



## Selecting and properly using paint rollers

By JAMES AND MORRIS CAREY The Associated Press

Paint industry experts say that about 95 percent of do-it-yourself interior wall painting is done with a roller. Even a rank amateur can use a paint roller because they're simple to use, effective and fast.

But, even with the best and simplest of tools, there are things one should know.

According to Ed Majkrzak, technical director at True Value Paint Co., "Good paint alone won't do the trick."

Majkrzak says that a good applicator is equally important. Since the roller cover itself is the most important part of the paint-rolling system, it is important to focus on how to choose the best one, and then, how to properly use it.

The roller cover is a two-part contraption consisting of the core and the fabric covering. Majkrzak says that the core is the "foundation" of the roller cover and that the best type is made of phenolic-impregnated (resin-impregnated) craft paper.

The resultant core is a hard material that is resistant to paint solvents, and creates a tube that is nearly impossible for the average person to crush. Plastic, on the other hand, will soften in certain solvents, and a plastic core that is not perfectly round will "bump" on the surface resulting in an uneven distribution of paint.

Both water and solvents will soften the cheapest of the three cores — the plain-cardboard type. A plain-cardboard roller core will generally not hold up any longer than it takes to paint one room.

Top-quality rollers pick up and release more paint per fill and provide more uniform coverage with less effort. Inexpensive rollers tend to mat-down, reducing the amount of paint the roller will hold and requiring more frequent fillings.

The fabric covering also has much to do with the quality of a good roller cover. Unfortunately, all the commonly used fabrics are available in many grades, and, therefore, practically the only way to hope for good-quality material is to purchase top-of-the-line roller covers. Desired qualities in roller-cover fabric:

Ability to pick up paint.
 Ability to release the paint evenly on the surface.

• Ability to recover from compression. A fabric that mats down is no good.

• What surface finishes it can create (smooth, rough, orange-peel, etc.).

Tendency to not shed.

Keep the following in mind when selecting a roller cover:

■ For an ultra-smooth wall finish using enamel or semi-gloss paint, use a 1/4-inch mohair or a 1/4-inch all-purpose cover.

■ For brick or block use a 1-and-1/2-inch pile cover.

■ For flat finishes on walls and ceilings, use a 3/8th-inch to 1/2-inch pile cover.

It's essential to know how to fill

a roller and then how to properly distribute the paint on the wall. The roller pan serves two purposes: a place to soak the roller with paint and a place to roll off the excess to ensure that the paint is evenly distributed throughout the roller. Dip the roller in the paint well and roll it back and forth until it is completely covered with paint. Then roll the cover back and forth over the angled section of the pan until the paint is evenly distributed all around the roller.

A dripping roller is one that is overfilled. Bring the roller to the pan and roll it back and forth again until the paint no longer drips.

To apply the paint, use an "M" or "W" shape stroke on the wall. Then move the roller up and down to evenly spread the paint.



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