

Painting is ideal for many more surfaces than just walls and ceilings and provides a simple way to give a tired room a brand new look without breaking your bank account. I applied paint to dingy linoleum flooring, damaged countertops, uninteresting cabinets and hideous floral tiles in my bathroom—all situations in which I knew I had absolutely nothing to lose. Not only is it fun to do but, by using the correct products, it can last for years.

Here are a few tips:

Proper preparation is the key to attractive and durable results. Tiles, panelling, countertops and linoleum floors all need a light sanding, followed by a thorough wash down with TSP and a complete rinse.

If you are painting over wood, plastic or laminate panelling, fill all holes with wood filler before applying your primer.

For surfaces that will be used regularly, select a primer specially designed for hard-to-stick-to surfaces and use alkyd or oil based paint for your finishing coats. Apply at least two coats and, if you like, you can top it off with a varnish for added protection.

Use only floor paint on flooring. It is available in all colours, takes time to fully cure, but holds up well in the long run.

Melamine paint is slightly thicker than regular paints making it tough, resilient and well suited for use on cabinets, countertops and tiling. Again, it takes time to cure, but will stand up well to normal usage.

Always work in a well-ventilated area when applying these paints and be patient between applications; allow 6 – 12 hours for each coat to dry properly and approximately a week for the finished results to cure.

When I originally tackled my uninspiring bathroom it was supposed to be a stop-gap measure—that was ten years ago and I still love it.