

Painting Your House to Sell - Tips for Picking the Right Colors

One of the easiest and least expensive things you can do to make your home attractive to potential buyers is to give your rooms a fresh coat of paint. If you have painted within the last couple of years, and the colors are fairly neutral, then you can probably get away with some touch-ups here and there.

On the other hand, if you have wallpaper or very vivid colors or haven't updated your color scheme in a while, you may want to think about replacing these with a new coat of paint. When you put your house on the market the goal is to make it as broadly appealing as possible, which is why real estate agents always tell you to go with a neutral color. That way, people notice your house and all of its great features, instead of being distracted by the paint color. But how do you pick the right neutral from among the thousands that are available? Here are some fail- safe options.

White vs. color: You might think that painting everything white is the safest way to go, but white is not the ideal neutral in most cases. White tends to be cold, harsh and not very inviting as a wall color. It does work well as a trim or woodwork color and makes a nice contrast to walls with more color. Some great whites for trim:

- Benjamin Moore *White Dove* (a warm white that's not too gray, not too yellow)
- Pratt & Lambert *Designer White* (clean & bright)
- Behr *Swiss Coffee* (taupe undertones- blends well with muted wall colors)

Warm vs. cool neutrals for walls: Even neutrals like beige or tan have either warm or cool undertones, which is a key consideration depending on which room they are being used for. Warmer colors stimulate the senses (and the appetite) so they are best used in the kitchen and the main "social" areas of the house. Cool colors like blues, greens and grays tend to soothe and relax. They work well in bedrooms and bathrooms.

Recommended warm neutrals:

- Benjamin Moore *Lenox Tan* (mid-tone neutral from the Pottery Barn collection)
- Benjamin Moore *Windham Cream* (a very subtle yellow that feels neutral and works with lots of colors)
- Restoration Hardware *Saffron* (a warm, buttery beige)

Recommended cool neutrals:

- Restoration Hardware *Cappuccino* (a cool taupe)
- Benjamin Moore *Classic Gray* (a creamy gray, fresh and airy)
- Benjamin Moore *Wethersfield Moss* (a darker sage-green)
- Benjamin Moore *Rosemary Sprig* (a touch lighter and yellower than *Wethersfield Moss*)
- Benjamin Moore *Wedgewood Gray* (a sophisticated medium tone gray blue)

