



Paint Your Walls. Protect Your Family: Tips on how to safely paint indoors

One of the quickest, cheapest and most dramatic ways to freshen up a room is paint. However, before you grab the rollers and get going, it's important to remember that paint and paint thinner can have extremely harmful effects on you and your family, especially when used indoors.

At UL, we know you want to keep your two most important investments – your family and home – safe. For more information about safe painting tips, visit your local home improvement or paint store.

When painting, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission recommend you take the following precautions to ensure a safe outcome:

- **Keep windows wide open.** For about two to three days after painting, weather permitting, keep windows open to avoid unwanted exposure to paint vapors (and to return to acceptable indoor air quality).
- **Use window-mounted box fans to exhaust vapors from the work area.** Make sure the fans are secured in the window and cannot fall out. If fans cannot be used, make sure that rooms being painted have adequate cross-ventilation.
- **Let your neighbors know.** Provide advance notice to neighbors in adjacent units if you live in an apartment or condominium that you're starting a painting project.
- **Take frequent fresh air breaks while painting.** Leave painted areas if you experience eye watering, headaches, dizziness or breathing problems.
- **Try to schedule painting for dry periods in the fall or spring.** In the warmer months, windows can be more easily left open for ventilation.
- **Keep out of freshly painted rooms.** Keep young children and individuals with breathing problems from freshly painted rooms.

In addition to these safe painting tips, there are also new environmentally safe paints for your projects. Look for low- or no-VOC (volatile organic compound) paints that reduce exposure to fumes that cause headaches, nausea and respiratory problems. These paints are available at your local paint or hardware store. Be sure to check if the tint is also VOC-free as many tints are not.

Source: EPA/CPSC <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSC/PUBS/456.pdf>

