

NEW BRUNSWICK PAINTING

Interior Painting

Interior wall, ceiling, trim, door, and room painting techniques, prep, and guidance for NB homes

22 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

newbrunswickpainting.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

1. What is the correct way to paint over horsehair plaster walls in an older Saint John or Fredericton heritage home?
2. How do I paint a room in a New Brunswick home that is occupied with furniture I cannot fully remove?
3. How do I paint interior walls in a New Brunswick home after a minor flood or water damage once repairs are complete?
4. How do I paint an open-concept living room and kitchen area with different colours in Fredericton?
5. How do I fix paint that is peeling off interior walls in my older Saint John home?
6. What is the best way to paint a textured or stipple ceiling in a New Brunswick home?
7. What is the best interior paint colour for selling a home in the New Brunswick real estate market?
8. How do I paint a room with high ceilings in a Fredericton home without scaffolding?
9. What is the correct order to paint a room — walls, ceiling, or trim first?
10. How do I get a smooth finish when painting interior doors in my New Brunswick home?
11. What type of paint should I use in a bathroom in Moncton where humidity is a concern?
12. How do I paint baseboards and trim without getting paint on the walls or floor?
13. What is the best way to paint a staircase and railing in a two-storey New Brunswick home?
14. How long should I wait between coats of interior paint in a humid NB summer?
15. Can I paint over dark walls with a lighter colour without using multiple coats of primer?
16. What is the best paint for a nursery or children's room in New Brunswick considering VOC safety?
17. How do I paint a ceiling without getting roller marks or lap lines in my Moncton home?
18. What paint finish is best for hallways and high-traffic areas in a New Brunswick home with kids and pets?
19. What is the best approach to painting wood panelling in an older New Brunswick home?
20. What is the best time of year to do interior painting in New Brunswick and why?
21. How do I paint around light switches and electrical outlets safely in my NB home?
22. How many coats of paint do I need for interior walls when changing from a dark to a light colour?

What is the correct way to paint over horsehair plaster walls in an older Saint John or Fredericton heritage home?

Horsehair plaster walls in older Saint John and Fredericton homes require careful preparation and the right primer to prevent cracking and ensure proper adhesion. These walls, common in homes built before 1940, have unique characteristics that demand specific techniques for successful painting.

Understanding Horsehair Plaster Construction

Horsehair plaster consists of three layers: a rough base coat mixed with horsehair for strength, a smoother brown coat, and a final white finish coat. In heritage homes throughout Saint John's uptown area and Fredericton's downtown core, these walls have often endured 80-100+ years of settling, temperature changes, and Maritime humidity. The plaster may have developed hairline cracks, loose sections, or areas where the finish coat has deteriorated.

Before painting, assess the wall condition carefully. Gently press on suspicious areas — solid plaster feels firm, while loose sections may flex or sound hollow when tapped. Small hairline cracks are normal and can be painted over, but larger cracks or loose plaster requires repair first. For significant damage, consult a heritage restoration specialist familiar with traditional lime-based plaster repair techniques.

Critical Preparation Steps

Start by cleaning the walls with a damp cloth to remove decades of dust, smoke residue, and grime — common in older NB homes. Avoid soaking the plaster, as excessive moisture can soften the lime-based binder. If the walls have been painted before (likely multiple times), check for lead paint using a test kit, as homes built before 1978 in Saint John and Fredericton commonly have lead-based paint on walls and trim.

For loose or flaking paint, scrape gently with a putty knife rather than aggressive sanding, which can damage the plaster surface. Fill hairline cracks with flexible acrylic caulk rather than rigid spackle — horsehair plaster moves slightly with seasonal changes, and flexible fillers accommodate this movement better.

Primer Selection is Critical

Use a high-quality bonding primer specifically designed for challenging surfaces. **Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3** or **Benjamin Moore Fresh Start** are excellent choices for horsehair plaster. These primers penetrate the porous plaster surface, seal any remaining chalky areas, and provide superior adhesion for the topcoat. Avoid standard wall primers, which may not bond properly to the alkaline lime-based plaster.

Apply primer with a high-quality brush or roller with a 10mm (3/8 inch) nap to work the primer into the textured plaster surface. Horsehair plaster is quite porous and may require two coats of primer, especially if the original plaster is showing through or if you're making a dramatic colour change.

Paint Selection and Application

Choose a premium 100% acrylic latex paint in eggshell or satin finish. **Benjamin Moore Regal Select** or **Sherwin-Williams Duration** perform exceptionally well over properly primed plaster. These paints are flexible enough to accommodate minor movement in the plaster while providing excellent coverage and durability.

Apply paint with a brush and roller combination — brush first to work paint into any texture and crevices, then back-roll with a 10mm nap roller for smooth, even coverage. Two coats are essential for uniform colour and adequate protection. Allow extra drying time between coats during NB's humid summer months.

Heritage Home Considerations

If your Saint John or Fredericton home is in a designated heritage conservation area, check with the municipal heritage office before making significant colour changes to interior walls visible from the street. Some heritage properties have guidelines for historically appropriate interior colour palettes.

When to Hire a Professional

Consider hiring a professional for extensive plaster repair, rooms with high ceilings common in heritage homes, or if lead paint testing reveals contamination. Professional painters experienced with heritage homes understand the nuances of working with horsehair plaster and have the proper equipment for safely handling lead paint if present.

Find local painting contractors experienced with heritage homes through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory — many NB painters specialize in the unique requirements of older Maritime homes and understand the proper techniques for preserving these architectural treasures while updating them for modern living.

Q2

How do I paint a room in a New Brunswick home that is occupied with furniture I cannot fully remove?

Painting around furniture requires careful planning and protection, but it's absolutely doable in most New Brunswick homes. The key is working in sections, protecting everything thoroughly, and choosing the right time of year for proper ventilation.

Room Preparation Strategy

Start by moving furniture to the center of the room and covering everything with plastic sheeting or canvas drop cloths. In older NB homes with narrow doorways and stairs, you often can't remove large pieces like dressers, beds, or sectional sofas. Group the furniture tightly in the room's center, leaving at least 3-4 feet of working space around the perimeter walls. Use lightweight plastic sheeting (available at any hardware store in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John for \$15-25) to completely cover furniture — paint mist travels farther than you think, especially if you're using a roller.

Remove everything you possibly can, even if it means multiple trips. Picture frames, lamps, curtains, and smaller furniture should all go out. The less you have to work around, the better your results will be. For items that absolutely cannot move, like built-in shelving or a heavy piano, mask them carefully with plastic and painter's tape.

Painting Sequence and Technique

Work in this order: ceiling first, then walls, then trim and doors. With furniture in the center, you'll need to paint the walls in sections. Start with the wall farthest from the door, complete it entirely (primer if needed, then two coats), then move the furniture to that finished wall and paint the opposite side. This sectional approach prevents you from trapping yourself or the furniture.

Use a high-quality angled brush for cutting in around furniture and tight spaces — a 2.5-inch Purdy or Wooster brush will give you much better control than a cheap brush. For rolling, use an extension pole so you can reach higher areas without moving furniture repeatedly. In NB's older homes with 9-10 foot ceilings, an extension pole is essential for reaching the top of walls while working around obstacles.

Ventilation and Timing Considerations

Winter is actually ideal for occupied room painting in New Brunswick homes. The dry indoor air (often below 30% humidity from forced-air heating) helps paint dry quickly, and you can easily ventilate with a window cracked open and a fan running. Summer painting in an occupied room can be challenging due to NB's humidity — paint takes longer to dry, and you'll need dehumidifiers or air conditioning to keep conditions manageable.

Use low-VOC or zero-VOC interior paint (Benjamin Moore Natura, Sherwin-Williams Harmony, or Dulux Pure) to minimize odors in the occupied space. Even with low-VOC paint, run fans and crack windows for air circulation. The furniture covering will trap some fumes, so good ventilation is crucial for comfort and proper paint curing.

Protecting Floors and Managing Dust

Lay canvas drop cloths or heavy plastic on all exposed flooring — the lightweight plastic sheets will slide around and create trip hazards. Canvas drop cloths stay in place better and absorb spills rather than letting them spread. In older NB homes with hardwood floors, protection is critical since refinishing floors around furniture is nearly impossible.

If you're painting over existing paint in good condition, dust will be minimal. But if you need to sand glossy trim or fill nail holes, use a shop vacuum frequently and keep furniture covered during all prep work. Sanding dust settles everywhere and will show through your new paint if not cleaned properly.

When to Hire a Professional

Consider hiring a professional painter if you're dealing with high ceilings (common in older Saint John, Fredericton, and Moncton homes), extensive trim work, or if the room hasn't been painted in many years and needs significant prep. Professional painters have the experience to work efficiently around furniture and the equipment to handle challenging spaces safely. They can also complete the work faster, minimizing the time your room is disrupted.

For a standard bedroom with furniture you can't remove, expect to add 25-40% more time compared to an empty room, but the results can be just as professional with careful planning and patience.

Q3

How do I paint interior walls in a New Brunswick home after a minor flood or water damage once repairs are complete?

After flood repairs are complete, you must wait for complete drying, test for moisture, prime all affected surfaces, and use mildew-resistant paint to prevent future problems. Rushing to paint over water-damaged walls before they're fully dry will trap moisture and cause the new paint to peel within months.

Ensure Complete Drying First

The most critical step is confirming that all moisture has been eliminated from the wall structure. Even after visible repairs are done, moisture can remain trapped in drywall, insulation, and framing for weeks. Use a moisture meter to test drywall — readings should be below 12% before painting. In New Brunswick's humid climate, this drying process takes longer than in drier regions, especially during summer months when indoor humidity can reach 60-70%. Run dehumidifiers and fans continuously, and consider professional moisture testing if the flooding was significant.

Surface Preparation is Critical

Water damage often leaves invisible contaminants that will bleed through regular paint. Clean all affected wall surfaces with a TSP (trisodium phosphate) solution to remove any residual dirt, minerals, or organic matter left by floodwater. Even if the drywall looks clean, floodwater carries bacteria, minerals, and organic compounds that can cause staining and odors if not properly cleaned. Sand any areas where the drywall paper has raised or roughened

from water exposure — these spots will show through paint if not smoothed.

Prime Everything with Stain-Blocking Primer

This is non-negotiable for flood-damaged walls. Use a high-quality stain-blocking primer like Zinsser BIN (shellac-based) or Kilz Original (oil-based) on all affected surfaces. These primers seal in any remaining stains, odors, or tannins that water may have drawn from building materials. Regular latex primer is not sufficient for water-damaged surfaces. Apply the primer in thin, even coats and allow full cure time — typically 24 hours in New Brunswick's humidity.

Choose the Right Paint

Use a high-quality interior latex paint with mildew-resistant properties. Many premium paints (Benjamin Moore Aura, Sherwin-Williams Duration, Dulux Diamond) contain antimicrobial additives that help prevent mildew growth. For areas that experienced significant flooding, consider upgrading to a semi-gloss or satin finish instead of flat paint — these sheens are more washable and resistant to moisture if future water issues occur. Bathrooms and basements that flooded should always get semi-gloss paint.

Address the Root Cause

Before painting, ensure that whatever caused the flooding has been properly addressed. In older New Brunswick homes, common flood sources include ice dam backup, foundation seepage, plumbing leaks, and poor drainage around the foundation. If the moisture source isn't eliminated, you'll be repainting again within a year or two. Consider upgrading ventilation in affected areas, especially basements and bathrooms.

When to Hire a Professional

If the flooding affected multiple rooms, reached above 18 inches on the walls, or if you detect any musty odors after cleaning, hire a professional painter experienced with water damage restoration. They have industrial moisture meters, proper ventilation equipment, and experience identifying hidden moisture problems that could cause paint failure. Professional painters also carry insurance that covers water damage work, which is important given the higher risk of callbacks on flood-damaged surfaces.

The key to success is patience — don't rush the drying and preparation phases to get paint on the walls quickly. Proper preparation now prevents costly repainting later and ensures your New Brunswick home's interior walls will look great for years to come.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Loves Painting Ltd.
- moose luxury painting
- M And M Painting
- Thirty Four Renovations

[View all contractors ?](#)

How do I paint an open-concept living room and kitchen area with different colours in Fredericton?

Painting an open-concept living room and kitchen area with two different colours works best when you choose a clear transition point — typically a ceiling-height architectural break, the edge of a peninsula or island, or a defined wall — and plan both colours to share the same undertone so the space feels cohesive rather than disjointed. In Fredericton's open-concept homes, especially the newer builds in Silverwood, Lincoln, and Hanwell subdivisions, this is one of the most common interior painting questions.

The most important step happens before you pick up a brush: choosing the right colours. The two shades don't need to match, but they should be pulled from the same colour family or share a common undertone. A warm greige in the living room pairs naturally with a warm sage or navy in the kitchen because neither has a cool blue or purple base. Take large paint chips home — the 8x8 cm chips, not the small ones — and tape them to your walls under different lighting conditions. Fredericton homes with north-facing windows read colours much cooler than south-facing spaces, and the open-plan layout means both colours will be visible simultaneously.

Defining the transition line is where most DIYers run into trouble. If your open-concept space has a soffit, a ceiling beam, or a change in flooring, use that break as your colour boundary — it looks intentional and clean. If there's no architectural feature, run the new colour from floor to ceiling on the kitchen side of a defined wall or the back of the peninsula. Avoid transitioning colours mid-wall with no structural justification; it looks arbitrary and dated. A popular approach in Fredericton homes is to keep the ceiling and upper trim consistent (typically white) across both zones while changing only the wall colour, which anchors the whole space visually.

Technique tips for a clean transition:

- Prime both surfaces, especially if changing from a dark to a light colour or vice versa
- Apply the lighter colour first, let it dry fully, then tape carefully at the transition line before applying the darker colour
- Use a high-quality painters tape (FrogTape is popular in NB) pressed firmly at the edge — don't rely on cheap masking tape
- Remove the tape while the final coat is still slightly tacky, pulling it back at a 45-degree angle, to get a crisp line without tearing dried paint
- For the kitchen walls, choose a satin or eggshell finish minimum — it cleans far better than flat/matte paint when dealing with cooking splatter and grease

For the living room, eggshell or satin also works well and is more washable than flat. Semi-gloss is best reserved for trim and kitchen backsplash areas. Premium interior paint like Benjamin Moore Regal Select or Sherwin-Williams Emerald runs \$55–75/gallon and gives noticeably better coverage and washability than budget options — worth it in the kitchen especially.

This is a good DIY project if you're comfortable with a brush and roller and have patience for the taping work. The main challenge is cutting in cleanly at the transition point and at ceilings and trim. If you want a flawless result, a professional painter in Fredericton will typically charge \$500–900 for an average combined living/kitchen space at these walls alone, and they'll get the transition line clean the first time.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Thirty Four Renovations
- moose luxury painting
- M And M Painting
- Worry No More Handyman Services

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q5

How do I fix paint that is peeling off interior walls in my older Saint John home?

Peeling interior paint in an older Saint John home almost always points to a moisture problem, a failed adhesion bond from a previous paint job, or both — and the fix starts with identifying and addressing the source, not just scraping and repainting over the same surface. Painting over peeling paint without solving the underlying cause is the single most common and most expensive painting mistake NB homeowners make.

Saint John's older housing stock — particularly the Victorian and early 20th-century homes in the North End, South End, and the Lower West Side — was built before modern vapour barriers and insulation standards. Many of these homes have walls that breathe moisture from both inside and out. If the peeling is happening in a bathroom or kitchen, the culprit is almost always inadequate ventilation combined with high humidity. If it's on an exterior-facing wall in a bedroom or living room, suspect moisture migrating through the wall assembly from outside, especially if

the exterior painting hasn't been maintained.

Start by fixing the moisture source first. In a bathroom, check that the exhaust fan is actually ducted to the outside (many older Saint John homes have fans that vent into the attic — useless for humidity control) and use it during and for 20 minutes after every shower. In a kitchen, the range hood should vent outside, not recirculate. If you're seeing peeling on exterior-facing walls outside of wet rooms, you may have a failed exterior paint job allowing water infiltration, or a lack of interior vapour barrier — those are bigger problems that deserve a professional moisture assessment before you repaint.

Once the moisture source is addressed, here's how to fix the wall:

Scrape all loose and peeling paint thoroughly with a wide putty knife or paint scraper. Don't just scrape the lifted edges — test adjacent paint by pressing firmly with your fingernail. If it pops off easily, it needs to come off now rather than after you've repainted over it.

Sand the feathered edges of the remaining paint so there's no hard lip between the scraped area and the intact paint. Hard edges will telegraph through the new paint as visible ridges.

Apply a stain-blocking primer like Zinsser BIN (shellac-based, \$45–65/gallon) or Kilz Original over the scraped areas — and the whole wall if peeling was widespread. This seals the surface, blocks stains, and gives the new topcoat something to grip. Do NOT skip this step and go straight to topcoat.

Fill any gouges or surface damage with lightweight spackling compound, let dry, sand smooth, and spot-prime those areas before painting.

Apply two full coats of a quality interior latex in the appropriate sheen — eggshell or satin for most rooms, semi-gloss for bathrooms and kitchens where moisture resistance matters most. Premium paints like Benjamin Moore Aura or Regal Select (\$65–75/gallon) have better adhesion properties than budget options in high-humidity environments.

If the peeling is widespread throughout the house and you're seeing it in multiple rooms across multiple wall surfaces, it's worth having a professional painter assess the situation before you invest in materials. Some older Saint John homes have layers of oil-based paint over latex, or vice versa, that are fundamentally incompatible — no amount of new topcoat will fix that without stripping back to bare wall. In those cases, a professional skim coat and fresh primer before painting is the right call.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- M And M Painting
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- moose luxury painting
- Thirty Four Renovations

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q6

What is the best way to paint a textured or stipple ceiling in a New Brunswick home?

The best way to paint a stipple or textured ceiling in a New Brunswick home is with a thick-nap roller (at least 19mm/3/4 inch) loaded with a flat ceiling paint, applied in slow, light passes without over-working the surface — the goal is to lay paint into all the peaks and valleys without flattening the texture. Stipple ceilings are extremely common in NB homes from the 1970s through the 1990s, and painting them is one of the best value DIY improvements you can make to freshen up a dated space.

The roller nap is the most important equipment decision. The deep pockets in a stipple texture require a thick enough nap to reach into the valleys without the roller body just skimming the peaks. A standard 10mm/3/8 inch roller that works fine on smooth walls will leave the stipple looking blotchy with unpainted recesses. Use a 19mm/3/4 inch or 22mm nap lamb's wool or microfibre roller cover — these are widely available at hardware stores in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John. Expect to use more paint than you would on a smooth ceiling, roughly 1 litre per 8–10 square metres instead of 12–14 square metres, because the texture increases surface area significantly.

Prep work matters just as much on a stipple ceiling as anywhere else. Wipe the ceiling with a dry mop or vacuum with a brush attachment before painting to remove dust and cobwebs, which are hiding in every peak. If there are any water stains, nicotine yellowing, or smoke marks, apply a stain-blocking primer first — Zinsser BIN or Kilz Original at \$45–65/gallon — or the stain will bleed through even multiple coats of fresh white ceiling paint. If you skip the stain-blocker, you may end up applying four or five coats and still see the shadow.

The technique that gives the best result:

Work in small sections (roughly 1 metre x 1 metre) and avoid going back over sections you've already painted once they start to dry. Stipple texture is made from drywall compound and is extremely fragile when wet — over-rolling a

wet section will pull the texture off the ceiling in chunks, leaving smooth bare spots that are very noticeable and difficult to repair. Load the roller generously, lay the paint on with light pressure, and move on. One coat almost never covers fully on stipple — plan for two coats, allowing complete drying (at least 2 hours in normal conditions, longer in humid NB summer conditions) between coats.

Use a dedicated flat white ceiling paint rather than tinted wall paint. Ceiling paints are formulated to be thicker (for better coverage), have less splatter, dry with a dead-flat finish that hides surface irregularities, and are typically priced at \$35–50/gallon — cheaper than premium wall paint but better suited to the job.

One important caution for NB homes built before 1978: Some older stipple and popcorn texture compounds contained asbestos, particularly in the Maritimes where older building materials stayed in use longer in some areas. If you have a pre-1978 home in Saint John, Fredericton, Moncton, or elsewhere in NB, do not sand or disturb the texture before testing. Paint over it without disturbing it if the texture is intact and in good condition — painting over intact asbestos-containing texture is safe. If the texture is crumbling, flaking, or you need to remove it, hire a professional asbestos abatement contractor before any work proceeds.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- moose luxury painting
- Gionetterenovations
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- M And M Painting

[View all contractors ?](#)

What is the best interior paint colour for selling a home in the New Brunswick real estate market?

Neutral, warm whites and greiges consistently perform best when selling a home in New Brunswick — colours like Benjamin Moore Chantilly Lace, Sherwin-Williams Accessible Beige, or Dulux Antique White appeal to the widest range of buyers and photograph beautifully for listings.

The reasoning behind this isn't just aesthetics — it's psychology and practicality. Buyers in NB markets like Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John are walking into homes with pre-existing furniture and décor in mind. A bold navy feature wall or a deep burgundy dining room forces them to mentally repaint before they've even seen the kitchen. Neutral walls let buyers project their own vision onto the space. Real estate agents consistently report that freshly painted homes in soft neutrals sell faster and closer to asking price than homes with strong personality colours, regardless of how tastefully the original owners executed them.

Warm neutrals outperform cool greys in most NB homes — and this is partly a function of our housing stock. The older wood trim, warm hardwood floors, and cedar accents common in Fredericton and Saint John heritage homes look strange alongside the cool, blue-toned greys that dominated paint trends a few years back. Warm greiges like Sherwin-Williams Accessible Beige (SW 7036) or Benjamin Moore Pale Oak (OC-20) sit comfortably with golden oak flooring and natural wood trim. If the home has been updated with white trim and modern finishes, a soft warm white like Benjamin Moore White Dove (OC-17) gives a clean, refreshed look that appeals broadly.

For NB specifically, consider that many homes have smaller windows by modern standards — especially older homes in Moncton's north end or Fredericton's south side. Choose paint colours with a light reflectance value (LRV) of 70 or higher to keep rooms feeling airy. This is more important than the colour itself — a light warm beige at LRV 75 will make a small bedroom feel larger and brighter, which matters enormously in listing photos.

Practical tips before you list: Paint every room the same colour or stay within a two-colour palette for the whole main floor — it creates a sense of flow that feels cohesive in person and in listing photos. Use a semi-gloss on all trim and doors (freshened white trim is one of the highest-return touches you can make before listing). Budget roughly \$1,500–\$3,500 for a professional interior paint job on a 3-bedroom NB home, or \$3,000–\$6,500 for a full interior including trim and ceilings.

When to hire a pro: If you're listing within weeks, hire a professional painter. A rushed DIY job with roller marks, missed cut-ins, and uneven coverage will show up in listing photos and at showings. A professional painter can often complete a full interior repaint in 3–5 days, turning around a freshly painted home quickly before your listing date. Need help finding a local painting professional? New Brunswick Painting can match you with painters in your area for free.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- M And M Painting
- Gionetterenovations
- Thirty Four Renovations

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q8

How do I paint a room with high ceilings in a Fredericton home without scaffolding?

For high ceilings up to about 3.5 metres (11–12 feet), you can manage safely with a combination of an extension pole and a sturdy stepladder — beyond that, renting scaffolding or hiring a professional is the right call.

Many older homes in Fredericton — particularly in the downtown and Northside heritage neighbourhoods — feature 9- to 11-foot ceilings, and even some newer builds have vaulted great rooms that push 12–14 feet. The good news is that ceiling painting with a roller and extension pole doesn't require scaffolding in most cases. A quality extension pole (1.2 to 1.8 metres, which gets you easily to a 10-foot ceiling from the floor) combined with a quality thick-nap roller cover (15–19mm, or 5/8 to 3/4 inch) will let you reach the field of the ceiling while keeping your feet on the ground. For the edges and cut-in work along the ceiling/wall joint, a 2.5- to 3-inch angled sash brush on an extension pole works well once you're comfortable with the technique — though many painters find it easier to use a short stepladder and do the cut-in work carefully by hand.

The real challenge with high ceilings isn't the reach — it's the paint splatter and fatigue. Painting overhead with a loaded roller sends fine spray downward onto you, your floor, and your furniture. Cover everything with quality drop cloths (canvas, not cheap plastic that slides) and wear safety glasses. Old houses in Fredericton often have original hardwood floors that are difficult or impossible to refinish if hit with paint droplets — take no chances with the floor covering. Work in sections, keeping a wet edge, and don't over-load the roller or you'll get drips on the wall below.

In NB's older heritage homes, high ceilings often come with crown moulding and decorative plaster details that require patience and a steady hand during cut-in. Take your time at the edges. Frog Tape (green) is more reliable than standard blue tape for getting clean lines on textured or older plaster surfaces. Press it firmly with a putty knife to prevent paint bleeding underneath.

Practical tips: Use a ceiling-specific flat paint (not wall paint) — it minimises the appearance of roller marks under angled light, which is amplified on high ceilings. Sherwin-Williams Ceiling Bright White or Benjamin Moore Waterborne Ceiling are both available in NB and offer good hide. Work in good light — open windows during daylight, add a work light positioned at an angle to the ceiling so you can see missed spots before the paint dries.

When to hire a pro: If ceilings exceed 3.5 metres (about 12 feet), or if you have a two-storey open stairwell, hire a professional. Working at height on ladders without the right training and fall protection is the leading cause of serious injury in home renovation — it's genuinely not worth the risk. A professional with proper scaffolding or pump jacks will paint your high-ceiling room faster and safer than any DIY approach. Budget \$300–\$600 for a single high-ceiling room, professionally painted.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- M And M Painting
- Worry No More Handyman Services
- moose luxury painting
- Thirty Four Renovations

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q9

What is the correct order to paint a room — walls, ceiling, or trim first?

The correct order is ceiling first, then walls, then trim — and following this sequence saves you hours of extra masking and touch-up work.

This order exists for a very practical reason: every step you do will inevitably get a little paint on the adjacent surface, and working top-to-bottom means you cover your mistakes as you go. When you paint the ceiling first,

you'll inevitably get a small amount of ceiling paint on the top of the walls — but that's fine, because you haven't painted the walls yet. When you do the walls next, you'll overlap slightly onto the trim — again, fine, because the trim comes last. The trim coat is your final step and is where you take the most care, creating clean crisp lines against the freshly painted wall.

Where most DIYers go wrong is painting the trim first, thinking the clean lines will be easier to see and tape against. The problem is that once your trim is painted, you then have to carefully tape it (or cut in perfectly with a brush) before rolling the walls — and any mistakes during the wall stage chip or smear the fresh trim. It doubles your masking work and increases the chance of damage to the trim you just carefully finished.

Here's how each step should unfold in a typical NB home. **Ceiling:** Roll the field first with a ceiling paint using a 10–15mm nap roller, then cut in around the perimeter with a 2.5-inch angled brush. Two coats minimum. Allow to fully dry. **Walls:** Cut in at the ceiling line, corners, and around trim with an angled brush first. Roll the field while the cut-in is still wet to blend the edge — this is called maintaining a wet edge and prevents lap marks. Two coats. **Trim and doors:** Once walls are fully dry, paint all baseboards, door casings, window casings, and doors last in your chosen trim sheen (semi-gloss or satin acrylic are the NB standard).

One exception worth noting: if you're also priming surfaces (bare drywall after renovation, water stains, etc.), prime before the ceiling and wall sequence. And in older NB homes where you're dealing with oil-based trim paint already on the woodwork, you may need to lightly sand and prime the trim before your new topcoat — oil-based paints don't accept latex directly without proper preparation.

Practical tips: Keep a damp cloth nearby for immediate cleanup of drips from one surface onto another. Change your roller sleeve between ceiling and wall stages if there's any risk of colour transfer. Use Frog Tape on the trim when doing your final wall cut-in — it gives a cleaner line than standard blue tape on slightly textured wall surfaces common in NB homes from the 1970s–1990s.

When to hire a pro: The sequence itself is manageable for a DIYer, but cutting in cleanly — especially at the ceiling/wall junction in a room with no crown moulding — takes practice. A professional painter can cut in freehand faster and cleaner than most homeowners can with tape. If you're painting a whole house interior or multiple rooms, a two-person professional crew will typically complete the job in a fraction of the time for \$3,000–\$6,500 on a typical 3-bedroom NB home.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Thirty Four Renovations

- Gionetterenovations
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- M And M Painting

[View all contractors ?](#)

How do I get a smooth finish when painting interior doors in my New Brunswick home?

The secret to a smooth door finish is removing the door from its hinges and painting it flat on sawhorses, using a foam roller for the panels and a quality brush for the edges and detail work.

This single step — laying the door flat — eliminates 90% of the drip and sag problems that plague vertical door painting. When a door stands upright, paint migrates down the surface under gravity before it has time to level and dry. Panels are especially prone to sags and fat edges at the bottom. Laying the door flat across a pair of sawhorses lets the paint self-level properly and gives you a noticeably smoother finish with far less effort.

Prep is everything with doors. Doors in NB homes — especially older homes in Moncton and Saint John — often have many layers of paint built up over decades, meaning the panel profiles are soft and any new paint will highlight existing imperfections. Lightly sand the door with 120-grit sandpaper before you start, paying attention to any drips or rough areas. Fill dents and gouges with a lightweight wood filler, let it dry, sand again with 150-grit. If the existing surface is glossy (common with semi-gloss or high-gloss doors), sand it or use a liquid deglosser (like Krud Kutter Gloss-Off) to give the new paint something to bite into. Wipe the door down with a damp cloth after sanding to remove all dust.

For paint choice, **an acrylic-alkyd hybrid trim paint gives the smoothest results on doors** — Benjamin Moore Advance and Sherwin-Williams ProClassic are the two most popular options among NB professional painters. These products flow and level like an oil-based paint but clean up with water. They dry slowly (4–6 hours to recoat in normal conditions, longer in NB's humid summers), which is actually an advantage — the extended open time lets the paint level out and eliminate brush marks on its own. A standard latex trim paint dries too fast and often shows brush strokes on flat door panels.

Technique: For a panelled door, paint in this order: recessed panels first, then the horizontal rails (cross pieces), then the vertical stiles (long pieces running top to bottom), then edges. Use a 4-inch foam roller (6mm nap) on the flat panel areas and a 2-inch angled brush for the moulded edges and detail. Roll a section, then lightly tip-off (drag a dry brush across the rolled surface once) to eliminate any bubbles or stipple texture. Two thin coats always beat one thick coat.

Practical tips: Pull the hinge pins out and remove door hardware completely before painting — painting around hinges looks amateurish and collecting paint around hardware makes them sticky and hard to operate. Use a cup hook or nail to prop the door up slightly while paint dries so the edge doesn't stick to the sawhorses. In NB's humid summer months, allow extra drying time before reinstalling doors — at 70–80% humidity, acrylic-alkyd products can take 8–12 hours before they're ready for a second coat.

When to hire a pro: If you have 10 or more interior doors, or if the existing paint is multiple layers of oil-based products that need stripping or extensive prep, hiring a professional painter will give you a faster and cleaner result. Professional painters often spray doors with an HVLP sprayer for a completely brush-mark-free factory finish — something that's very difficult to achieve with brush and roller alone. Cabinet and door spraying typically runs \$200–\$500 for a set of interior doors professionally completed.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Loves Painting Ltd.
- Gionetterenovations
- moose luxury painting
- M And M Painting

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q11

What type of paint should I use in a bathroom in Moncton where humidity is a concern?

Use a satin or semi-gloss acrylic latex paint specifically formulated with mildew resistance for any bathroom in Moncton — flat and matte finishes have no place in a wet room.

Bathrooms are one of the most punishing environments for paint in any NB home. Hot showers create steam that drives moisture into walls, condensation cycles wet and dry surfaces repeatedly, and the combination of warmth and moisture is exactly what mildew needs to thrive. Moncton's naturally humid Maritime climate compounds this — many older homes in the city lack adequate bathroom ventilation (just a small window, no exhaust fan), which means humidity lingers long after a shower and can push relative humidity in the bathroom to 90%+ for extended periods.

Sheen selection matters more in bathrooms than in any other room. Flat and matte paints have a porous surface that absorbs moisture and provides countless microscopic hiding spots for mildew spores. They also cannot be scrubbed — attempt to clean a soap-splashed flat wall and you'll scrub the paint right off. **Eggshell is the minimum sheen for a bathroom**, though most professional painters in NB recommend satin or semi-gloss. Semi-

gloss wipes clean easily, resists moisture penetration, and makes the bathroom look brighter — a real advantage in the smaller bathrooms common in older Moncton homes. The trade-off is that semi-gloss shows surface imperfections (bumps, patches, taping ridges) more readily, so prep work matters even more.

Look for paints that specifically include a built-in mildewcide — a biocide additive that inhibits mildew and mould growth. Benjamin Moore Aura Bath and Spa (a matte finish specifically engineered for bathrooms with exceptional moisture resistance) and Sherwin-Williams Emerald Interior in satin or semi-gloss are both excellent choices available in NB. Dulux Diamond Interior in semi-gloss is another solid option widely available at hardware stores across Moncton. These specialty bathroom or high-humidity formulations are worth the premium (\$55–\$75/gallon) — a bathroom is a small space requiring only 1–2 litres per coat, so the cost difference versus a budget paint is only \$10–\$20 for the whole project.

Prep is critical in a bathroom. If there's any existing mildew on the walls (look for grey, black, or pink streaks, especially near the shower surround, ceiling corners, and window frames), treat it before painting. Mix one part bleach with three parts water, apply to the affected area, let sit 15 minutes, scrub, rinse, and allow to dry completely — at least 24 hours. Painting over active mildew with any paint, including mildew-resistant products, will not work — the mildew will grow right through the new coating within months. Address the ventilation too: if you don't have a bathroom exhaust fan, installing one will extend the life of your paint finish dramatically.

Practical tips: Apply a mould-resistant primer (Zinsser Mold Killing Primer or Benjamin Moore Fresh Start All-Purpose Primer) before your topcoat, especially on previously affected surfaces. Caulk around the tub, shower, and where the wall meets the floor with a paintable silicone or siliconized latex caulk — this prevents moisture from sneaking behind the wall and causing paint to peel from behind.

When to hire a pro: If your bathroom has active mould that goes beyond surface mildew staining — meaning you're seeing dark spots coming through the wall, soft drywall, or mould around an exterior wall — do not paint over it. A professional assessment of the moisture source is needed before any painting work begins. Browse painting contractors in your area through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- moose luxury painting
- Gionetterenovations
- Loves Painting Ltd.

- M And M Painting

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q12

How do I paint baseboards and trim without getting paint on the walls or floor?

The most reliable approach is to combine painter's tape along the wall edge, a thin cardboard or paint shield along the floor edge, and a quality 2- to 2.5-inch angled sash brush — then practice the cut-in technique to reduce your reliance on tape over time.

Trim painting trips up more DIYers than almost any other task, and the frustration usually comes from two places: using cheap tape that bleeds, and rushing the application. Let's solve both.

Along the wall: Apply painter's tape (Frog Tape green is significantly better than standard blue tape on painted walls — its SureBond gel activates with moisture and seals the edge) along the top edge of the baseboard where it meets the wall. Press the tape down firmly along the bottom edge using a putty knife or your fingernail — any loose section allows paint to wick underneath. Apply your trim paint with a 2-inch angled brush, loading the brush modestly, and work in the direction of the wood grain. Remove the tape while the paint is still wet, pulling it back at a 45-degree angle — if you wait until the paint is dry, pulling the tape can crack and lift the new trim paint with it.

Along the floor: This depends on your flooring. On hardwood — very common in older homes throughout Fredericton, Moncton's older neighbourhoods, and Saint John — a thin cardboard paint shield slid along the floor under the brush works better than tape. Tape doesn't adhere reliably to hardwood floors, and the gap between baseboard and floor is often irregular in older homes. Slide the shield, brush the trim, move the shield. On tile or vinyl, tape works better. On carpet, simply tuck the carpet with a wide putty knife and paint along the bottom of the baseboard.

The best long-term skill is freehand cutting in. With a quality angled sash brush (Purdy XL Sprig 2-inch is a favourite among NB painters), you can cut a straight line along the wall without tape by loading the brush lightly, holding it with your fingertips rather than gripping it, and using the tip of the bristles to feather the edge. It takes practice on a few projects, but experienced painters rarely use tape at all — it's faster and gives equally clean results.

For NB homes with older, settled baseboards, expect gaps between the baseboard and the wall, and between the baseboard and the floor. Fill these with a paintable caulk (Alex Plus or similar) before painting, smooth with a wet fingertip, allow to dry, then paint. This one step transforms the look of old baseboards — the continuous sealed line

between wall and trim is part of what distinguishes a professional paint job from a DIY one.

Practical tips: Stir your trim paint thoroughly but don't shake it — shaking creates bubbles that leave pinhole dimples in the finish, especially noticeable on semi-gloss surfaces. Use long, smooth brush strokes in the direction of the trim's length. Two thin coats look far better than one thick coat, which will sag and show brush marks. Allow at least 3–4 hours between coats for standard satin acrylic trim paint (longer in humid NB summer conditions).

When to hire a pro: If you're painting all baseboards, door casings, and window casings throughout an entire NB home, the cumulative linear footage is substantial — often 150–250 linear metres in a typical 3-bedroom home. Professional painters with efficient cutting-in technique will complete this in a fraction of the time. Whole-house trim painting typically runs \$1,500–\$3,500 professionally in the NB market.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- moose luxury painting
- Gionetterenovations
- Worry No More Handyman Services
- M And M Painting

[View all contractors ?](#)

What is the best way to paint a staircase and railing in a two-storey New Brunswick home?

Paint the staircase in stages — railing and spindles first, then the stringers and risers, then the treads last — so that you always have a dry path to move through the house while work is in progress.

A two-storey staircase is genuinely one of the trickier interior painting projects in any NB home, not because the painting itself is difficult, but because of the logistics of working at height on an angled surface while keeping the stairs passable, and because staircases in older homes typically have many intricate parts that require patience and the right tools.

Start with the railing system. If you're painting spindles (balusters), these are the most time-consuming part of the whole project. Inspect them first — in many Moncton and Fredericton homes built before 1980, the spindles have accumulated 5–8 coats of paint and are starting to look thick and rounded at the corners. Light sanding (150-grit) to knock off any drips or rough spots, followed by a thorough wipe-down, prepares them for painting. A small 1.5-inch angled brush works best on round spindles; a 2-inch brush on square profiles. Work methodically from top to bottom on each spindle, then move to the handrail. Apply two thin coats of a quality acrylic trim paint in your chosen sheen — semi-gloss is most practical on high-touch areas like railings and handrails.

The stair treads require particular attention in NB homes because they take heavy foot traffic and typically see more wear than any other painted surface in the house. If you're painting raw wood treads, use a porch and floor enamel rather than a standard trim paint — it's formulated for abrasion resistance. Sand the treads with 80-grit, fill any gaps or cracks with wood filler, sand again with 120-grit, prime with a shellac or oil-based primer for better penetration and adhesion, then apply two to three coats of porch paint, sanding lightly with 220-grit between coats. Allow full cure time — porch enamels typically need 7 days of full cure before they reach maximum hardness, even though they feel dry to touch within hours.

To keep the house accessible during the project, paint every other tread in the first session and let them dry completely (overnight is safe). Then paint the skipped treads in the second session. This way there's always a dry tread to step on, even if you have to step over a wet one. Place a drop cloth over the landing at the top and bottom to protect the flooring there.

Safety at height is a real consideration. Many two-storey NB staircases have an open well that drops 3–4 metres from the upper landing. Never lean a ladder against a spindle railing — they're not rated to hold your weight. Use a purpose-built stair ladder (an adjustable ladder with legs that can be set to different heights) or hire a professional who has the right equipment.

Practical tips: Protect the adjacent wall from spindle overspray by hanging a strip of rosin paper or plastic sheeting. Remove or tape off any carpet runner before starting — paint splatter on stair carpet is nearly impossible to fully remove. For the handrail, use a satin finish rather than semi-gloss — semi-gloss shows hand oils and fingerprints far more readily on a horizontal surface that gets constantly touched.

When to hire a pro: Staircase painting is one area where professional help genuinely pays off. Between the height risks, the intricate spindle work (which is pure labour hours), and the complexity of keeping the stairs passable, a professional painting crew can complete a full staircase and railing in a day, start to finish, cleanly. Budget \$500–\$1,200 for a typical two-storey NB staircase painted professionally.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Loves Painting Ltd.
- M And M Painting
- moose luxury painting
- Worry No More Handyman Services

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q14

How long should I wait between coats of interior paint in a humid NB summer?

In a humid NB summer, add at least 50% to the manufacturer's stated recoat time — if the label says 2 hours, plan for 3–4 hours before recoating, and watch the paint with your eyes and fingertip rather than the clock.

Humidity is the enemy of fast drying times, and New Brunswick summers are reliably humid. From June through August, outdoor relative humidity commonly ranges from 65–85%, and without central air conditioning — which many NB homes don't have — indoor humidity follows closely behind. High humidity slows the evaporation of water from latex paint, which is the mechanism by which acrylic paint dries and forms its film. A room at 70% relative humidity will see paint take roughly twice as long to reach a recoatable state compared to the same room at 40% humidity.

What happens if you recoat too soon is worth understanding. Applying a second coat over paint that hasn't fully dried traps solvents and moisture beneath the new layer. The result is a soft, gummy film that wrinkles, peels, or remains tacky for days. In worst cases it never fully cures properly and the paint surface stays soft and easily scratched. In NB summer conditions this is surprisingly easy to do — the surface may feel dry to a light touch within 2 hours, but press firmly with a fingertip: if it leaves a slight impression, it's not ready for another coat.

As a general guide for NB summer conditions (70–85% humidity): **standard latex interior paint needs 3–4 hours between coats**, not the 2 hours stated on most labels. **Premium paints with extended open time** (Benjamin Moore Regal Select, Sherwin-Williams Emerald) are even slower — budget 4–6 hours between coats in high humidity, or leave overnight to be safe. **Oil-based and alkyd-hybrid trim paints** (Benjamin Moore Advance, Sherwin-Williams ProClassic) need 8–12 hours between coats in humid summer conditions — leaving overnight is the correct approach, not an abundance of caution.

Practical strategies to speed drying in NB's humid summers: Open windows and run a box fan to create cross-ventilation — moving air across the wet paint surface dramatically speeds evaporation even in high humidity. A dehumidifier running in the room during painting and drying is even more effective — dropping room humidity from 75% to 50% can cut drying time by nearly half. Air conditioning (window units are common in NB homes) cools and dries the air simultaneously and is excellent for keeping drying times manageable. Avoid painting on days when rain is forecast or when you can't achieve meaningful ventilation.

Practical tips: Paint early in the morning when temperatures are rising and humidity is at its daily low. By mid-afternoon in a humid NB summer, the combination of peak humidity and heat can make drying conditions genuinely poor. Get your first coat on in the morning, let it cure through the afternoon, and assess whether conditions support a second coat by early evening. If in doubt, wait until the next morning — a 16-hour recoat window is never too long, but a 2-hour window in 80% humidity is often too short.

When to hire a pro: Professional painters understand this intuitively and plan their project schedules around drying conditions. If you're on a deadline — listing a house, hosting an event — hire a professional who can manage the sequence across multiple rooms, working efficiently while each surface cures properly. They also have commercial dehumidifiers and fans that accelerate drying beyond what most homeowners have access to. Get matched with a painting professional through New Brunswick Painting for a free estimate on your project.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- moose luxury painting

- Loves Painting Ltd.
- Gionetterenovations
- FRS Flooring Solutions

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q15

Can I paint over dark walls with a lighter colour without using multiple coats of primer?

You can minimise the number of coats needed, but going from dark to light almost always requires at least one coat of primer — skipping it entirely means you'll likely need 3–4 coats of paint to achieve full coverage, which costs more in time and paint than a proper primer application.

The challenge is physics. Dark pigments — particularly deep colours like navy, charcoal, hunter green, or burgundy — use very high concentrations of tinting pigment. That pigment shows through lighter topcoats. A medium grey wall needs a minimum of 2 coats of quality paint to cover fully; a deep navy or charcoal can bleed through 3 coats of an average white or light colour. Premium paint companies know this and offer a workaround: have your primer tinted at the store to a mid-tone version of your destination colour. If you're going from dark navy to a light warm white, ask the paint shop to tint your primer to a mid-tone grey. That grey primer neutralises the dark colour in a single coat and gives the white topcoats a fighting chance to cover in two coats.

Tinted primer is the real answer here, and it's a trick that professional painters in NB use routinely on renovation and repainting jobs. Most NB paint stores — Benjamin Moore dealers, Sherwin-Williams locations in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, Dulux retailers — can tint primer at the counter. A tinted primer coat followed by two quality topcoats is almost always sufficient for even very dark-to-light transitions. Without primer, you're looking at 3–4 coats of topcoat at \$55–\$75 per gallon, which costs significantly more than the single gallon of primer plus two coats of topcoat approach.

The quality of the topcoat matters enormously here. High-hiding paints — products specifically engineered for maximum pigment load and opacity — cover dark colours noticeably better than budget paints. Benjamin Moore Aura (with its Colour Lock technology), Sherwin-Williams Emerald, and Dulux Diamond are the top performers in this category available in NB. A gallon of Aura at around \$80 will cover a dark wall in two coats far more reliably than two gallons of a \$35 paint trying to do the same job. In the NB market, the premium makes financial sense on a difficult colour change.

Practical tips: When going from dark to light, order your primer and topcoats at the same time and have the staff confirm the coverage strategy — any good paint store associate will recommend the tinted primer approach without being asked. Apply primer as a thin, even coat (primer doesn't need two coats — one good coat is the entire purpose). Allow it to fully dry before topcoating. Check the wall in raking light (a flashlight held at a low angle to the wall surface) to see if any dark colour is bleeding through after the first topcoat — if so, a second primer coat is faster than three additional paint coats.

When to hire a pro: Colour transitions on a full room or whole-house scale benefit enormously from professional application — a professional painter will assess the existing colour, recommend the right primer strategy, and execute the full change efficiently. If you're changing multiple rooms from bold colours to neutrals (common when prepping a home for sale in NB's real estate market), a professional painter can often complete the whole project in 2–3 days that would take a DIYer a full week or more. Browse painting contractors in your area through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Gionetterenovations
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- Worry No More Handyman Services
- Loves Painting Ltd.

[View all contractors ?](#)

What is the best paint for a nursery or children's room in New Brunswick considering VOC safety?

Choose a zero-VOC or near-zero-VOC interior latex paint for any nursery or children's room — Benjamin Moore Natura, Sherwin-Williams Harmony, and Dulux Lifemaster are all excellent options widely available in New Brunswick, and they off-gas negligibly compared to conventional paints.

VOC stands for volatile organic compounds — the solvents in paint that evaporate as it dries and create that characteristic paint smell. In conventional interior paints, VOC levels range from 50 to 350+ grams per litre. Health Canada and Environment Canada have established standards limiting VOC content in architectural coatings sold in Canada, and all paints sold in NB comply with these limits — but "compliant" is a low bar when you're painting a room where a newborn will sleep. **Zero-VOC products (typically under 5 g/L) are specifically formulated to eliminate this off-gassing**, and the difference in air quality during and after painting is noticeable, especially in a small room with limited ventilation.

One important nuance worth knowing: **the tinting pigments added at the paint store can reintroduce VOCs into a zero-VOC base**. A zero-VOC white base becomes a low-VOC product once tinted with a deep or vivid colour, because some tint concentrates contain VOCs. To keep the final product truly zero-VOC, ask your paint retailer for zero-VOC tints — Benjamin Moore (which sells Natura as their zero-VOC line) offers zero-VOC tinting concentrates, and Sherwin-Williams can advise on zero-VOC tinting for Harmony. Pale colours (pastels, soft neutrals) require minimal tinting and stay much closer to zero-VOC levels than deep accent colours.

For NB specifically, the timing of painting matters for air quality. If you're painting a nursery in winter — which is actually ideal for interior painting given NB's dry heated indoor air — ventilation becomes critical because you can't simply open windows in -15°C weather. Use a zero-VOC product, run a bathroom exhaust fan or portable fan to circulate air, and allow the room to air out for at least 48–72 hours before placing a crib or furniture back in (even with zero-VOC paint, allowing the film to fully cure before occupancy is good practice). If painting in summer, open windows and use cross-ventilation generously.

Beyond zero-VOC paint, consider these practical choices for a children's room: Choose a washable finish — satin or eggshell at minimum. Children's rooms are hard on paint; crayon, markers, handprints, and general activity happen. A flat ceiling paint is fine for the ceiling, but the walls need to be cleanable. Benjamin Moore Natura in eggshell is both zero-VOC and washable — an excellent combination for a nursery. For accent walls or bold colour choices in a child's room, confirm the tint system with your retailer.

Budget: Zero-VOC premium paints run \$55–\$75 per gallon in NB. A typical 10x12 bedroom requires roughly 2 litres (about half a gallon) per coat, so a two-coat paint job costs \$15–\$30 in paint for a small nursery — the premium

over a conventional paint is minimal for the peace of mind it provides.

When to hire a pro: If the room has existing paint that predates the 1990s — which is common in older Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John homes — have the existing paint tested for lead before any sanding or scraping. Lead testing kits are available at hardware stores across NB for around \$15–\$25. If lead paint is confirmed, do not sand or scrape the surfaces, and strongly consider hiring a professional with lead-safe work practices, particularly in a room that will house an infant. This is not a project to take risks with. New Brunswick Painting can help you find a local painting professional experienced with lead-safe methods.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- M And M Painting
- Gionetterenovations
- Thirty Four Renovations
- Worry No More Handyman Services

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q17

How do I paint a ceiling without getting roller marks or lap lines in my Moncton home?

The secret to a lap-line-free ceiling is working fast, keeping a wet edge, and loading your roller consistently — and in NB's dry winter air, you actually have a real advantage.

Lap lines form when a section of paint starts to dry before you overlap the next roller pass. Once the edge skins over, rolling back into it creates a ridge or colour difference that shows up brutally under raking light. The solution is a combination of technique, the right products, and working in manageable sections.

Start with the right paint and roller. Ceiling paint is formulated thicker than wall paint, with special levelling agents that slow the drying time just enough to let you maintain a wet edge. Don't use leftover wall paint on ceilings — use a dedicated flat ceiling paint (5-50/gallon in NB stores). For your roller, use a 12mm (1/2-inch) nap on a smooth ceiling, and a longer 18mm (3/4-inch) nap on stipple or textured ceilings. A longer roller frame — 46 cm (18

inches) instead of 23 cm (9 inches) — lets you cover more area per pass and reduces how many times you need to reload.

The wet-edge technique is everything. Work in strips that run the full width of the room, not in patches. Cut in about 5-10 cm along the perimeter with a brush, then immediately roll that strip before moving to the next. Roll in one direction (say, north to south), then lightly roll perpendicular (east to west) to flatten any stipple texture from the roller. Never stop mid-strip. If your phone rings, let it ring — an interrupted wet edge will show as a lap line.

In Moncton specifically, humidity matters throughout the year. In summer when humidity is high (60-80%), your ceiling paint will stay workable slightly longer — that can actually help, but it also means slower dry times between coats. In the winter, Moncton homes with forced-air heat get quite dry (20-30% relative humidity), and ceiling paint can skin over faster than you expect. If you're winter-painting, work in smaller strips or add a wet edge extender product like Floetrol to slow the open time just slightly.

Practical tips for clean results:

- Add a small amount of Floetrol (about 60-120 ml per gallon) to slow drying slightly in dry conditions
- Keep a full roller — reload often. A nearly-dry roller drags and leaves marks
- Roll toward a light source (window or work light on the floor pointing up) so you can see coverage as you go
- Cut in one section at a time, don't cut in the entire room first and then roll
- Apply two thin coats rather than one heavy coat — thick coats sag and take forever to level

DIY or hire a pro? For a single room with a standard 8-foot ceiling, most homeowners can tackle this themselves with careful technique. For vaulted ceilings, open-concept spaces over 20 feet across, or if your stipple/popcorn texture needs to be preserved, a professional painter with a proper extension pole and commercial roller will save you a lot of frustration. A professional painter in Moncton will typically charge 50-350 per room just for the ceiling, depending on size and condition.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- moose luxury painting
- Worry No More Handyman Services
- Thirty Four Renovations
- Loves Painting Ltd.

Q18

What paint finish is best for hallways and high-traffic areas in a New Brunswick home with kids and pets?

For hallways and high-traffic areas with kids and pets, satin finish is the clear winner — it's washable, scuff-resistant, and still looks clean and warm on the walls.

Finish (or sheen) is one of the most practical decisions in interior painting. Flat and matte paints look beautiful but absorb grease, scuff marks, and fingerprints like a sponge, and wiping them aggressively just spreads the stain or wears the paint off entirely. Eggshell is a slight step up but still doesn't hold up to heavy daily abuse. Satin sits at the sweet spot — enough sheen to be cleanable and durable, not so shiny that it highlights every dent and imperfection in your walls.

For a household with kids and pets, the ability to wipe down walls without repainting is non-negotiable. Muddy paw prints, crayon marks, food splashes near the kitchen, scuff marks from backpacks hitting the wall — all of these wipe clean from a satin finish with a damp cloth or mild cleaner. Semi-gloss is even more durable and washable, and works well in very heavy-use spots like the lower half of a hallway wall, around light switches, and near door frames where hands constantly touch. Some homeowners use satin on the upper portion and semi-gloss on the lower section (below 1.2 metres) in hallways with particularly rough treatment.

Product quality matters enormously here. In New Brunswick, the premium options — Benjamin Moore Regal Select (5-75/gallon) in satin, or Sherwin-Williams Duration (0-80/gallon) in satin — contain higher levels of binders and scrub-resistance additives that make a real difference over five or ten years in a busy hallway. Mid-range options (0-55/gallon) are fine for a guest bedroom, but in a hallway that gets washed twice a month, you'll see the mid-range paints start to thin and dull after 18-24 months of regular cleaning. The premium paint pays for itself.

NB housing stock consideration: Many New Brunswick homes, particularly in Saint John's older neighbourhoods, Fredericton's Victorian-era streetscapes, and Moncton's pre-war housing, have horsehair plaster or older drywall with uneven surfaces. Semi-gloss will highlight every bump and ding on those walls — satin is more forgiving on imperfect surfaces while still delivering the washability you need.

Colour and pet hair tip: If you have a light-coloured dog or cat, darker hallway colours make pet hair on walls more visible. Lighter, warm neutrals tend to hide it better. Conversely, if your pet is dark, pale walls show hair transfers at shoulder height (where they brush against the wall). Something to keep in mind when choosing your colour.

For a typical NB hallway (roughly 12-15 linear feet), a professional painter will charge 00-700 including prep, priming if needed, and two coats of a quality satin. It's a project many homeowners tackle themselves, but the hallway is literally the most-seen space in your home every single day — a quality finish and careful cutting in around door frames and trim is worth the effort.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Worry No More Handyman Services
- Gionetterenovations
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- M And M Painting

[View all contractors ?](#)

What is the best approach to painting wood panelling in an older New Brunswick home?

Painting over wood panelling is entirely doable and can dramatically modernize an older New Brunswick home — the key is thorough cleaning, the right primer, and accepting that the grooves between panels will still be visible unless you fill them.

Wood panelling was a go-to wall finish in NB homes from the 1950s through the 1980s, and it's extremely common in basement rec rooms, living rooms, and bedrooms of homes built in those decades. The good news: painting it is a legitimate, cost-effective alternative to removing it. The bad news: shortcuts will show up immediately — either as paint that peels within a year, or as bleed-through from tannins and resin in the wood.

Cleaning and prep is the make-or-break step. Panelling collects grease, smoke residue, dust, and cleaning product buildup over the years. Wipe it down thoroughly with a TSP (trisodium phosphate) solution or a strong degreaser like Krud Kutter. Let it dry completely — at least 24 hours. Then sand the panelling lightly (120-150 grit) to degloss the factory finish. The old finish is often a varnish or lacquer that paint won't bond to without scuffing it first. Don't skip this step, especially in NB where older panelling often has a very hard factory sheen.

The right primer is critical. Many NB homeowners paint panelling and then watch it peel, discolour, or show bleed-through within months. The culprit is almost always using a wall paint directly, or even a standard latex primer, on wood that's high in tannins (cedar, pine, fir) or that has old oil-based finish on it. Use a shellac-based stain-blocking primer like Zinsser BIN (about 0-65/gallon) or an oil-based primer for the first coat. These bond to previously finished surfaces and block tannins and knots from bleeding through your topcoat. A quality latex topcoat goes on top with no issues. One full coat of shellac primer + two coats of latex wall paint is the reliable sequence.

Decide how to handle the grooves. The V-grooves between panels are what give the space that dated panelling look. If you want to minimize them, fill each groove with paintable latex caulk or lightweight spackling compound, smooth it flat with a putty knife, let it dry, then sand smooth before priming. This is tedious work but transforms the result — you'll still see a faint line in strong raking light, but from normal viewing distance the wall reads as smooth. If you're less concerned about the grooves, skip the filling and embrace the texture — it can actually look quite charming painted in a deep navy or forest green.

NB-specific consideration: In older homes in Saint John's North End, Moncton's Elmwood area, or Fredericton's Skyline Acres, basement panelling often has moisture issues lurking behind it from older foundations without proper drainage. If you notice any soft spots, discolouration, or musty smell, address the moisture source before painting — paint won't fix the underlying problem and will peel within a season. Check for moisture with a meter; wood should be below 15% before painting.

For a typical basement rec room with panelled walls (roughly 60-80 linear feet), expect to spend 50-250 on materials (primer, paint, caulk, sandpaper). A professional painter in NB will typically quote 00-1,800 for the full job including prep, priming, filling grooves, and two finish coats. This is a project many determined DIYers tackle successfully — but the prep work takes longer than the painting itself.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Worry No More Handyman Services
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- Thirty Four Renovations
- M And M Painting

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q20

What is the best time of year to do interior painting in New Brunswick and why?

Winter is the best time of year for interior painting in New Brunswick — specifically the period from November through March — when forced-air heat keeps indoor humidity low and rooms dry fast, giving you excellent conditions for a smooth, durable finish.

This might seem counterintuitive since most people associate home projects with spring and summer, but New Brunswick's climate actually makes winter the ideal season for interior work. Here's the logic: paint dries and cures through the evaporation of water (in latex paints) or solvents (in oil-based paints). The drier the air, the faster and more completely this happens. NB homes heated with forced-air systems in January and February typically sit at 25-35% relative humidity — low enough that a coat of latex wall paint is fully dry to the touch in under an hour and ready for a second coat in two to four hours. That's as good as conditions get.

High humidity is paint's enemy indoors. In summer, NB homes without central air conditioning can reach 60-70% indoor humidity during humid stretches in July and August — especially in Fredericton's river valley and along the Fundy coast near Saint John and Shediac. At that humidity level, latex paint dries slowly, runs and sags more easily, and is more prone to drips, brush marks, and lap lines because the wet edge stays open too long for controlled work on ceilings and trim. That doesn't make summer impossible for interior painting, but it's noticeably

harder to achieve a perfect finish, and recoat times stretch considerably.

The other advantage of winter painting is that painters are typically more available and, in some cases, offer better pricing during the slower off-season. The exterior painting season (May through October) is when professional painters in NB are at peak demand, and booking time in spring is often competitive. A winter interior project lets you take your time getting multiple quotes, schedule at your convenience, and work with a painter who isn't rushing to fit you in before the weather turns.

Practical winter painting tips for NB homes: Keep the house at a steady temperature — around 18-21°C is ideal. Avoid painting near exterior doors that get frequently opened in cold weather, as cold drafts can chill wet paint and slow curing. Ventilate briefly during and after painting (even in winter) to remove fumes, but don't leave windows open — bring fresh air in for 15-20 minutes and then close up again. In very dry winter conditions (below 25% humidity), some painters add a small amount of Floetrol to latex paint to extend open time slightly and improve brush levelling on trim work.

The one caveat: If your home has significant moisture issues — active leaks, a damp basement affecting wall moisture, or poorly sealed exterior walls — winter painting can be problematic because the moisture source doesn't go away in cold weather. Fix those issues first regardless of season. But for the vast majority of NB homes in solid condition, picking up a brush in January while there's two feet of snow outside is genuinely smart planning.

If you're scheduling a whole-house interior refresh, consider booking your painter in October or November before the holiday rush fills their calendar. Many NB painters are happy to schedule winter interior work and can turn around a full house interior in two to three weeks.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- Loves Painting Ltd.
- Thirty Four Renovations
- FRS Flooring Solutions
- Worry No More Handyman Services

[View all contractors ?](#)

Q21

How do I paint around light switches and electrical outlets safely in my NB home?

Painting around electrical switches and outlets is safe and straightforward — the key is removing the cover plates entirely before you paint, never painting over them, and keeping paint away from the electrical contacts inside the box.

This is one of the most common questions from first-time DIY painters, and the good news is there's no real electrical risk involved as long as you follow the simple rules. You do not need to turn off the circuit breaker to paint around outlets (as long as you're careful), though turning it off adds a margin of safety if you're accident-prone or working quickly.

Always remove the cover plates. This is the single best thing you can do to get a clean, professional result around outlets and switches. Use a flat-head screwdriver to unscrew the single centre screw on each cover plate and set the plates and screws aside in a small bag or bowl so you don't lose them. With the plate removed, you can paint all the way to the edge of the electrical box cleanly, without trying to cut in around the rectangular plastic frame. When the plates go back on after painting, they cover the rough edge of the wall paint perfectly. The result looks 100 times better than trying to tape around the plates.

Safety basics while painting with the plate off. Don't jam your brush into the outlet opening. Keep your wet brush away from the actual outlet slots. Don't spray paint directly into an open outlet box. If you're using an airless sprayer, mask the outlet box opening with a small piece of tape over the slots while spraying, and remove it when done. For most homeowners doing careful brush-and-roller work, none of this is an issue — the exposed outlet with its cover off is just a flat area of wall you cut around neatly.

Dealing with paint on the outlets themselves. If you're repainting a room that's been painted before, you may find the outlet and switch covers are already coated with old paint and look dingy. This is your chance to either clean them (a razor blade carefully scraping old paint off a plastic cover works well), replace them (a new outlet cover costs ~\$3 at any hardware store — it's often the cheapest upgrade you can make to a room), or paint them. White plastic covers can be painted with the same paint as your walls to blend them in — just spray them lightly while they're removed, and they look intentional rather than painted-over.

In older NB homes — particularly those built before 1990 in areas like Moncton's Wheeler Park, Fredericton's Dufferin Heights, or Saint John's East Side — you may encounter older two-prong ungrounded outlets, porcelain light switches, or even aluminum wiring. None of these change your painting approach, but if you notice anything alarming inside the electrical box (scorching, melted insulation, wires that seem fused together), stop, replace the cover, and call an electrician before proceeding. This is rare but worth mentioning for older NB housing stock.

Reattaching after painting. Let the paint dry fully before reinstalling the cover plates — at least a few hours, ideally overnight. Pressing a freshly painted surface against a plastic outlet cover can cause the paint to stick and peel when you eventually remove the plate again. Once the paint is cured, the plates screw back on in seconds and will cover any rough edges at the box perimeter beautifully.

This is entirely a DIY task — there's no need to hire a professional specifically for this step. It's one of those small details that separates a carefully done DIY paint job from a rushed one.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- M And M Painting
- Worry No More Handyman Services
- Thirty Four Renovations
- Loves Painting Ltd.

[View all contractors ?](#)

How many coats of paint do I need for interior walls when changing from a dark to a light colour?

When going from a dark colour to a light one, plan for three coats minimum — a tinted primer coat plus two coats of your new light colour — and understand that skipping the primer will cost you more time and paint in the long run, not less.

Dark-to-light colour changes are one of the most frustrating interior painting challenges, and the reason so many homeowners end up in trouble is that they underestimate how much work the dark colour below is doing. A deep navy, forest green, or burgundy wall can require four or even five coats of a pale colour to fully cover it without tinting or shadows showing through. The professional approach bypasses that entirely.

The tinted primer strategy. The most efficient sequence is: apply one coat of a quality latex primer tinted by the paint store to approximately 50-75% of your new topcoat colour (most paint stores will do this for free or a small fee), let it dry fully, then apply two coats of your final light colour. The tinted primer does two things at once — it blocks the dark colour below and gives you a closer base for your light topcoat, so those two finish coats go on cleanly and completely. Without the tinted primer, you're essentially asking your light paint to fight the dark colour alone, and most light latex paints simply aren't opaque enough to win that fight in two coats.

Paint opacity varies by product and colour. This is where paint quality pays off directly. Premium paints like Benjamin Moore Regal Select or Sherwin-Williams Duration have higher pigment loads and better hide than mid-range paints — they'll cover better in fewer coats. Certain light colours are particularly challenging: bright white, pale yellow, and pastel pink all have low pigment opacity and will fight dark colours more than a rich cream or warm grey. If you're going to a very light, airy colour, tinting your primer is especially important.

What happens if you skip the primer? You'll likely find yourself doing four, five, or even six coats to get the dark colour to stop showing. Each coat costs you paint (0-75/gallon), drying time (2-4 hours per coat in NB conditions), and labour. A tinted primer coat at the start is almost always faster and cheaper than two extra topcoats at the end. The math isn't close.

NB-specific note on older homes. In many Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton homes built before 1980, the existing dark paint may be oil-based. Oil paint (alkyd) was the standard for trim and sometimes walls through the 1970s. If you try to apply a water-based latex primer directly over oil-based paint without proper prep, the latex won't adhere and will peel. The test is simple: rub the wall firmly with a cotton ball soaked in rubbing alcohol — if colour comes off on the cotton ball, it's latex. If nothing comes off, it's likely oil-based. For oil-based walls, use a shellac-based or oil-based bonding primer for your first coat, then you can apply latex topcoats over that without

issue.

In practical terms for a typical NB bedroom (say, 12x12 feet with 8-foot ceilings), changing from a dark charcoal grey to a soft off-white, you'll use approximately one gallon of tinted primer and two gallons of topcoat, plus some time. A professional painter will typically quote 50-700 for a room of that size including the primer coat and two finish coats — the extra primer coat adds 0-100 to the quote over a simple same-colour refresh, and it's absolutely worth paying for.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Expressions Painting
- M And M Painting
- moose luxury painting
- Thirty Four Renovations
- FRS Flooring Solutions

[View all contractors ?](#)

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by New Brunswick Painting. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any painting project. Information is current as of May 3, 2026 and may change. Visit newbrunswickpainting.com for the latest answers.