New Wall Finishes

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New Wall Finishes

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A BEAUTIFUL WALL FINISH is one of the first essentials in making a room attractive and homelike. The suggestions in this circular will aid the homemaker in securing these results.

Calcimine

Water color is one of the oldest wall finishes known. It is quite generally used today because it is inexpensive, easily done, attractive and sanitary.

There are two kinds of calcimine. Cold water calcimine is used extensively, because it is easy to mix and saves time. It will rub off. Hot water calcimine must stand until cool before using. It is a jelly-like consistency when cold. It is then strained and used immediately. Calcimine requiring this preparation will not rub off.

The calcimines which are on the market are ready mixed. All they need is the addition of water. However, the directions on the package should be followed carefully because each manufacturer believes that there are certain rules that will produce the best results with his product. It is absolutely necessary that the right amount of water be used. To do a good piece of work only one coat is put on. There should be very few brush marks and no joinings on the finished wall. Before the work starts, the room should be cleared of all furnishings and well lighted, the walls prepared and the calcimine mixed.

The calcimine is put on the ceiling first. It is best to begin at the left hand corner of the room and work away from the light because the result can be seen better. The brush is dipped into the calcimine to a depth of two or three inches. It should carry all that is possible without scattering calcimine about the room. The calcimine is applied entirely across the ceiling in a strip about a foot wide. If a workman is very quick, a wider strip can be handled. The object is to cover the wall with a thick coat, and to avoid the appearance of joinings and a dry edge. If the strip is too wide, the edge will dry and it will be necessary to brush it lightly with clean water and a clean brush before going on; otherwise a line will appear. The workman returns to the side of the room from which he started and brushes on the second strip so as to lap the edges lightly and not leave a thicker line between the strips. Every inch must be covered evenly.

On the walls, work from the top down. As large a strip is done at one time as will insure wet edges. Mistakes on side walls are not as likely to occur because the heat is not as intense as at the ceiling: the space is more broken with openings and it is not as easy to detect a defect.

Usually, during calcimining, all doors and windows are closed because the drying may take place too rapidly. After the work is
finished, the room is opened to hasten the drying. If this takes place too slowly, the walls may appear spotted. If the atmosphere is damp, it may mean better results if heat is used to dry out the room.

To do first class work in calcimining it is necessary to have a good wall surface. Many defects are frequently found in new walls. There may be a difference in smoothness of surface; a rough sand or stucco will not be alike all over. The projections on a rough surface catch the calcimine and really make it easier to get a better surface. There may be spots in the plaster or hard glazed spots. The former absorb the calcimine and the latter hold it on the surface. The materials in the plaster and the mixing may be partly the cause of difference in surface. There may be "hot spots", places where there is quick lime, caused by improperly mixed plaster. The lime in these spots is very likely to destroy the color of the calcimine.

Calcimining is easy to do if everything is just right. But too often the wall must have special treatment. If a poor piece of work is done, the only way to remedy it is to determine the cause and correct it. This may mean the removal of the tint. The best practice is to size the walls with a coat of "suction varnish, gloss or hard oil." This should be thick enough to give a good gloss. The first two give better results with dry walls. A glue size is best with damp walls. The calcimine goes on as soon as the size is dry. If a wall is of "gloss-like" smoothness, a handful of dry plaster of Paris is added to a gallon of gloss oil. A ready prepared flat paint may be used successfully over a porous wall.

Cracks in Plaster.—Cut out the crack if necessary. Dampen the edge with glue size. Fill the crack in with plaster of Paris and sand mixed in glue size. Smooth the surface. Tint before the repair dries.

New Walls.—Make repairs. Then cover the wall with a thin coat of one of the following: flat paint, white shellac, varnish, gloss or hard oil. The last four are mixed with a small amount of plaster of Paris.

Removing Smoke Stains.—Cover the walls with fresh whitewash and then with a water color. The oil paints cannot be used because the oil is likely to form a soap with the alkali.

Testing a Greasy Wall.—Wash the wall with sal soda and water. Rinse with clear water. Cover with a thin coat of plaster of Paris mixed with tint. Calcimine when the wall is dry.

Old-tinted Wall.—Wash off the old calcimine with water. Repair the wall. Shellac the new plaster. Apply a thin coat of tint over the shellac. Sometimes a new coat of calcimine of the same color is put on over the old coat without any previous preparation. The old coat is very likely to be lifted off by the new. Unless the old coat was fairly clean, the dirt may spread over the surface and a very poor job result.

Tinting Over Old Paper.—The paper must not be loose. Size the walls with a mixture of one pound of alum and one-half pound glue to one gallon of water.

Treating Water Stain.—On a rough wall use plaster of Paris and glue mixed the same as for a tint. The wall is gone over a number of
times until the stain ceases to show through when dry. At least two coats can be put on in an hour. On a smooth wall, use one or more coats of white shellac followed by a wash of plaster of Paris and glue size or thin tint.

Preparing a Tint to Use Over Metal.—Add a small amount of glycerin to the tint.

Preventing Shellac Showing Through a Tint.—Allow the tint to stand twenty-four hours to permit the thorough evaporation of the alcohol.

Keeping Tint from Souring.—Add a small amount of carbolic acid, oil of cloves or oil of peppermint.

Renewing Sour Tint.—Destroy the odor with oil of peppermint. Add fresh glue.

Keeping a Tint Soft.—A handful of Irish Moss, bar of soap or ounce of glycerin to a gallon of tint.

Preserving Size.—Three ounces of pulverized borax to every gallon of size.

Stippling

Stippling is a process of pounding a finish coat so that a part of the paint is removed and the result gives a somewhat porous effect. The stippling coat may also be pounded on in an irregular pattern. Both methods are used with calcimine and paint. A stippling brush, wool

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Fig. 1.—Stippling a Wall with the Cut Surface of a Wool Sponge.
sponge, newspaper, cheesecloth, burlap or coarse ribbed underwear may be used to produce different designs.

A stippled wall is artistic. It is easy to do if a few simple rules are followed. The cost is less than for a coat of paint. It will cover a cracked surface. It is effective on an entire surface or in panels. There must be enough difference in color between the ground and stipple coats so that the latter will stand out. If the under coat is dark, the stipple coat is light. The undercoat must be opaque so as to cover the wall. The top coat may be opaque or transparent. A number of stipple coats may be used. However, one coat gives a very good effect. A fairly thin paint gives a fine pattern while a thicker paint gives a coarse pattern.

The Sponge.—A deep-sea wool sponge is the best to use. One that costs from seventy-five cents to a dollar will last a long time if used carefully. The sponge is wrung out with water and trimmed to a flat surface on one side. This can be done with a butcher knife. A new sponge will give a coarse effect; an old sponge a fine pattern.
Stippling a Calcimined Wall.—The first method requires two men to stipple as fast as one man can put on the tint. The process must be done evenly and quickly before the calcimine dries. It is not necessary to be careful about removing the brush marks. This is done in the stippling.

A second method of stippling calcimine is as follows: Apply the first coat to the walls, mixing the calcimine according to the direction on the package. The colors that are to be used for pattern effect are mixed in separate dishes but thinner than that used for the plain coat—about one pound of calcimine to a pint and a half of water. The sponge is dipped lightly in the color to be used and squeezed out so as not to carry too much calcimine at one time; otherwise the result will be a daub instead of a pattern. The calcimine is pounded out lightly on a piece of glass, tin or smooth board in order to give an even distribution of color over the surface of the sponge. After the first stipple coat has been given to the entire wall, a second coat may be applied in contrasting or harmonizing color.

Stippling a Painted Wall.—The wall is finished with two or three coats of paint depending upon the requirements of the company whose paint is being used. The stippling coat is mixed with a glazing liquid. When everything is ready, the paint is brushed onto a piece of board or galvanized iron. The paint is stirred each time before more paint is removed to the board. The flat side of the sponge is dipped lightly into the paint on the board. The wall is pounded firmly but not too lightly, the hand moving the sponge in a circular line rather than in straight line. The right hand stippled edge must always be irregular. Sections of the wall that are missed, and the corners, are finished with the tip of the sponge. If the sponge is applied too hard against the wall, the result will be a smear. The sponge is pulled from the wall straight. Clean the sponge often in gasoline and then wring out with water to open the sponge.

*Fig. 4.—Brushes for Calcimining and Painting Walls*
If too much paint has been put on in one spot, the sponge should be tried in another place on the wall. After it is freed of paint, the sponge can be used to pick up some of the extra paint. However, this is difficult to do. A better method is to paint over the heavier spots of paint, when dry, with the background cold. If it is impossible to do a good piece of work, the whole surface, if not too dry, should be washed off with benzine or gasoline and a new stipple coat applied. The fewer times it is necessary to go over the surface the better.

Another method for stippling a painted wall is to brush on the stipple coat and then lift off the paint in pattern effect.

**Tiffany Blend**

The Tiffany blend is a finish used on painted walls. The surface is prepared the same as for any finish. The last coat must be thoroughly dry. Practice and the right selection of colors will give a very beautiful effect. The following color combination may be used effectively: chrome yellow, rose lake and cobalt blue on a cream background.

The glazing liquid and the colors are prepared according to directions in separate containers. The amount of wall space to be covered at one time is carefully considered because the result should show no line where the work started or left off but an even soft blending of color over the entire surface. The section of the wall to be painted is covered with a glazing liquid. The colors are then brushed on in spots about fifteen inches apart. Different colors are placed together. Each color is worked out in an irregular shape with a wad of cloth or with the brush to six or twelve inches of the center. Care must be exercised not to cover too much space with each color. The idea is to eliminate all sharp edges between colors. However, the colors must not be brushed together so that they are greyed. Neither must the colors stand out in spots. As soon as the colors have been well blended, the surface is stippled.

**Stenciling**

1. A stencil should be in proportion to the room. Large stencils are used in public buildings. Small stencils are more appropriate for homes.
Rooms with high ceilings require a larger stencil than rooms with low ceilings.

2. Stencils are more adapted to the plain wall whether painted or calcimined.

3. Unless the ceiling is high, walls with stippled or tiffany finish will probably look better without a stencil. The colors used in the stencil must harmonize with the walls if a stencil is used with these wall finishes.

4. Bright colors are used more successfully in small stencils.

5. If the wall space is badly broken up with doors and windows, the finished room will probably look better without a stencil.

6. The amount of paint required to stencil a room is small. These paints can be purchased in different size tubes.

References

"Interior Wall Decoration" by F. N. Vanderwalker.

"Practical Painting and Paper Hanging in All Its Branches" by Charles L. Young.