

One Green Thing



An Eco-Painting Primer

Any coat of color can transform a room, but these options are easy on the eyes and the planet. *By Amanda MacMillan*

IF THE SENSE of accomplishment you get from painting a room is followed quickly by the need to open a window, consider this: That noxious smell comes from volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, which the paint can continue to emit for months. Some of these chemicals, like formaldehyde and benzene, have been linked to respiratory problems and even cancer, and others damage the ozone layer.

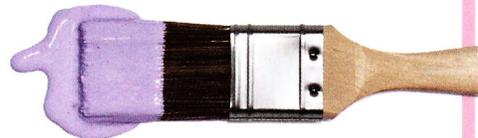
While low-VOC paints have been around

for years, early formulas were often hard to spread and less durable than conventional ones. Even when brands claimed to be zero VOC, some colorants bumped up levels significantly. "Finding true zero-VOC paints is now easier than ever," says Annie B. Bond, author of *Better Basics for the Home*. "A number of companies offer milk- and clay-based formulas that work beautifully." Next time you reach for a brush, go a little greener by choosing one of these eco-friendly products. **Q**

May We Help You?

Best plant-derived

Unearthed Vega Paint. With a vegetable-based binder, this paint leaves an even smaller eco-footprint than milk-based varieties, which can require large herds of cattle. (From \$39 per gallon; unearthedpaints.com)



Best for drawing

ECOS Chalkboard Paint. This organic line, made with clay- and mineral-based binders and without chemical solvents, comes in more than 100 colors. (From \$82 per gallon; ecospaints.net)



Best for kitchens and bathrooms

Mythic Paint Black Label. Resistant to moisture and mildew without the use of toxic fungicides, this self-priming latex formula works well in high-humidity rooms. (\$60 per gallon; mythicpaint.com)



Best for outdoors

Sherwin-Williams Emerald Exterior Acrylic Latex Paint. Eco-paints for outside use are scarce, but this option is self-priming and comes with a lifetime guarantee. (\$71 per gallon; sherwin-williams.com for stores)



Best color selection

Benjamin Moore Natura. The first paint to earn the Green Good Housekeeping Seal, this latex interior line offers more than 3,300 colors. (\$57 per gallon; benjaminmoore.com)



Best for kids

Anna Sova Baby Paint. The subtle scent of this milk-based paint comes from ingredients like dairy casein (found in yogurt). (\$69 per gallon; annasova.com)

