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# Cabinet Painting

Kitchen and bathroom cabinet painting, refinishing, spray finishing, and cabinet-grade paint products

17 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

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## How do I achieve a glazed or antiqued finish on painted kitchen cabinets in my Fredericton home?

**A glazed or antiqued finish adds depth and character to painted kitchen cabinets by applying a translucent glaze over the base paint color, then selectively removing it to highlight details and create an aged appearance.** This technique works particularly well in Fredericton's older homes where it complements traditional Maritime architecture and existing wood trim details.

The process starts with properly painted cabinet doors and frames as your foundation. Your base coat should be completely cured — at least 7 days for latex paint, 14 days for oil-based or specialty cabinet paints like Benjamin Moore Advance. The base color is typically a light neutral (cream, off-white, soft gray, or sage green) that will show the glaze contrast effectively. **Never attempt glazing over fresh paint** — the solvents in glaze can soften uncured paint and cause lifting or streaking.

**Glaze Selection and Mixing** is crucial for achieving the right look. Commercial glazes like Faux Effects Aqua Glaze or Ralph Lauren Glaze Base provide the best working time and translucency. For a warm antique look, tint the clear glaze base with raw umber, burnt umber, or Van Dyke brown universal colorants. For cooler tones, use raw sienna or a touch of black. Start with very small amounts of colorant — you can always add more, but you can't take it back. Mix thoroughly and test on a hidden area or sample board first.

The application technique determines the final appearance. **Work one cabinet door at a time** to maintain control over the process. Apply the glaze with a high-quality brush, working it into all the recessed panel areas, corners, and details. Immediately begin the removal process using clean, lint-free rags or cheesecloth. **The key is selective removal** — leave more glaze in the recessed areas, corners, and detailed sections where natural aging would occur, while wiping most of it from the raised surfaces and door centers. Work quickly but deliberately — most glazes have a 10-15 minute open time before they become difficult to manipulate.

**New Brunswick's humidity affects glaze working time significantly.** During Fredericton's humid summer months (often 70-80% relative humidity), glazes stay workable longer, giving you more time to perfect the look. In winter's dry indoor conditions (below 30% humidity with forced-air heating), glazes set up much faster — work smaller sections and have your removal rags ready immediately. Consider using a glaze extender in very dry conditions to maintain workability.

**Technique variations** create different aged effects. For heavy antiquing, leave substantial glaze in all recessed areas and remove only from the high points. For subtle aging, apply glaze lightly and remove most of it, leaving just hints in the deepest recesses. **Dry brushing** with a nearly dry brush can create streaked, weathered effects. **Rag rolling** the glaze creates texture, while **combing** with a fine comb through wet glaze creates wood grain effects

over painted surfaces.

**Protection is essential** once you achieve the desired look. Allow the glaze to cure according to manufacturer specifications — typically 24-48 hours. Then apply a clear protective topcoat. For kitchen cabinets that will see daily use, choose a durable water-based polyurethane in satin or semi-gloss sheen. Apply thin, even coats with a high-quality synthetic brush or foam roller, maintaining wet edges to avoid lap marks. Two coats provide adequate protection for most kitchen use.

**Common mistakes to avoid** include working too large an area at once (glaze sets before you can manipulate it properly), using too much colorant (creates muddy, opaque coverage instead of translucent depth), and rushing the base coat cure time (causes glaze to lift or streak the underlying paint). Also avoid over-working the glaze — once you achieve the look you want, stop manipulating it.

**This is an advanced DIY technique** that requires practice and patience. The difference between professional and amateur glazed cabinets is often in the consistency and restraint of the application. Consider practicing on sample boards or less visible cabinet doors first. For a kitchen you'll see every day, many Fredericton homeowners find the investment in professional cabinet refinishing worthwhile — experienced painters can achieve consistent, restaurant-quality glazed finishes using spray application techniques and professional-grade materials.

Need help finding a professional painter experienced with specialty finishes? New Brunswick Painting can match you with contractors who specialize in cabinet refinishing and decorative techniques.

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Q2

## How do I paint the interior of cabinet boxes so the finish is as durable as the door fronts in NB?

**Painting cabinet boxes to match the durability of professionally finished doors requires the same high-quality materials and techniques used on the door fronts themselves.** The key is using cabinet-grade paint, proper surface preparation, and applying thin, even coats with the right tools.

### Surface Preparation is Critical

Start by removing all shelves, drawers, and hardware. Clean the interior surfaces thoroughly with TSP (trisodium phosphate) or a degreasing cleaner to remove any cooking oils, grease, or residue that has accumulated over time. In NB's humid summers, allow extra drying time after cleaning. Sand all surfaces lightly with 220-grit sandpaper to create adhesion — you're not trying to remove the existing finish, just roughing it up so the primer will stick. Vacuum out all dust and wipe down with a tack cloth.

If the existing finish is glossy laminate or previously painted with oil-based paint, use a bonding primer like Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 or Benjamin Moore Fresh Start. For raw wood or previously stained surfaces, use a high-quality acrylic primer. The primer step is absolutely essential — cabinet boxes see constant use, and without proper adhesion, your new paint will chip and peel within months.

### **Use Cabinet-Grade Paint**

Don't use regular wall paint inside cabinet boxes. Use the same high-quality cabinet paint as the doors — Benjamin Moore Advance, Sherwin-Williams ProClassic, or similar acrylic-alkyd hybrid paints. These cure to a harder, more durable finish that resists chips, scratches, and moisture. In NB, where many homes experience humidity swings between dry winter heating and humid summers, these paints also handle expansion and contraction better than standard wall paint.

### **Application Technique**

Use a high-quality synthetic brush (Purdy XL Elite or Wooster Ultra Pro) or a small foam roller with a 6mm/1/4-inch nap. Work in thin, even coats — thick coats will drip and sag on vertical surfaces and create an uneven texture. Paint all surfaces in the same direction, maintaining a wet edge to avoid lap marks.

For the smoothest finish, lightly sand between coats with 320-grit sandpaper once the first coat is fully cured (usually 4-6 hours in NB's typical indoor humidity). This removes any brush marks or imperfections and creates an ultra-smooth base for the final coat.

### **Timing and Curing**

Cabinet paint needs proper cure time to reach full hardness. While it may feel dry to the touch in 2-4 hours, full cure takes 7-14 days depending on temperature and humidity. During NB's humid summer months, extend cure times and use fans or dehumidifiers to speed the process. Don't reinstall shelves or load the cabinets until the paint has fully cured — premature use will leave permanent marks and dents.

### **When to Hire a Professional**

While painting cabinet boxes is more manageable than doors (no need to remove and lay flat), achieving a factory-smooth finish requires experience with brush technique and paint application. If your doors were professionally spray-finished, the difference between DIY brush-painted boxes and professional spray application will be noticeable. For kitchens where you want a flawless, uniform appearance, consider having the boxes professionally sprayed at the same time as the doors.

Need help finding a cabinet painting specialist? New Brunswick Painting can match you with professionals experienced in high-end cabinet refinishing throughout NB.

## Is it worth painting laundry room or mudroom cabinets in a Fredericton home or should I just replace them?

**Painting existing laundry room or mudroom cabinets is almost always worth it over replacement, especially in Fredericton homes where these utility cabinets are typically basic builder-grade but structurally sound.**

You'll save 60-80% compared to replacement while achieving a fresh, updated look that can last 8-12 years with proper preparation and quality paint.

### Evaluate Your Current Cabinets First

Most laundry and mudroom cabinets in Fredericton homes built after 1980 have solid wood frames with laminate or wood veneer doors — perfect candidates for painting. Check if the cabinet boxes are square, doors close properly, and hinges function smoothly. If the bones are good, painting makes financial sense. However, if you're dealing with particle board that's swelling from moisture exposure (common in older basements or poorly ventilated laundry rooms), or if doors are warped beyond adjustment, replacement might be necessary.

### The Painting Process for Utility Cabinets

Laundry and mudroom cabinets need **moisture-resistant paint** due to humidity from washers, dryers, and wet boots or coats. Start with thorough cleaning using TSP (trisodium phosphate) to remove detergent residue, fabric softener buildup, and general grime. Sand lightly with 220-grit paper to degloss the existing finish, then apply a high-quality bonding primer like Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 or Benjamin Moore Fresh Start. For the topcoat, use a durable semi-gloss or satin acrylic paint designed for trim and cabinets — Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic are excellent choices that cure to a hard, washable finish.

### Fredericton Climate Considerations

Fredericton's humidity swings — from winter heating dryness to summer mugginess — put stress on painted surfaces. In laundry rooms especially, steam from dryers and washing machines creates challenging conditions. Ensure good ventilation during and after painting, and consider adding an exhaust fan if your laundry room doesn't have one. The freeze-thaw cycles that affect exterior paint aren't a concern indoors, but temperature fluctuations in unheated mudrooms or basement laundry areas can affect paint adhesion if you're painting in winter.

### Cost Comparison

Painting laundry room cabinets typically costs **\$400-800** for an average setup (upper and lower cabinets with 8-12 doors), including materials and professional application. Replacement cabinets for the same space run **\$1,500-4,000** depending on quality and configuration, plus installation costs. Even factoring in repainting every 8-10 years, you'll save thousands over the cabinet's lifespan. For a utility space where function matters more than showroom

aesthetics, painting delivers excellent value.

### **When to Consider Replacement**

Replace rather than paint if your cabinets have significant structural issues, lack adequate storage for your needs, or if you're doing a complete laundry room renovation anyway. Also consider replacement if the existing layout is inefficient — adding a folding counter, better organization systems, or reconfiguring for a new washer/dryer setup might justify new cabinets.

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## Can I add a sheen coat or topcoat over painted kitchen cabinets in NB to make them easier to wipe clean?

**Yes, you can absolutely add a protective topcoat over painted kitchen cabinets to improve durability and cleanability,** but the success depends entirely on what type of paint is currently on your cabinets and how you prepare the surface.

**The best approach is to apply a water-based polyurethane topcoat** specifically designed for painted surfaces. Products like Varathane Triple Thick Polyurethane or General Finishes High Performance Water Base Top Coat are popular choices available at NB hardware stores. These create a hard, washable surface that can handle the daily abuse kitchen cabinets receive — grease splatters, steam, frequent cleaning, and constant handling.

**Surface preparation is critical for adhesion.** Even though your cabinets are already painted, you'll need to lightly sand the entire surface with 220-grit sandpaper to create "tooth" for the topcoat to grip. Clean thoroughly with TSP or a degreasing cleaner to remove any cooking residue, then wipe with a tack cloth. Kitchen cabinets accumulate an invisible film of grease and cooking vapours that will prevent proper adhesion if not removed.

**Choose the right sheen level** for your needs. Satin polyurethane provides good durability with a subtle sheen that hides minor imperfections. Semi-gloss offers maximum washability but will highlight any brush marks or surface flaws in the underlying paint. Given NB's humidity levels, especially in summer kitchens without air conditioning, water-based polyurethane is preferable to oil-based — it dries faster, has less odour, and won't yellow over time.

**Application technique matters significantly.** Use a high-quality synthetic brush or foam roller designed for water-based finishes. Work in thin, even coats and maintain a wet edge to avoid lap marks. Two thin coats will outperform one thick coat every time. Allow full cure time between coats — typically 4-6 hours in NB's humid conditions, longer in summer.

**When to hire a professional:** If your cabinets were painted with latex wall paint (rather than proper cabinet paint), or if the existing finish is already showing wear, adhesion, or colour issues, consider having them professionally resprayed instead. A professional can strip the old finish if necessary and apply a proper cabinet paint system with a catalyzed topcoat that will last 10+ years. For cabinets you look at every day, the difference between DIY brush application and professional spray finish is dramatic.

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## How do I paint bathroom vanity cabinets in a high-humidity New Brunswick bathroom so the finish lasts?

**Painting bathroom vanity cabinets requires moisture-resistant paint and meticulous surface preparation to handle New Brunswick's high humidity levels.** The key is using the right products and creating proper ventilation during and after the project.

### Surface Preparation is Critical

Start by removing all cabinet doors and drawers, then clean every surface with TSP (trisodium phosphate) to remove soap residue, toothpaste buildup, and body oils that accumulate in bathrooms. These contaminants prevent paint adhesion and will cause peeling within months if not properly removed. After cleaning, lightly sand all surfaces with 220-grit sandpaper to break the gloss on existing finishes — paint won't stick to shiny surfaces.

Fill any holes, dents, or scratches with wood filler, then sand smooth once dry. Wipe down all surfaces with a tack cloth to remove dust before priming. This prep work accounts for 70% of your final results, so don't rush it.

### Primer and Paint Selection

Use a high-quality bonding primer like Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 or Benjamin Moore Fresh Start — these primers stick to glossy surfaces and resist moisture penetration. For the topcoat, choose a **cabinet-grade acrylic paint** specifically designed for high-moisture areas. Benjamin Moore Advance and Sherwin-Williams ProClassic are popular choices among NB painters because they cure to a hard, washable finish that resists humidity damage.

Avoid regular wall paint on bathroom cabinets — it won't stand up to steam, splashing, and frequent cleaning. The extra \$20-30 per quart for cabinet paint prevents having to redo the project in two years.

### Managing New Brunswick's Humidity

NB bathrooms can reach 70-80% humidity during showers, which dramatically slows paint drying and can cause finish problems. Run a dehumidifier in the bathroom during painting to keep humidity below 50%. Open windows if weather permits, and use fans to circulate air. Paint drying time doubles in high humidity — what normally takes 4 hours might take 8 hours in a steamy NB bathroom.

### Application Technique

Remove doors and paint them flat on sawhorses for the smoothest finish. Use a high-quality synthetic brush or foam roller for even coverage, and apply thin coats rather than trying to cover in one heavy application. Sand lightly between coats with 320-grit sandpaper for a glass-smooth finish. Two thin coats always outperform one thick coat, especially in moisture-prone areas.

## When to Hire a Professional

Consider hiring a professional if you want a spray-finished look or if your vanity has intricate details and raised panels. Professional painters have spray equipment that creates a factory-smooth finish impossible to achieve with brushes and rollers. For a bathroom vanity you'll see every day, the \$400-800 professional cost often delivers noticeably better results than DIY brush application.

Need help finding a painting professional for your bathroom project? New Brunswick Painting can match you with experienced cabinet painters in your area who understand Maritime humidity challenges.

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Q6

## Can I paint my own kitchen cabinets or should I hire a professional painter in New Brunswick?

**You can paint your own kitchen cabinets, but the honest answer is that most DIY cabinet paint jobs look noticeably different from professional spray-finished work — and since kitchen cabinets are the most scrutinised surface in your home, the difference matters.** Whether DIY makes sense depends on your skill level, your tools, and how much you care about a factory-smooth finish.

The core challenge is that brushes and rollers leave texture — brush marks, roller stipple, and lap lines — that is very visible on flat cabinet doors in raking light. Professional painters spray cabinets with an HVLP or airless sprayer in a controlled environment, which produces a glass-smooth finish impossible to replicate with a brush.

**If you decide to DIY**, here is what produces the best possible result. Remove all cabinet doors, drawers, and hardware — paint every piece flat, never in place. Degrease everything thoroughly with TSP substitute. Sand with

120-grit, then 180-grit. Apply a bonding primer (oil-based or shellac-based products like Zinsser BIN work well). Use a **foam roller for the flat panels and a high-quality brush for the edges**. For the topcoat, use a cabinet-specific acrylic-alkyd hybrid paint like Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic (\$60-90/gallon). Apply two thin coats minimum, scuff lightly between coats with 220-grit. Allow full cure time before rehanging (at least 7 days).

**The most common DIY cabinet mistakes** are skipping the degreasing step, using standard wall paint, applying coats too thick, and rushing the cure time.

**The case for hiring a professional is strong for kitchens.** Professional cabinet painting in New Brunswick typically costs **\$2,500-6,000** for an average kitchen with 20-30 doors and frames. That price includes proper prep, spray application, a factory-smooth finish, and reassembly. When you factor in the cost of quality primer and paint, brushes, sandpaper, and 2-3 full weekends of your time — plus the risk of a finish you're unhappy with — the professional option is often the better value.

For a bathroom vanity with 2-4 doors, DIY is much more reasonable — the smaller scale means the prep is manageable and a good brush finish is achievable.

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## What is the best paint for kitchen cabinets in NB — Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic?

**Both Benjamin Moore Advance and Sherwin-Williams ProClassic are excellent cabinet paints, and either will give you a durable, beautiful finish on NB kitchen cabinets — the right choice often comes down to where you're buying and which applicator you're using.**

Benjamin Moore Advance is an acrylic-alkyd hybrid that levels exceptionally well, meaning brush marks almost completely disappear as it dries. It has a longer open time (it stays workable longer before skinning over), which is forgiving for both brush application and spray work. In a humid NB kitchen, that extended working time can actually be an advantage. It dries to a very hard, furniture-grade finish that resists nicks, grease, and daily wear. Advance is available through Benjamin Moore dealers in Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, and other NB cities — expect to pay 0-85 per litre for this product. One limitation: it can take up to 30 days to fully cure to full hardness, so treat freshly painted cabinets gently in the first month.

Sherwin-Williams ProClassic is a similarly positioned product — an acrylic-alkyd hybrid with excellent hardness, levelling, and durability. Many professional painters in NB favour ProClassic when spraying because it atomizes beautifully through an airless or HVLP sprayer, giving a factory-smooth finish. It's available through Sherwin-Williams stores in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, typically running 5-80 per litre. ProClassic also cures to a very hard surface and holds up well in the high-humidity environment of an NB kitchen where steam and temperature cycling can stress cabinet coatings over time.

**Practical tips for choosing between them:** If you're brushing and rolling (a DIY-friendly approach), Advance has a slight edge due to its superior self-levelling and longer open time. If your painter is spraying (the professional standard), ProClassic is a top pick. Both require a good bonding primer first — Advance Primer or All-Purpose Enamel Underbody for Benjamin Moore, or All Surface Enamel Primer or Extreme Bond Primer for Sherwin-Williams. Don't skip the primer — it's what makes the topcoat bond to previously finished wood or laminate surfaces.

For NB homeowners hiring a professional, ask your painter which product they're most experienced spraying — a skilled painter with their preferred product will always outperform a painter using an unfamiliar one. Both products are genuinely excellent, and the skill of the applicator matters more than which brand is on the can.

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Q8

## How long does it take to paint kitchen cabinets professionally in a Moncton home?

**A professional kitchen cabinet painting job in a typical Moncton home takes 3 to 5 days from start to finish, though the actual hands-on time spans just 2 to 3 days — the rest is drying and curing time between coats.**

The process breaks down like this: Day one is almost entirely prep work — removing all cabinet doors, drawer fronts, and hardware, cleaning every surface with a degreaser (kitchen cabinets accumulate invisible grease film that destroys paint adhesion), lightly sanding or scuff-sanding to break the existing finish, filling any dents or dings, and applying a quality bonding primer to all surfaces. For a typical Moncton kitchen with 20 to 30 doors and frames, this prep day is the hardest and most important part of the entire job.

Day two involves the first topcoat — usually sprayed in a controlled environment (painters often set up a temporary spray booth or work in a garage or basement for doors and drawer fronts). Box frames that can't be removed are sprayed or brushed in place with careful masking of the surrounding walls, countertops, and appliances. After the first coat, everything needs to dry fully before the second coat goes on — in NB's climate, that's typically 4 to 6 hours with good ventilation, longer in humid summer conditions.

Day three brings the second topcoat, final inspection, and touch-ups. After that, doors and hardware go back on. However, — and this is important for Moncton homeowners — cabinet paint like Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic takes 7 to 30 days to fully cure to maximum hardness. During that window, treat the cabinets gently: wipe spills immediately, avoid harsh cleaners, and don't stack items on shelves that might leave impressions in the still-curing paint.

**Size matters:** A small kitchen with 10 to 15 doors might be completed in 2 days of work. A large kitchen with 35+ doors, extra drawers, a pantry wall, or an island can stretch to 4 full days. Older Moncton homes with intricate door profiles, raised panels, and decorative mouldings add time because spray alone doesn't reach all the recesses — painters must back-brush or back-roll detail areas.

Most professional painters in Moncton will ask to take the doors off-site or will set up in your garage. If they're doing all the work in your kitchen without removing doors, ask how they're getting a spray-grade finish on vertical surfaces — it requires a skilled touch and proper masking to avoid overspray on your walls and appliances.

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Q9

## What preparation is needed before painting kitchen cabinets in my Fredericton home?

**Preparation is everything with kitchen cabinet painting — it accounts for at least 60% of the total work and is the single biggest predictor of whether your painted cabinets last beautifully for 8 to 10 years or start peeling and chipping within the first year.**

The first step is a thorough cleaning. Kitchen cabinets — especially in Fredericton homes where cooking is done year-round on cold days when windows stay closed — accumulate a thin film of grease, cooking vapours, and grime that's nearly invisible but completely destroys paint adhesion. Use a proper degreaser like TSP (trisodium phosphate) or a cabinet-specific degreaser, wash all surfaces inside and out, and let everything dry fully before moving on. This step cannot be skipped.

Next comes scuff sanding. You don't need to sand down to bare wood — you need to break the existing finish so the primer has something to grip. For stained and varnished wood cabinets (common in older Fredericton homes from the 1970s-90s), 150-grit sandpaper worked with the grain is ideal. For previously painted cabinets, 220-grit is fine. After sanding, wipe down every surface with a tack cloth or damp rag to remove all dust — any sanding dust left behind will show through your final finish as a gritty texture.

**Repairs come next.** Fill any dents, holes from old hardware, or gouges with wood filler or lightweight spackling compound, let it dry, and sand smooth. If any cabinet door joints are loose or separating (common in older NB homes), use wood glue and clamps to reset them before painting. Remove all hardware, hinges, and handles — tape hardware holes if you're not moving them.

Priming is non-negotiable. For natural wood cabinets, a stain-blocking primer (Zinsser BIN shellac-based or Bulls Eye 1-2-3) prevents tannins in oak and birch from bleeding through the topcoat — oak especially is notorious for bleed-through that turns white paint yellow. For laminate cabinets, a bonding primer specifically designed for slick surfaces is required. Apply primer to all surfaces, let it dry, sand lightly with 220-grit to smooth any grain raise, and wipe clean before topcoating.

The final prep step that many DIYers skip is **masking the surrounding area** carefully. Cabinet painting involves spray or roller application of significant paint quantities near your walls, countertops, floor, and appliances. Proper drop cloths, masking tape, and plastic sheeting protect your kitchen from overspray and drips.

If your Fredericton cabinets are older (pre-1980s), consider having them tested for lead paint before sanding — lead test kits are available at hardware stores and testing takes two minutes. If the test is positive, hire a professional with lead-safe work practices rather than sanding yourself.

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## Should kitchen cabinets be spray painted or brush-and-roller painted for the best finish?

**Spray painting gives a dramatically smoother, more factory-like finish on kitchen cabinets and is the professional standard — but a skilled brush-and-roller application with the right paint and proper technique can produce excellent results that most homeowners will be very happy with.**

The difference comes down to surface texture. Spray application atomizes the paint into tiny droplets that land flat and level with virtually no brush marks or roller stipple. A professional spray finish on kitchen cabinets is nearly indistinguishable from factory-lacquered cabinetry — smooth, hard, and even. This matters especially on flat-panel and shaker-style doors that are popular in NB homes right now, where any texture is immediately visible.

Brush-and-roller application, on the other hand, always leaves some texture. With a cheap brush, it leaves visible brush marks. With a quality China-bristle or foam roller and a self-levelling paint like Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic, those marks flow out significantly as the paint dries — but not completely. The result is a finish that looks very good from normal viewing distance but shows texture if you look closely in raking light (direct sunlight or a lamp pointed at the surface from the side). For older NB homes with traditional raised-panel doors with lots of detail, brush marks in the recesses are virtually unavoidable without spray equipment.

**For DIYers in New Brunswick**, brush-and-roller is the realistic choice unless you own or rent a quality HVLP or airless sprayer and have a safe, clean space to spray in (a garage with the cars out, for example). A rented airless sprayer from a Moncton or Fredericton tool rental company runs about 0-120 per day. The challenge with spray application is that it requires proper masking of everything nearby, good technique to avoid runs and uneven coverage, and understanding how to thin paint to the right viscosity for your equipment.

**The practical recommendation:** If you're hiring a professional, insist on spray application for cabinet doors and drawer fronts — that's where finish quality is most visible. The box frames that stay attached to the wall can be brushed in place with acceptable results. If you're doing it yourself and don't have spray experience, brush-and-roller with Benjamin Moore Advance and a quality 4-inch foam roller will give you a result you'll be pleased with — just don't expect it to look identical to factory cabinetry.

Regardless of application method, preparation quality matters more than spray vs. brush. A perfectly prepped surface with a mediocre applicator will outlast a poorly prepped surface sprayed beautifully.

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Q11

## How do I paint laminate kitchen cabinets in my New Brunswick home without the paint peeling?

**Painting laminate cabinets successfully is absolutely possible, but it requires specific products designed to bond to slick, non-porous surfaces — skip the right primer and you will have peeling paint within months, no matter how good the topcoat is.**

Laminate is notoriously difficult to paint because it's essentially a plastic film bonded to a substrate, and standard primers and paints don't mechanically or chemically grip that surface well. The first and most critical rule is to use a **bonding primer** specifically formulated for slick surfaces. Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 Plus, Sherwin-Williams Extreme Bond Primer, or Benjamin Moore Fresh Start High-Hiding Primer are all good options available in NB. Even better for truly stubborn laminate is Zinsser BIN shellac-based primer — it grips almost anything and is worth the extra cost for laminate cabinet projects. These primers are available at paint stores and hardware stores in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John.

**Preparation is just as critical as primer choice.** Clean the laminate thoroughly with a degreaser — kitchen laminate is coated in invisible cooking grease, especially on the upper cabinet doors near the stove. After degreasing, lightly scuff-sand the entire surface with 220-grit sandpaper. You're not trying to remove the laminate — you're just dulling the sheen to give the primer micro-scratches to grip. This step alone makes a significant difference in adhesion. Wipe away all sanding dust with a tack cloth before priming.

Apply the bonding primer in a thin, even coat — don't try to build too much thickness with primer. Let it dry fully (at least 2 hours, longer in humid NB summer conditions), then sand lightly with 220-grit and wipe clean. Now apply your topcoat — an acrylic-alkyd hybrid like Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic is ideal because it cures very hard, which is important on laminate where any softness leads to scratching and chipping at edges and corners.

**The biggest mistakes NB homeowners make with laminate cabinets:** Skipping the scuff sanding (even with bonding primer, smoother adhesion = longer life), using a standard drywall primer instead of a true bonding primer, and not allowing adequate cure time before putting the cabinets back into heavy use. Give the finished surface at least two weeks of gentle use before cleaning with anything other than a soft damp cloth.

If your laminate is lifting at the edges, peeling, or delaminating — common in older NB homes with 20- or 30-year-old laminate cabinets — glue those edges back down with contact cement before painting. Paint will not hold lifting laminate down and will simply bridge the gap and eventually crack at that point.

Laminate cabinet painting is one area where hiring a professional often pays off. A professional with spray equipment, proper bonding primer, and a high-quality topcoat will give you a much more durable result than a DIY brush application on a difficult surface. Get a free estimate through the New Brunswick Painting matching service before deciding whether to tackle this yourself.

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**Q12**

## **What colour should I paint my kitchen cabinets in 2026 to update my NB home without a full renovation?**

**In 2026, the most popular and enduring cabinet colours for NB kitchens are soft whites, warm greiges, deep navy blues, and earthy greens — all of which photograph beautifully, appeal broadly to future buyers, and update a kitchen's feel dramatically without touching a single cabinet box.**

The safest choice for resale value and broad appeal is a warm white or off-white. Benjamin Moore White Dove (OC-17), Chantilly Lace (OC-65), and Simply White (OC-17) are consistently among the most-requested cabinet colours

across NB, and for good reason — they brighten kitchens (important in older Fredericton and Saint John homes with smaller windows), coordinate with virtually any countertop or backsplash, and never feel dated. The key is choosing a warm white rather than a stark, cool white, which can look clinical against natural wood tones common in NB homes.

Greiges — the grey-beige family — have settled in as a long-term staple rather than a trend. Benjamin Moore Revere Pewter (HC-172) and Sherwin-Williams Accessible Beige (SW 7036) are classics, but for cabinet-specific applications, look at slightly cooler tones like Benjamin Moore Pale Oak (OC-20) or Edgecomb Gray (HC-173). These work especially well in NB kitchens with warmer-toned flooring (oak hardwood, birch, or pine floors are common in older Maritime homes) because they bridge the warm and cool without clashing.

**For homeowners wanting more character**, navy and deep teal have moved from trendy to established over the past five years and read as classic rather than dated. Benjamin Moore Hale Navy (HC-154) on lower cabinets with white uppers is a look that photographs beautifully for listings and feels considered rather than trendy. Sherwin-Williams Naval (SW 6244) and Benjamin Moore Van Deusen Blue (HC-156) are also excellent. These darker colours work best in kitchens with good natural light — if your kitchen is already dark, lighter uppers are important.

**Earthy sage greens** are the emerging direction in 2026 — muted, dusty, almost grey-green tones that feel organic and calm. Benjamin Moore Dried Thyme (HC-174) or October Mist (1495) give a kitchen a fresh, slightly elevated feel that doesn't read as a short-lived trend. These coordinate well with the brass and matte black hardware that's popular in NB kitchen updates right now.

**A practical NB note:** Before committing to a colour, paint large sample boards (at least 30 cm x 30 cm) and hold them up against your actual cabinets at different times of day — NB's northern light is cooler and flatter than southern Canadian cities, and colours shift noticeably between morning winter light and afternoon summer sun. Always view samples in your actual kitchen before ordering full cans.

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## How durable is cabinet paint compared to factory-finished cabinets and how long will it last in NB?

**A professionally painted cabinet finish using premium acrylic-alkyd paint on properly prepared surfaces will last 8 to 12 years in a typical NB kitchen — which is comparable to many mid-range factory cabinet lines, though not quite as hard as catalyzed lacquer finishes used on top-tier factory cabinetry.**

Factory cabinet finishes vary enormously. The cheapest factory cabinets use a thin paper foil wrap or low-grade paint baked at minimal temperatures — these often chip, peel at edges, and fade within 5 to 8 years in an active NB kitchen. Mid-range factory cabinets use a multi-coat baked enamel or UV-cured finish that's quite durable — comparable to a good professional paint job. High-end factory cabinets use catalyzed conversion varnish or two-component polyurethane, which cure to an almost plastic-hard surface and can last 20+ years in heavy use. A professional paint job sits between mid-range and high-end factory in terms of durability.

The durability of a painted cabinet finish in NB depends heavily on three factors: the quality of prep work (clean, sanded, primed surfaces bond far better than shortcuts), the paint product used (Benjamin Moore Advance and Sherwin-Williams ProClassic cure significantly harder than regular interior latex), and the cure time before returning cabinets to normal use. New paint takes 7 to 30 days to fully harden to its maximum durability — homeowners who start using freshly painted cabinets at full intensity the day after the painter leaves will see nicks and scratches much sooner than those who treat cabinets gently for the first few weeks.

**NB kitchen-specific factors** that affect longevity: Steam from cooking and boiling pots is hard on any finish, so proper ventilation matters — make sure your range hood is working well. The temperature cycling in NB kitchens (cold drafts from windows and doors in winter, summer heat from cooking) creates mild expansion and contraction cycles in cabinet materials. A flexible acrylic-alkyd paint handles this better than a rigid product. Cleaning habits also matter — harsh scrubbing pads and strong cleaners will shorten the life of any painted cabinet; use soft cloths and mild soap.

**Maintenance and touch-ups** are the practical advantage of painted cabinets over factory finishes. When a factory cabinet chips, matching and repairing the finish is very difficult. When a painted cabinet chips (which will happen eventually on high-traffic doors near the handles), a painter can touch up those spots with the original paint colour in a few minutes. Keep a small jar of your leftover cabinet paint for exactly this purpose — professional painters will typically provide you with touch-up paint at the end of the job.

With reasonable care and the occasional touch-up, a well-executed cabinet painting job in a Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John home will comfortably last a decade before any consideration of repainting.

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Q14

## Can I paint just the cabinet doors and leave the frames as is to save money in my Moncton kitchen?

**Yes, you can paint just the cabinet doors and leave the frames, but the result will only look cohesive if the frames' existing colour is very close to your new door colour — if there's a visible contrast between old frames and fresh doors, the mismatched look often reads as unfinished rather than budget-savvy.**

This approach — sometimes called a partial cabinet refresh — works best in specific situations. If your frames are already white or off-white and you're painting the doors a white or near-white colour, a slight shade variation may be barely noticeable once hardware is back on and the kitchen is fully furnished. Similarly, if the frames are a neutral that coordinates with your new door colour, this can work well. The doors are what visitors see most directly — the frames are partially hidden by the doors themselves when closed.

Where this plan tends to fall apart is when homeowners paint doors a dramatically different colour from the existing frames. Painting doors navy blue while leaving natural oak or builder-beige frames creates a very obvious visual mismatch. In older Moncton homes where the existing cabinets have years of wear, yellowing varnish, or a distinctly dated colour, the contrast between crisp new door paint and tired-looking frames will actually highlight the age of the cabinets rather than refreshing the kitchen's feel.

**The economics of including frames are better than most homeowners expect.** In a professional cabinet painting quote for a typical Moncton kitchen, the doors and drawer fronts represent about 50 to 60% of the total cost because they're removed, moved, spray finished on both sides, and rehung. The face frames (the fixed structure around the cabinet openings) add relatively little to the total because they're already in place, don't need to be

transported, and take a fraction of the spray or brush time. Getting a quote that includes both doors and frames versus doors only may surprise you with how small the difference is.

**If budget is genuinely tight**, a better approach than leaving frames raw is to do the entire job yourself via brush-and-roller rather than hiring out, and do it all at once — doors and frames together. The consistency of colour throughout will look intentional and finished, even if the texture isn't as smooth as a professional spray job. Use Benjamin Moore Advance for its self-levelling properties and the results will be respectable.

Get quotes from a few Moncton painters before deciding. New Brunswick Painting can match you with local cabinet painting professionals who can quote both the full job and a doors-only option so you can make an informed comparison.

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**Q15**

## **How much does it cost to have a bathroom vanity painted by a professional in New Brunswick?**

**Professional bathroom vanity painting in New Brunswick typically costs \$400-800, depending on the size of the vanity, the number of doors and drawers, the current finish, and whether the cabinet boxes and frames are included.** This is one of the most affordable professional painting upgrades available for an NB home.

A standard single-sink bathroom vanity with 2-3 doors and 1-2 drawers falls in the **\$400-550 range**. A larger double-sink vanity with 4-6 doors and multiple drawers runs **\$550-800**. The price reflects labour time for proper prep, priming, spray or brush application, and reassembly.

**What the professional process includes:** A good painter will remove all doors and drawers, clean and degrease every surface, lightly sand to scuff the existing finish, apply a bonding primer, and then apply two coats of a specialty cabinet paint — typically Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic at \$60-90/gallon.

For older NB homes — especially bathrooms in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John built in the 1970s-1990s with dark oak or laminate vanities — painting is an incredibly cost-effective update. A \$500 professional paint job on a dated oak vanity, combined with new hardware (\$50-150), can make a bathroom look completely renovated for under \$700 total.

**Colour choice matters in bathrooms.** Whites and soft greys are the most popular choices. A **satin or semi-gloss finish** is standard for bathroom vanities because it's easier to wipe down and resists the daily moisture that NB bathrooms generate.

Before spending \$400-800 on a vanity repaint, make sure your bathroom has adequate ventilation — a properly vented bathroom will make the paint job last 8-12 years rather than 3-4.

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## What happens if I skip sanding and priming when painting oak cabinets in my NB home?

**Skipping sanding and priming on oak cabinets is the most reliable way to ruin a cabinet painting project — within weeks or months you'll see the paint peeling, yellow-brown bleed-through staining your new colour, and a finish that chips at every touch.**

Oak has two specific properties that make it particularly unforgiving if you skip prep. First, oak has an open, pronounced grain texture — unlike maple or poplar, which are smoother — meaning the surface has tiny pores and channels that need to be raised, sanded smooth, and filled with primer before they'll accept a topcoat evenly. Paint applied directly over unsanded oak without primer sits on top of the varnish or stain layer without mechanically bonding to it. It looks fine at first, but the moment the cabinet door flexes, gets bumped, or gets exposed to steam or humidity (common in NB kitchens and bathrooms), the paint releases from the underlying finish in sheets or flakes. In NB's climate with cold winters and humid summers, this cycle of expansion and contraction accelerates the failure.

The second problem is **tannin bleed-through**. Oak contains high levels of tannic acid, and when you apply a water-based paint directly over it (even over existing varnish), the tannins can migrate up through the paint as it dries, leaving yellow-brown stains that look like water marks or rust spots — usually appearing in circular or ring patterns. This is especially noticeable when painting oak a light colour like white, cream, or light grey, which is the most common upgrade in NB homes right now. No amount of additional topcoat covers this bleed-through once it's happened — you must go back, apply a proper stain-blocking primer (Zinsser BIN shellac-based is the gold standard for tannin bleed), let it dry, and repaint. That's double the work and double the cost.

**What happens without sanding specifically:** The existing varnish or lacquer on your oak cabinets is a glossy, slick surface. Primer and paint need micro-abrasion — tiny scratches created by sanding — to grip mechanically. Without it, even a good primer will eventually delaminate. You may not see it immediately, but within 6 to 18 months in an active NB kitchen or bathroom, the finish will start lifting at edges, around handles, and on the corners of doors where wear is greatest.

**The shortcut that costs more:** Many homeowners see YouTube videos or DIY blog posts suggesting liquid deglosser as a substitute for sanding. While liquid deglosser can reduce sheen on a previously painted surface, it does not adequately prepare oak's open grain structure for cabinet painting. It's a supplement, not a replacement. On oak, physical sanding — working with the grain with 120 to 150 grit, then finishing with 220 — is necessary.

If your NB home has oak cabinets that you want to paint, do the prep properly: clean with TSP degreaser, sand with the grain, apply Zinsser BIN or a dedicated bonding and stain-blocking primer, sand again lightly after priming, then

apply two coats of a quality cabinet paint. Done right, the job lasts 8 to 12 years. Done with shortcuts, it fails within one to two. The prep work is not optional — it is the job.

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Q17

## How do I paint cabinet hardware and hinges or should I replace them when painting cabinets?

**In most cases, replacing cabinet hardware is the better choice** — it is faster, produces a cleaner result, and often costs less than the time and effort of painting hardware well. That said, painting hinges and pulls is entirely doable if the hardware is in good shape and you take the right approach.

Cabinet hardware takes an enormous amount of wear. Handles and pulls get touched dozens of times a day; hinges flex constantly as doors open and close. Paint applied directly to metal hardware — especially chrome, nickel, or zinc — without proper preparation will chip, scratch, and flake within months. The prep work required to paint hardware properly is considerable: thorough cleaning to remove finger oils and grime, sanding or scuff-abrading the metal surface, and applying a dedicated metal primer before any paint touches it. For painted or spray-finished hardware, you should use a good quality acrylic-alkyd paint in the sheen of your choice (semi-gloss or satin are most practical for hardware).

If you do decide to paint hardware, **remove every piece before painting** — hinges, pulls, and knobs. Never try to paint hardware in place on the cabinet. Tape-and-paint approaches look amateurish and invariably leave paint ridges, runs, and missed spots. Lay the hardware on a piece of cardboard, spray with a self-etching metal primer (Rust-Oleum Self-Etching Primer is widely available in NB), let it dry fully (at least 2-4 hours), then apply 2 thin

coats of your chosen paint. Spray cans give a far smoother finish than a brush on small metal parts. Let each coat dry completely before the next, and allow at least 24 hours of cure time before reinstalling.

**The honest comparison:** A set of replacement cabinet pulls for a typical NB kitchen runs .50 to per pull at hardware stores in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John — a full kitchen might cost 0 to 50 in new hardware. That is often less than the labour time required to properly clean, prime, and paint the old hardware. New hardware also gives you the opportunity to update the style of the kitchen at the same time as the paint refresh, which is one of the biggest value adds of a cabinet painting project. If the existing hardware is solid brass or a finish you love and want to preserve, painting can work — but for standard builder-grade nickel or chrome pulls, replacement usually wins on every front.

**For hinges specifically:** If your cabinets use concealed European-style hinges (the adjustable cup hinges visible only when the door is open), these are generally not worth painting — they are mechanical parts with moving surfaces that painted finishes will bind up. Replace or leave unpainted. Exposed traditional hinges can be painted if primed correctly, but visible hinges on a freshly painted kitchen often look dated — this is a good moment to switch to concealed hinges if your cabinet style allows it.

When hiring a professional for cabinet painting, ask whether their quote includes hardware removal and reinstallation — most reputable painters include it, and it makes a significant difference in the final result.

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