

# Hints For The Handy

## Prep School: A Guide For Do-It-Yourselfers

(NAPSA)—Most home builders will tell you that the foundation of a house helps determine the quality of a home. But did you know the same can be said for a home or deck's outside paint or finish?

The fact is, proper prepping is a vital first step in painting or staining the exterior of your home or in refinishing a deck. And if you're wondering if prep work pays off, consider this: Many homeowners skip the prep work when refinishing their wood surfaces, assuming it is too tedious, difficult and time-consuming, but don't realize this compromises the quality of the finish and creates more work down the road. A number of new premium wood prep products allow homeowners to prep with ease and efficiency, helping them achieve a beautiful, long-lasting finish.

Here's a closer look at proper wood-surface preparation:

### Strip It

If you need to clean and strip an exterior wood surface, try a product like Behr Premium Stain & Finish Stripper. Ideal for decks, siding, fences, shakes and shingles, it has been upgraded to remove all coatings, including 100 percent acrylic stains and finishes on both horizontal and vertical surfaces. Don't forget to wear protective clothing, goggles and acid-resistant gloves while working with a stain and finish stripper.

### Clean Up

Next, you need to clean the surface you plan to paint or stain.



**The right products can make it simple to prep a surface before you put on the perfect finish.**

Behr Premium Mildew Stain Remover is an enzyme-based, bleach-free interior/exterior cleaner that's designed for wood and composite decking as well as brick, stucco and vinyl/aluminum siding. It removes severe stains caused by mold, mildew, algae and fungus without whitening or damaging wood.

If you're looking to brighten and clean wood, you might try Behr Premium 2-IN-1 Wood Prep. It's an exterior cleaner formulated to clean, brighten and condition exterior wood surfaces prior to applying wood-toned finishes, paints or stains. It also removes light-to-medium mildew stains, rust and red clay stains.

### Finishing Tips

Of course, after the prep work comes the finish. Try these

tips for getting the type of finish you're looking for:

- You'll need rubber gloves, plastic drop cloths (to protect flowers and vegetation), goggles, a broom and garden hose with a spray nozzle for cleanup. Also, use a 3/8-inch-nap paint roller or stain pad with an arm extension and nylon/polyester paint brush.

- Pour stain or finish into a lined paint tray and apply to a small area at a time with a lamb's wool pad, roller or brush, being certain to maintain a wet edge on the surface.

- Always remove excess product and evenly distribute the finish by back-brushing on the surface during all application methods.

- Apply the product end-to-end or to entire board lengths to prevent lap marks from being left on the finished surface. This happens when the first coat's edge dries before the edge of the subsequent one and could result in an uneven film thickness.

- If possible, coat wood on all sides for optimum performance and always follow manufacturers' label instructions.

As a final tip, remember that it's important to maintain exterior surfaces throughout the year. Clean them as needed and keep them free of debris—that way you can maximize the durability and beauty of your wood.

For more information, visit [www.behr.com](http://www.behr.com). Behr products are available exclusively at The Home Depot.