all hardware. Replace it after painting.
2. Be sure the surface is free of grime and all traces of wax. Use a commercial wax remover. Dry the surface with a soft cloth.
3. If the old paint or clear finish is slightly chipped or peeling, scrape off all loose paint or varnish with a putty knife or a dull-bladed pocketknife. Smooth the edges of the scraped areas with abrasive paper (grade 1/0).
4. If there are any holes, cracks, or dents in the surface, fill them with wood dough. Let the dough dry thoroughly before sanding.
5. Following the grain of the wood, sand the entire surface as smooth as possible with abrasive paper (grade 2/0 or 3/0).

A shellac sealer should be applied over stained or bare wood after the surface has been sanded. A sealer coat helps ensure uniform absorption of the paint, and prevents stains, and resins inherent in many woods, from showing, or bleeding through, and discoloring the paint. A sealer coat is not necessary when the surface is uniformly covered with an old clear finish—which must be in good condition—because the finish acts as a sealer. When the sealer is dry, the surface must be smoothed again before the paint is applied.

Prepare the sealer by diluting (with its own solvent) the same type of clear finish you plan to use after the piece is stained. If you plan to use varnish, mix 1 part of varnish with 1 part of turpentine; if you plan to use shellac, mix 1 part of shellac with 8 parts of denatured alcohol. Brush a light coat of the sealer over the entire surface. Allow about 15 minutes for the sealer to penetrate; then, wipe off the excess with a dry cloth. When surface is thoroughly dry, rub it gently with fine steel wool (grade 2/0 or finer); then, dust with a clean cloth.

## PREPARING THE PAINT

Stir all paint thoroughly before use. If you are blending colors, they must be mixed very well or you will start working with one tone and finish with another. If you are using the remainder of an old can of paint, foreign particles, and congealed skin which forms on the surface of the paint, must be removed by straining paint through cheesecloth or an old nylon stocking. Stir the paint after straining.

Most manufacturers produce paint in a wide range of colors; however, if you do not find the color you want, manufacturers' color charts (available wherever paints are sold) often suggest variations that can be achieved by mixing two or more standard colors together or by adding measured amounts of pure pigment to a standard paint.

The earth colors—so called because of their derivation from clays—contain a neutral hue and a small amount of color pigment.

Following is a list of the earth colors:

- Raw umber—neutral brown
- Burnt umber—deep brown-orange
- Raw sienna—neutral light brown-red

- Burnt sienna—deep brown-red
- French yellow—ocher neutral yellow

### APPLYING THE PAINT

To apply paint, follow this step-by-step method, allowing for any specific instructions on the can of paint you are using:

1. If possible, rotate the piece so that the surface upon which you are working is always horizontal.
2. Clean the entire surface with a lint-free cloth to be certain the surface is free of dust.
3. Using a clean brush generously laden with paint, brush across the surface using long, smooth strokes following the grain of the wood. Without redipping the brush, stroke across the grain. Then, with a nearly dry brush, repeat the long, even strokes following the grain. (In this manner, you will achieve uniform coverage and prevent runs and bulging edges of congealed paint.)
4. If additional coats of paint are desired, let the surface dry, and sand it lightly between coats.

To achieve a satin sheen, use two or more thin coats of enamel, and allow ample time for each coat to dry. Sand the surface lightly between coats; then, after the final coat has dried thoroughly, smooth the entire surface with a pumice rub. Use a soft cloth, and 1 tablespoon of fine pumice powder (grade FFF) in 4 tablespoons of oil. (Use light lubricating oil such as No. 10 motor oil; do not use linseed oil.)

### DECORATIVE MOTIFS

Should you decide to decorate a piece (either by stenciling, free-hand painting, or appliqueing old prints or decals), the time to apply the decoration is after the final coat of paint has dried thoroughly (but before a glaze is applied, if an antique look is desired).

### A PICKLED FINISH

This pleasing, smoky-wood effect has the appearance of a clear finish, but is achieved with thick, opaque—usually white—paint which is rubbed into the grain and open pores in the wood. A pickled finish is especially effective for making large, heavy pieces of furniture appear less somber. Depending upon the type of wood you are finishing, pickled finishes bear such names as pickled pine, limed oak, etc.

A pickled finish should be applied to bare wood. If the piece is already finished, it must be

stripped. If the piece is stained, it should be bleached if a natural light tone is desired. If the wood is open grained, apply a thin sealer coat before you apply the finish.

Following is the equipment you will need: white (or color of your choice) enamel paint (one pint is sufficient for a large chest), steel wool (grade 1/0 or 2/0), clean cloths, and a clear finish.

To pickle a furniture piece, follow these step-by-step instructions:

1. Be sure the piece is clean, free of wax, and sanded smooth.
2. Apply the paint—unthinned—with a folded cloth, rubbing the paint into the surface against the grain of the wood. (Apply a small amount of paint at a time, only enough to fill grain and open pores in the wood.) Let the paint dry thoroughly.
3. Rub steel wool (grade 1/0) against the grain of the wood until all the paint is removed from the surface, leaving only the grain and pores in the wood filled with paint.
4. Rub lightly with steel wool (grade 2/0), following the grain, to smooth the surface.
5. Apply a clear finish.

### A DISTRESSED FINISH

This seasoned-paint effect is achieved by using two contrasting colors of paint. Apply the first coat of paint and let it dry thoroughly; then, spray or brush on a light coat of the second color, and let it dry. Sand through the top coat with an abrasive paper (grade 1/0 or 2/0) wherever normal wear would occur—on corners, edges, high points of carvings, turnings, etc.—and create occasional streaks on the rest of the piece. Wherever the sanding wears through both layers of paint, and in cracks, crevices, and scratches, brush on raw umber oil color directly from the tube. Before it dries, wipe the excess away with a clean cloth lightly dipped in turpentine. (Substitute burnt sienna for the raw umber if the look of a red undercoat is desired).

**NOTE:** Do not paint good wood furniture. Refinish it in a natural wood color.

### PREPARING THE GLAZE

A glaze is a colored, transparent coating usually applied over a painted surface to produce an antique or special effect. Prior to the advent of antiquing kits, glazes were prepared by mixing glazing solutions which were applied by several techniques to produce a variety of effects. The

methods of producing these special effects are the same whether you use a kit or your own home-made glaze. In spite of the added expense, the kits simplify the work by packaging the right amount of paint (to use as an undercoat) and glaze for the specific job. Both the paint and the glaze are available in a large variety of colors. If you use a kit, follow the package instructions carefully.

To prepare your own glaze, mix together: 1 teaspoon of raw umber oil color, 1 tablespoon of varnish, and 3 tablespoons of turpentine. Add a pinch of lamp black oil color to glaze dark-colored painted surfaces. Substitute raw sienna for the umber if you want a warmer, reddish wood tone, or substitute another oil pigment for a colorful variation.

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

For a simple antique effect, apply a thin, uniform coat of glaze over the painted surface. (In kits, the glaze is usually referred to as the toner; the paint is referred to as the undercoat. Follow the kit directions to apply the paint.) Wait a few minutes for the glaze to set—until it is tacky, but not dry. Then wipe or rub the surface with cheesecloth, a sponge, steel wool, a hard brush—anything that might produce an interesting texture. This is where you can use imagination: wipe in swirls, strokes, pats, daubs. For the simple antique effect, wipe in long, even strokes over large areas with cheesecloth. If you are not certain of the effect you wish to achieve, test the glaze on a sample piece of painted wood before you actually apply it to the furniture piece. When the glaze is thoroughly dry, you should apply a protective coat of clear finish.

To produce trick effects using a glaze, see below, or follow the instructions enclosed in the kit.

#### Wood-Grain Effect

To simulate natural wood grain, use a dry bristle brush (about 2 inches). Place a small amount of glaze on a smooth surface, such as glass or tinfoil, and lightly touch the glaze with just the tip of the brush. Apply the glaze to the surface in long, even strokes, following the normal grain of the wood. Occasionally, make irregular patterns that simulate real wood grain. (Have a piece of wood with an attractive grain, or a photograph of one handy.) This is a most realistic effect when covering paints in variants of wood colors; however, other colors will produce light, decorative effects.

#### Spattered Effect

Use a very stiff toothbrush to simulate a spattered or water-weathered look. After applying the glaze, wipe evenly with cheesecloth, but leave a slightly heavier glaze than usual on the surface. Before the glaze dries, dip the toothbrush in mineral spirits or turpentine; shake off excess; then, stroke the bristles with your fingernail, holding the brush several inches above the surface. This causes a fine spray to spatter over the surface and form tiny circles as it bleeds into the damp glaze. Let the spattered circles dry before repeating the spray. Spattering can be effectively applied only on a horizontal surface.

#### Tortoise-Shell Effect

To achieve a tortoise-shell effect, apply a heavy coat of glaze. Tap the wet surface lightly with your fingertips. Keep your fingers spread at random widths, while shifting your hand to different angles. Continuing tapping in this manner over the entire surface until desired effect is achieved.

#### Marbled Effect

To achieve a marbled effect, the undercoat should be the base color of the marble you wish to simulate; the glaze should be marble's contrasting color. Effective color combinations are white over black, black over green, raw umber over pink. Crumple a large piece of plastic food wrap, shake it out slightly and lay it over the surface while the glaze is still wet. Press on the crumpled plastic with your palms; however, do not flatten the plastic too much. The air bubbles trapped under the plastic help create the texture. Pick the plastic straight up to avoid brushing it along the wet surface. Additional texture can be added, if desired, by spattering the surface lightly.

### SOME WOODS USED IN FURNITURE AND FACTS TO KNOW

<u>WOOD</u>	<u>HARDNESS</u>	<u>GRAIN</u>	<u>FILLER</u>
Ash	hard	open	Yes
Birch	hard	close	no
Cherry	hard	close	no
Fir	soft	close	no
Mahogany	hard	open	yes
Maple	hard	close	no
Oak	hard	open	yes
Pine	soft	close	no
Poplar	hard	close	no
Walnut	hard	open	yes



## REFERENCES

Information is from *House Beautiful*, *House and Garden*, and *Better Homes and Gardens* Magazines.

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