

ASK TOM

By Tom Mrakas

A quick word of thanks to the Aurora Chamber of Commerce for putting on a great Home Show! I hope everyone enjoyed it and came away with some great ideas and plans for their homes. I know I did.

I was asked recently by a client what sheen is the proper sheen for a particular room (in this case a powder room). Given that paints come in a number of sheens including flat, eggshell, satin, pearl, semi-gloss and high gloss, it is a common question that many homeowners have. My answer is the appropriate sheen depends on what you are painting and, of course, the look you hope to achieve. But there are a few general tips that may prove helpful.

In almost all cases, it is best to use paint with a flat sheen for all ceilings. Why? Well, flat paint on a ceiling hides a multitude of sins. Quite simply, the more sheen you have, the more imperfections will show and if you have a lot of natural light coming in, it will show it all on the ceiling.

Yes, flat paint is difficult to keep clean, and shows every mark and scratch, but that's why it's great for the ceiling. No one touches the ceiling so you won't have dirty little finger and hand prints.

For your walls you are best to use any one of the various sheens of eggshell and/or satin. This is due to the fact that walls in your hallways and family rooms are subject to quite a bit more wear and tear and thus you need a little more durability in your paint. The eggshell or satin sheens can be cleaned fairly regularly by wiping with just a damp cloth and will not affect the paint.

Lastly, we have trims and doors. These are the painted surfaces in your house where it seems like every hand touches them and they get the most abuse, so you want to use something that will hold up ? such as a semi-gloss for its durability. Or, if you don't want that much of a gloss, then you can use a pearl and get the best of both worlds. A pearl sheen has a little less shine and a little more of the hiding power of the flat.

Now, some people (like my mom) like to have all the walls in semi-gloss.

It makes it much easier to keep everything very clean. With all the walls semi-gloss, they can be wiped down every day. But, any imperfection on the surface will also be very visible, so it's a bit of a tradeoff.

At the other extreme is using flat paint on the walls (which is what most builders use for its hide ability). But once you move in, those nice flat walls will show literally every finger print that touches it, and won't hold up to a cleaning with a damp cloth.

That is why sheen is a personal preference

So, when it comes time to paint, consider what you are painting. Is it a high traffic area, or is it a ceiling? What do you expect out of your paint finish? Do you want to be able to wipe it down occasionally or every day?

Think about what you are painting and what you expect of the surface.

Once you've decided on the sheen, then all you'll need to do is decide on the colour! But that's a whole other topic?

That's all for this week. Remember a good job, is a job well done!

If you have any questions you can always reach me at www.facebook.com/anastasisdesign or on twitter, @ADesign_build and email of course Anastasis@anastasisdesign.ca.