

NEW BRUNSWICK PAINTING

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# Paint Selection & Colours

Paint types, brands, colours, sheens, finishes, and product recommendations for NB painting projects

18 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

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## How do I pick an exterior paint colour that complements the red brick common on older homes in Saint John and Fredericton?

**Red brick is one of the most versatile exterior materials for paint colour pairing, and the historic red brick homes throughout Saint John's uptown and Fredericton's downtown offer excellent examples of timeless colour combinations that work beautifully in New Brunswick's Maritime setting.**

The key to complementing red brick is understanding its undertones. Most red brick in older NB homes has warm undertones — ranging from orange-red to brown-red — which means warm, earthy paint colours will create the most harmonious look. **Classic white trim remains the most popular and foolproof choice** because it provides crisp contrast without competing with the brick's natural warmth.

For **trim, fascia, and soffits**, consider these proven combinations: **Pure white or off-white** (Benjamin Moore Cloud White, Sherwin-Williams Pure White) creates a clean, traditional look that never goes out of style. **Warm cream or ivory** (Benjamin Moore Windham Cream, Dulux Navajo White) offers a softer, more historic appearance that's particularly beautiful on Victorian and Edwardian homes common in both cities. **Soft gray with warm undertones** (Benjamin Moore Revere Pewter, Sherwin-Williams Accessible Beige) provides a more contemporary feel while still respecting the brick's warmth.

**For doors, shutters, or accent colours**, you have more creative freedom. **Deep forest green** complements red brick beautifully and is historically appropriate for Maritime homes — it's the colour of choice for many heritage properties in Saint John's Trinity Royal area. **Navy blue** creates a sophisticated, nautical feel that's perfect for NB's coastal setting. **Charcoal gray** offers a modern touch while remaining neutral enough not to clash. **Black** provides dramatic contrast and works especially well on front doors and window trim.

**Avoid cool colors** like bright blues, purples, or stark grays with blue undertones — these will clash with the warm red brick and look jarring. Similarly, avoid colors that compete with the brick's intensity, like bright reds, oranges, or yellows.

**Consider your home's architectural style** when making your final choice. The Georgian and Victorian homes in Saint John's heritage areas look stunning with traditional white trim and deep green or navy accents. The more modest worker cottages throughout both cities can handle slightly bolder colour combinations while still respecting the brick's natural beauty.

**Test your colour choices** by purchasing sample sizes and painting large swatches directly on your trim in different lighting conditions. Red brick can look dramatically different in morning versus afternoon light, and NB's frequent overcast skies will affect how colours appear throughout the day.

**Need help finding a professional painter** to execute your vision? New Brunswick Painting can match you with experienced local painters who understand how to work with historic brick homes and achieve the classic, timeless look these beautiful Maritime properties deserve.

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Q2

## What paint sheen should I use in each room of my New Brunswick home and how does humidity factor into that decision?

**Choosing the right paint sheen for each room is crucial for both appearance and durability, and New Brunswick's variable humidity levels throughout the year make this decision even more important.** The wrong sheen in a high-moisture area leads to peeling, staining, and frequent repainting.

**Living Rooms and Bedrooms** should use **eggshell or satin finish**. These sheens hide minor wall imperfections while still being washable when your kids leave fingerprints or scuff marks. In NB's dry winter months (often below 30% humidity with forced-air heating), these finishes cure beautifully and provide excellent durability. During humid summer months, they're still moisture-resistant enough for comfort.

**Kitchens and Bathrooms** require **satin or semi-gloss finishes** due to moisture, grease, and frequent cleaning needs. NB bathrooms without exhaust fans (common in older homes) can see humidity spikes to 80-90% during showers. Semi-gloss paint forms a harder, more moisture-resistant surface that won't absorb steam or cooking vapors. Many Saint John and Fredericton homeowners in older homes find that eggshell paint in bathrooms starts peeling within two years due to moisture penetration.

**Ceilings** should almost always be **flat or matte finish**. Ceiling paint is formulated to minimize roller marks and provide excellent coverage in one coat. The flat finish hides imperfections in older NB homes where ceilings may have minor cracks or texture variations. Even in bathrooms, use a high-quality flat ceiling paint rather than glossy wall paint.

**Trim, Baseboards, and Doors** need **semi-gloss or gloss finish** for maximum durability and easy cleaning. These high-contact surfaces take daily abuse from shoes, hands, and cleaning. The harder finish resists scuffs and wipes clean easily. In NB's older homes with beautiful original wood trim, semi-gloss acrylic paint enhances the craftsmanship while protecting the wood.

**New Brunswick's humidity swings** create unique challenges. Winter indoor humidity often drops to 25-30%, which is actually ideal for paint curing — low humidity means faster drying and excellent leveling. However, summer humidity can climb to 60-70% indoors without air conditioning, especially in coastal areas like Shediac or Saint

John. High humidity slows paint drying dramatically and can cause issues with water-based paints if ventilation is poor.

**Practical application tips:** In summer, run dehumidifiers or fans during interior painting to keep humidity manageable. Paint early in the day when humidity is typically lower. For bathrooms and kitchens, consider upgrading to **moisture-resistant primer** before applying your topcoat — this is especially important in older NB homes that may lack proper vapor barriers.

**Avoid common mistakes:** Never use flat paint in kitchens or bathrooms — it absorbs moisture and stains permanently. Don't use high-gloss on large wall areas — it highlights every imperfection and creates glare. Semi-gloss is the practical maximum for most wall applications.

**When to hire a professional:** If you're repainting multiple rooms or dealing with moisture-damaged surfaces in older NB homes, a professional painter can assess whether primer upgrades or surface repairs are needed before applying the finish coats. They also have spray equipment that creates flawless finishes on trim and doors.

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Q3

## How do I choose a paint colour for my home office in Oromocto NB that promotes focus without feeling too dark or clinical?

**Choosing the right paint colour for your home office is about balancing psychological comfort with practical lighting needs — aim for colours that energize without overwhelming, especially important during**

## **New Brunswick's darker winter months.**

The key to a productive home office colour is finding what designers call the "focus zone" — colours that are calming enough to reduce stress but engaging enough to maintain alertness. **Soft blues and greens** are scientifically proven to enhance concentration while reducing eye strain, making them ideal for computer work. Consider colours like Benjamin Moore's "Palladian Blue" or "October Mist" — these provide gentle colour interest without being distracting.

**Warm neutrals with subtle undertones** work exceptionally well in NB home offices because they adapt to our changing natural light throughout the seasons. During Oromocto's bright summer days, a warm greige (grey-beige blend) like Sherwin-Williams "Accessible Beige" feels fresh and professional. In winter's limited daylight, the same colour provides cozy warmth without feeling cave-like. Avoid pure grey or stark white, which can feel institutional and cold during NB's long winter months.

**Consider your office's natural light exposure** when making your final choice. North-facing offices in Oromocto get consistent but cooler light — warm these spaces with colours that have yellow or peach undertones like Benjamin Moore's "White Dove" or "Cloud White." South-facing offices get strong, warm light and can handle cooler colours like soft sage greens or powder blues. East and west exposures change dramatically throughout the day, so stick with adaptable neutrals.

**Accent wall strategies** work particularly well in home offices. Paint three walls in a soft neutral and create one feature wall in a deeper, more energizing colour behind your desk or bookshelf. This gives you visual interest and a sense of boundaries in your workspace without overwhelming the room. Deep navy, forest green, or even a sophisticated charcoal can work beautifully as accent colours.

For the **paint finish**, choose eggshell or satin for easy cleaning and subtle light reflection that reduces eye strain. Flat paint absorbs too much light and shows every scuff, while semi-gloss can create glare on computer screens. A quality eggshell finish like Benjamin Moore's Regal Select provides durability for a workspace while maintaining a professional appearance.

**Test your colour choices** by painting large sample patches (at least 2x2 feet) on different walls and observing them throughout the day and evening under both natural and artificial light. NB's variable weather means your office lighting changes frequently — what looks perfect on a sunny morning might feel drab on an overcast afternoon.

**When to hire a professional:** If your home office has challenging features like built-in shelving, wainscoting, or multiple trim elements that need coordinating colours, a professional painter can ensure clean lines and a polished finish that enhances your professional image during video calls.

Need help finding a professional painter in the Oromocto area? New Brunswick Painting can match you with local contractors who understand how to work with our Maritime light conditions and can help you achieve that perfect

productive atmosphere in your home office.

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## What is the difference between flat, eggshell, satin, and semi-gloss paint finishes and when should I use each?

The sheen level of a paint finish affects how much light it reflects, how washable the surface is, and how much it highlights wall imperfections — and matching the right sheen to the right room makes a significant difference in both how the room looks and how long the paint job lasts. Choosing the wrong finish is one of the most common mistakes NB homeowners make, especially in kitchens and bathrooms.

Paint finishes are arranged on a spectrum from lowest to highest sheen: **flat (matte) ? eggshell ? satin ? semi-gloss ? high-gloss**. As the sheen increases, the surface becomes more reflective, more washable, more moisture-resistant, and better at highlighting surface imperfections. Lower sheens hide wall texture and bumps but scuff more easily and cannot be cleaned without removing the paint.

**Flat or matte** is the lowest sheen — essentially no light reflection. It is excellent for ceilings because it hides texture, seams, and imperfections beautifully and does not create glare from light fixtures. It is also good for accent walls with uneven plaster or older textured walls in Fredericton or Saint John heritage homes where you want to downplay the surface rather than highlight it. The major limitation is that it scuffs, marks, and stains easily, and cannot be scrubbed without leaving shiny spots. Never use flat paint in kitchens, bathrooms, hallways, or children's rooms.

**Eggshell** has a very slight sheen — just enough to give the surface a subtle warmth and a small amount of washability. It is the go-to finish for most living rooms, dining rooms, and formal spaces where the walls are not subject to heavy touching, splashing, or greasy hands. In a typical NB home, eggshell is a practical all-purpose choice for bedrooms and main-floor living areas. It hides imperfections much better than satin or semi-gloss while being somewhat cleanable with a damp cloth.

**Satin** has a smooth, low-gloss finish that reflects noticeably more light than eggshell. It is considerably more washable and moisture-resistant, making it the right choice for **children's rooms, playrooms, hallways, home offices, and laundry rooms** — any room that sees regular handprints, scuffs, or cleaning. Many NB homeowners use satin on all their main-floor walls because it is a good compromise between durability and a natural appearance. Note that on walls with significant bumps, old repair patches, or texture variations, satin will reveal them more than eggshell or flat.

**Semi-gloss** is the workhorse finish for trim, baseboards, doors, window frames, and bathroom and kitchen walls. It is noticeably shiny, very washable, and highly moisture-resistant. In bathrooms and kitchens, semi-gloss wall paint handles steam, splashing, and regular wiping without degrading. For all interior trim, baseboards, and doors, semi-gloss or satin is the standard — flat or eggshell on trim looks dull and scuffs immediately.

**High-gloss** is reserved for very specific applications — decorative trim details, furniture, cabinet doors where maximum hardness and a lacquer-like finish are wanted. It dramatically highlights any surface flaw, so prep must be impeccable before applying it.

A quick rule of thumb that works for most NB homes: flat for ceilings, eggshell or satin for bedroom and living room walls, satin for high-traffic interior spaces, semi-gloss for trim and wet rooms. When in doubt, go one step up in sheen rather than one step down — a slightly shinier wall can always be lived with, but flat paint in a kitchen is a frustrating mistake you will want to repaint within a year.

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Q5

## Is Benjamin Moore paint worth the higher price compared to Behr for interior painting in NB?

**For most interior painting projects in New Brunswick, Benjamin Moore is worth the extra cost — but the real question is where you are painting and how long you want the results to last.**

The price gap between the two is real. Benjamin Moore Regal Select or Aura typically runs \$65-80/gallon at an independent paint store, while Behr Ultra or Premium Plus at Home Depot lands at \$40-55/gallon. That difference adds up on a full house repaint. But paint is not just a colour on the wall — it is a film-forming product whose pigment load, resin quality, and coverage rate determine how many coats you need and how long the finish holds up.

Benjamin Moore consistently outperforms in two areas that matter most to NB homeowners: **coverage and washability**. A premium Benjamin Moore product typically covers 350-400 square feet per gallon on a properly

primed surface and holds up to repeated cleaning without scrubbing away the sheen. In high-traffic areas like hallways, mudrooms, and kitchens — especially in homes with kids or pets — that extra durability translates into fewer touch-ups and a longer interval before repainting. Behr products have improved considerably over the years and are a legitimate option for lower-traffic spaces like bedrooms, but professionals in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John overwhelmingly prefer Benjamin Moore for its consistency and predictable results.

**One practical consideration specific to New Brunswick** is access to colour matching and paint stores. Benjamin Moore sells through independent paint retailers across NB, and those stores tend to have knowledgeable staff who can match colours, recommend the right sheen, and troubleshoot problems. Behr is only available through Home Depot locations in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John — if you run short mid-project or need a quick custom match in Miramichi, Bathurst, or Shediac, that becomes a logistical problem.

### **Practical tips for making the choice:**

- For bedrooms, home offices, and low-traffic guest rooms, Behr Ultra or Behr Premium Plus Enamel is a reasonable mid-range option that saves money without a major quality sacrifice.
- For kitchens, bathrooms, kids' rooms, hallways, and trim, spend the extra money on Benjamin Moore Regal Select (eggshell or satin for walls, semi-gloss for trim) — you will wash those surfaces regularly and you want a film that holds up.
- Always factor in coverage: if a cheaper paint requires three coats where Benjamin Moore needs two, the cost difference narrows significantly once you account for extra paint and labour time.

**For DIYers**, Benjamin Moore is also more forgiving to work with — better levelling, longer open time, and smoother brush and roller application. For a professional painter quoting a fixed-price job, paint quality directly affects how many gallons they need and how many coats the job takes, which is why experienced NB painters almost always spec Benjamin Moore or Sherwin-Williams on their estimates. If you are painting yourself, the extra \$15-25 per gallon on Benjamin Moore in a kitchen or living room is genuinely worth it.

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Q6

## Benjamin Moore vs Sherwin-Williams for NB exterior painting — which brand performs better in Maritime climate?

**Both Benjamin Moore and Sherwin-Williams are excellent choices for New Brunswick exterior painting — the honest answer is that either brand's top-tier 100% acrylic latex will hold up in Maritime conditions, and the better question is which product line fits your specific situation.**

That said, there are real differences between the two that matter in NB's climate. Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior and Regal Select Exterior are known for exceptional colour depth, UV resistance, and outstanding adhesion on the wood siding and clapboard that makes up the majority of older homes in Moncton, Saint John, and Fredericton. Sherwin-Williams Duration Exterior and Emerald Exterior compete directly, offering excellent flexibility and moisture resistance, and Duration in particular carries a lifetime warranty for owner-occupied homes. Both products run \$65-80/gallon at their respective stores.

**The Maritime climate stresses exterior paint in three specific ways** that should guide your product choice: freeze-thaw cycling (NB sees 100+ freeze-thaw cycles annually in many areas), coastal salt air exposure, and high seasonal humidity. For **freeze-thaw performance**, 100% acrylic latex from either brand performs well because the film stays flexible rather than becoming brittle like older oil-based paints. For **salt air environments** — coastal Saint John, Shediac, Baie Verte, and the Fundy shore communities — look specifically for products marketed as moisture-resistant; Sherwin-Williams SuperPaint Exterior and Benjamin Moore ben Exterior are solid mid-range options for protected areas, but for exposed coastal elevations, step up to Aura or Duration. For **UV resistance on south- and west-facing walls**, both Aura Exterior and Duration Exterior use advanced pigment technology that holds colour significantly longer than entry-level products.

**Availability is a practical factor in NB.** Sherwin-Williams has dedicated stores in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John where staff know the product line well and contractors can open accounts for volume pricing. Benjamin Moore is sold through independent paint retailers across the province, including smaller communities where Sherwin-Williams doesn't have a location. If you are in Bathurst, Miramichi, or Woodstock, Benjamin Moore's independent dealer network may give you better local service and access.

One tiebreaker worth considering: **contractor familiarity.** Most NB painting professionals have a strong preference for one brand or the other based on experience, and they typically get better pricing through their trade accounts. If you are hiring a painter, ask what product they plan to use and why — a contractor who confidently specifies a

premium product by name and explains the sheen and formula choice is demonstrating real expertise.

For DIYers planning their own exterior project in the May-October window, either Sherwin-Williams Duration Exterior or Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior will give you a durable, beautiful result on NB clapboard, cedar shingle, or wood trim — provided the surface prep is thorough. No premium paint will compensate for painting over damp wood, peeling existing paint, or skipping primer on bare wood.

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## What paint sheen should I use in a kitchen in New Brunswick where walls get grease splatter?

For kitchen walls that deal with grease splatter, use a satin or semi-gloss finish — satin is the most popular choice because it is cleanable without looking too shiny, while semi-gloss is the right call if your kitchen sees heavy cooking and frequent washing.

Sheen is not just about appearance — it is directly tied to washability. Flat and matte finishes have a porous surface that absorbs grease, steam, and food particles. Once that happens, you cannot wipe a flat wall clean without removing the paint itself. In an NB kitchen where you are cooking through long winter months with the windows closed, that grease accumulates fast. Eggshell is a step above flat and handles light cleaning, but it still is not ideal for zones near the stove and sink. Satin has a smooth, slightly lustrous surface that allows you to wipe grease and splatter with a damp cloth or mild cleaner without damaging the paint film.

**Semi-gloss** is the right sheen for the highest-impact zones: within a metre of the stove, the wall behind the sink, and any area that gets regular scrubbing. It is noticeably shinier than satin, which some homeowners dislike on large wall surfaces, but it is genuinely the most durable and cleanable finish available in a standard wall paint. Many NB painters use satin for the main kitchen walls and bump up to semi-gloss on the section directly beside or behind the range — a practical compromise that gives you cleanability where you need it without making the whole kitchen feel like a bathroom.

One thing to keep in mind about NB kitchens specifically: **many older homes in Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton have lower ceilings and smaller kitchen footprints** where a shiny wall finish is more noticeable. If your kitchen is on the smaller side, satin throughout is a comfortable middle ground — it still cleans up well and is far more forgiving than eggshell or flat.

### Practical tips for your kitchen repaint:

- Use a high-quality acrylic-alkyd hybrid paint in satin or semi-gloss for the best combination of hardness, cleanability, and colour retention. Benjamin Moore ben Interior in satin or Regal Select Satin both perform well in kitchens. Sherwin-Williams Duration Interior Satin is another reliable choice.
- Always use a degreaser or TSP (trisodium phosphate) wash on kitchen walls before painting. Cooking grease creates an invisible film that prevents paint adhesion — painting over it without cleaning leads to peeling within a year, regardless of paint quality.
- On the trim, baseboards, and cabinet frames, use a semi-gloss or high-gloss acrylic-alkyd. Hard, washable surfaces everywhere in a kitchen extend the life of the whole paint job significantly.

**For most NB homeowners**, a kitchen repaint is a manageable DIY project if the existing walls are in decent shape. But if your kitchen has significant grease buildup, old flat paint that is staining, or walls that have never been properly primed, a professional can do the thorough prep work — cleaning, light sanding, spot priming — that makes the difference between a paint job that lasts 2 years and one that lasts 7 or 8.

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Q8

## What is the difference between latex and oil-based paint and when should I use each in NB?

**Latex paint (water-based acrylic) is the right choice for almost every residential painting project in New Brunswick today — but oil-based paint still has specific applications where it genuinely outperforms, particularly on certain trim surfaces and where you need maximum hardness.**

The core difference is in the binder — the part of the paint that forms the film and determines durability. **Latex paint** uses an acrylic or vinyl-acrylic resin suspended in water. It dries relatively quickly (touch-dry in 1-2 hours, recoatable in 2-4 hours), cleans up with soap and water, has lower VOC content, and stays flexible as it ages. **Oil-based paint** (also called alkyd paint) uses a linseed or soy oil-derived resin suspended in mineral spirits or other solvents. It dries slowly (touch-dry in 6-8 hours, recoatable in 24 hours), requires solvent cleanup, produces more fumes, and dries to an exceptionally hard, smooth film. Traditional oil-based paint becomes brittle with age, which is a critical problem in New Brunswick's climate.

**In NB's Maritime climate, 100% acrylic latex has largely replaced oil-based paint for exterior use** — and for good reason. Acrylic latex stays flexible through the province's 100+ annual freeze-thaw cycles, while an oil-based

film becomes rigid and cracks as temperatures swing from -20°C in February to +30°C in July. Acrylic latex is also breathable — it allows moisture vapour to escape from wood siding and trim — while oil-based paint traps moisture, leading to blistering and peeling in the damp Maritime environment. If you see peeling paint in sheets on older NB homes, there is a good chance old alkyd or oil-based exterior paint is involved.

### **Where oil-based (or alkyd) paint still earns its place:**

- **Interior trim, doors, and railings** — the extremely hard film that oil-based alkyd paint produces resists dings, scrapes, and wear better than most latex products. This matters on stair railings, door edges, and baseboards that take daily abuse.
- However, modern **acrylic-alkyd hybrid paints** — products like Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic Waterborne Alkyd — bridge this gap beautifully. They clean up with water, have lower VOC content, dry faster than traditional oil, and cure to a hard, smooth finish that rivals traditional alkyd. These are the best of both worlds and are now the dominant choice among NB painting professionals for interior trim and cabinet work.

### **Practical guidance for NB homeowners:**

- For walls and ceilings: always use latex. No exceptions.
- For exterior: always use 100% acrylic latex. Never oil-based on NB exteriors.
- For interior trim and doors: use a water-based acrylic-alkyd hybrid (Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic) for the best combination of hardness and workability.
- For stain blocking over water stains, smoke, or knots: shellac-based primer (Zinsser BIN) or oil-based primer as a spot coat, then latex top coats.

**One important note for older NB homes:** if you are repainting trim or doors that were originally painted with oil-based paint (common in homes built before 1990), sand the surface lightly and apply a bonding primer before latex or acrylic-alkyd hybrid top coats. Latex applied directly over glossy, unconditioned oil-based paint is likely to peel.

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Q9

## What are the best low-VOC and zero-VOC paint brands available in New Brunswick?

The best low-VOC and zero-VOC interior paints widely available in New Brunswick are **Benjamin Moore Natura**, **Sherwin-Williams Harmony**, and **Dulux Breathe Easy** — all genuinely zero-VOC at the base, with minimal VOC added during tinting.

VOC stands for volatile organic compounds — the chemical solvents in paint that off-gas as the paint dries and cure. Traditional paints can contain 150-400 grams of VOC per litre. Health Canada's limits for interior architectural coatings are 50 g/L for flat finishes and 150 g/L for non-flat finishes, and all paints sold in Canada meet these minimums. But zero-VOC paints go much further, containing fewer than 5 g/L — a meaningful difference for indoor air quality, especially in winter when NB homes are sealed tight against the cold for months at a time.

**Benjamin Moore Natura** is the gold standard in this category and is the product most NB painting professionals recommend when clients ask for the lowest possible VOC option. Natura is certified asthma and allergy friendly by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, contains zero VOC in its base, and performs comparably to premium conventional paints in coverage and washability. It is available through Benjamin Moore independent dealers across NB. **Sherwin-Williams Harmony** is another excellent zero-VOC option available at Sherwin-Williams locations in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John — it also includes an antimicrobial additive that helps resist mildew on interior walls, which can be helpful in older NB homes with moisture issues. **Dulux Breathe Easy** is available at hardware stores across the province and is a solid mid-range zero-VOC choice.

**One important caveat about tinting:** most zero-VOC paints are zero-VOC in the white or light base, but the colourant added at the store can introduce VOCs — sometimes significantly for deep or saturated colours. If zero-VOC is important for health reasons, ask the paint store to use their zero-VOC colourant system rather than the standard universal tinter. Benjamin Moore and Sherwin-Williams both offer this option at their dedicated stores. At big-box stores, zero-VOC tinting is not always available, so keep this in mind if you are choosing Behr.

### When does zero-VOC really matter in an NB home?

- Nurseries, bedrooms for children, and any space where a sensitive individual sleeps or spends significant time — this is the highest-priority use case

- Homes with residents who have asthma, chemical sensitivities, or respiratory conditions
- Painting in winter when ventilation is limited — NB homes are well-sealed against the cold, and conventional paint fumes build up without fresh air
- Any project completed while the family is living in the home and cannot easily leave during painting and off-gassing

Regardless of VOC content, always ventilate during interior painting — open windows when weather allows, use fans to move air, and take breaks in fresh air. Even zero-VOC paints produce some odour from water evaporation and other compounds during drying. The difference is that the chemical off-gassing that lingers for days or weeks with conventional paint is essentially eliminated with a true zero-VOC product. For families with young children or health concerns, the modest price premium for Natura or Harmony is genuinely worthwhile.

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## What paint colour trends are popular for New Brunswick homes in 2026?

In 2026, NB homeowners are gravitating toward warm neutrals, deep earthy tones, and nature-inspired greens — a shift away from the cool greys that dominated the previous decade, toward colours that feel grounded and connected to the Maritime landscape.

The grey-everything trend of the 2010s has definitively faded. What is replacing it in homes across Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John is a palette that feels warmer and more personal. **Warm whites and off-whites** continue to be the safest and most timeless choice for main living areas, but in 2026 the favourites are creamy, slightly warm whites with yellow or beige undertones — Benjamin Moore White Dove (OC-17), Chantilly Lace (OC-65), and Sherwin-Williams Alabaster are perennially popular in NB for this reason. They read as clean and bright without the clinical coolness of stark white or the dated look of old builder beige.

**Earthy, nature-inspired tones** are having a strong moment. Warm greens — ranging from soft sage to deeper forest greens — have become one of the most popular choices for feature walls, dining rooms, and even full-room treatments. These colours work beautifully in NB homes surrounded by the province's forests, rivers, and natural landscape. Think Benjamin Moore Salamander, Sherwin-Williams Rockwood Moss, or Dulux's Cypress Valley. Terracotta and warm clay tones are also popular for accent walls and smaller spaces like powder rooms and reading nooks. Warm taupes and greige (grey-beige hybrids with warm undertones) are replacing cool grey as the go-to neutral for open-concept main floors.

**For exteriors**, NB homeowners are showing renewed appreciation for colours that complement the region's traditional architectural character. Classic white with black or navy trim remains timeless and works well on the heritage-era clapboard homes common in Saint John and Fredericton's older neighbourhoods. Deep, rich body colours — charcoal, navy, forest green, and deep red-brown — are gaining traction as bold exterior choices, particularly on newer construction and renovated homes. If you live in a heritage area of Saint John or Fredericton, remember that some designated heritage properties require colour approval before exterior repainting.

### Practical advice for NB homeowners choosing colours in 2026:

- Test paint samples as large patches (at least 30 x 30 cm) on your actual wall and observe them at different times of day and in both natural and artificial light. NB's overcast Maritime light looks different from the warm, sunny conditions where most paint marketing photos are shot.
- Warm colours photograph and look inviting online but can feel overwhelming in a small, low-ceiling NB home. Live with a large swatch for a few days before committing.
- For resale value, lean toward the warm neutral side of current trends rather than the boldest expressions — a classic warm white or greige has near-universal appeal, while a terracotta feature wall may need repainting for

the next buyer.

- Consider your fixed elements — flooring colour, furniture, cabinet finishes, and the amount of natural light — before chasing a trend. The best colour for your home is one that works with what is already in it.

Trends are a useful starting point, but the most satisfying paint projects are the ones where the colour feels right for your specific home, your neighbourhood, and how you live in the space. A good paint store in NB will let you borrow or purchase sample pots for a few dollars — always worth doing before committing to a full-room purchase.

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Q11

## Should I use a paint-and-primer-in-one or separate primer and paint for my NB painting project?

**For most real-world NB painting situations — bare wood, stained surfaces, major colour changes, or damp-prone areas — separate primer and paint will give you significantly better results than a paint-and-primer-in-one product. Paint-and-primer-in-one is best for refreshing previously painted surfaces in good condition.**

Paint-and-primer-in-one products are a marketing concept more than a technical revolution. What they actually are is a thicker, higher-build paint with better hiding power than standard wall paint. They are genuinely useful in specific situations: repainting a room that is already the same or a similar colour, where the existing surface is clean, sound, and in good condition. In those cases, you may get adequate coverage in two coats without the extra step of separate priming. For a straightforward interior refresh in a well-maintained NB home, paint-and-primer-in-

one can save you time without a meaningful quality compromise.

**Where the all-in-one products fall short — and this covers a lot of NB painting situations — is on challenging surfaces.** Bare drywall, raw wood trim, clapboard siding, cedar shingles, and any surface with stains, knots, water damage, or smoke discolouration all require a dedicated primer to seal the surface, ensure adhesion, and block the underlying problem from bleeding through. A paint-and-primer-in-one applied over a water stain will often show the stain through the new topcoat within months. Over bare wood — including new wood trim, freshly sanded siding, or a repaired section of clapboard — the wood's porosity will drink the all-in-one product unevenly, leaving blotchy coverage that requires extra coats anyway.

**NB-specific situations where separate primer is mandatory:**

- Any bare or exposed wood on the exterior, including new siding, repaired trim, or clapboard that has been stripped back to raw wood. NB's spring moisture means bare wood can absorb water and swell if not sealed promptly.
- Knots in spruce, pine, or cedar — common in NB construction — bleed resin through regular paint and even most primers. Use a shellac-based stain-blocking primer (Zinsser BIN) on any visible knots before top coating.
- Older NB homes with nicotine staining, water stains from old roof leaks, or fire/smoke damage. A dedicated stain-blocking primer is the only reliable solution.
- Switching from a very dark colour to a light colour (or vice versa). A tinted primer to an intermediate colour will save you 1-2 coats of expensive topcoat paint.
- New drywall in an addition or renovation — PVA drywall primer seals the paper face and joint compound uniformly, preventing the common problem of "flash" (dull spots over seams and repairs) that occurs when paint-and-primer-in-one is applied directly to new drywall.

**The practical takeaway:** separate primer costs roughly \$40-60/gallon and one coat is usually all you need. It is not expensive relative to the total project cost, and it dramatically improves the final result. If you are investing in quality topcoat paint (\$55-80/gallon), skipping the primer step is false economy. Think of primer as the foundation — the paint is only as good as what it is applied over. The best time to discover you needed primer is before you put on the topcoats, not after.

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Q12

## What is the best ceiling paint for a New Brunswick home and does it need to be different from wall paint?

**Yes, ceiling paint should be different from wall paint — and using a dedicated flat ceiling paint rather than ordinary wall paint in flat finish is worth it for the drip resistance, coverage, and the way it handles NB's seasonal humidity shifts.**

Ceiling paint is formulated specifically for overhead application. The key differences are thicker viscosity (which dramatically reduces drip and splatter when rolling overhead), high hiding power in a flat sheen that minimizes the appearance of imperfections, and in better products, a quick-dry formula that lets you recoat without a long wait. Wall paint in a flat finish will work on a ceiling in a pinch, but it tends to drip more, offers less hiding power per coat, and the results are visibly inferior to a product designed for the job.

**The flat sheen on ceiling paint is not just aesthetic — it is functional.** Ceilings have imperfections: texture variations, tape seams, nail pops, settlement cracks, and areas of uneven texture. A flat finish scatters light rather than reflecting it, which visually minimizes all of these. Apply an eggshell or satin finish to a ceiling and every imperfection becomes a shadow. In older NB homes — particularly the turn-of-the-century wood-frame houses common in Fredericton's residential neighbourhoods and Saint John's Victorian-era housing stock — ceilings often have significant plaster settling and hairline cracking that a flat white ceiling paint handles gracefully.

**For most NB homes, a good ceiling paint costs \$35-50/gallon** and covers approximately 400-450 square feet per gallon on a smooth ceiling. Popular choices available across NB include Benjamin Moore Waterborne Ceiling Paint, Sherwin-Williams ProMar 200 Ceiling Flat, and Dulux Ceiling White. The Benjamin Moore product is particularly well-regarded for minimal spatter and excellent hide. For stipple or textured ceilings — very common in NB homes built from the 1970s through the 1990s — a thicker ceiling paint helps fill and unify the texture without creating drips.

**A few NB-specific considerations:**

- Bathrooms and kitchens have elevated humidity, and even ceiling surfaces in these rooms benefit from a paint with mildew resistance. Some ceiling paints include a mildewcide additive — look for this on the label, or use a bathroom-specific ceiling paint in moisture-prone spaces.
- NB's winter heating season drops indoor humidity significantly (sometimes below 20%), while summer can push indoor humidity to 60-70% in homes without air conditioning. Quality ceiling paint handles these swings better than a basic flat wall paint.
- If your ceilings have water stains from an old roof leak or plumbing issue, do not try to paint over them directly — stains bleed through flat paint reliably. Apply a shellac-based stain-blocking primer (Zinsser BIN) first, allow it to dry fully, then apply your ceiling paint.

**For stipple ceiling removal:** many NB homeowners want to remove the old stipple (popcorn) ceiling texture that was popular through the 1980s. Before doing so, homes built before 1980 should have the stipple tested for asbestos, as asbestos-containing compounds were sometimes used in ceiling textures of that era. If asbestos is present, professional abatement is required. If clear, a professional can skim coat the ceiling smooth — after which a quality ceiling paint goes on beautifully.

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## How do I choose between matte and eggshell finish for bedroom walls in my Fredericton home?

**For most bedrooms in Fredericton, eggshell is the better choice — it offers just enough sheen to be wipeable without looking shiny, and it holds up better over time than matte in a room that gets more use than homeowners often expect.**

The difference between matte and eggshell comes down to sheen and durability. **Matte finish** (sometimes called flat) has essentially no sheen — it scatters light completely and gives walls a soft, velvety appearance that looks beautiful on colour swatches and in magazine photos. It hides surface imperfections beautifully because there is no reflection to catch bumps or seams. The downside is that matte paint has a slightly more porous surface that absorbs rather than repels oils and dirt. When you try to wipe a matte wall, you often end up burnishing it — creating a shiny spot where you scrubbed — or removing the paint film entirely. **Eggshell** sits just above matte in sheen, named for the subtle lustre of an egg's shell. It is wipeable, marginally more durable, and in practice looks nearly identical to matte in a room with normal lighting.

**For Fredericton bedrooms specifically**, consider the reality of how bedrooms are used. Children's bedrooms see handprints, scuffs from toys and furniture, and regular accidental contact with walls near the bed and doorway. Guest bedrooms and primary bedrooms see less traffic but still accumulate fingerprints around light switches, door frames, and along the headboard wall over time. Eggshell handles all of this better than matte — a damp cloth will clean it without damaging the film, and the finish does not show burnish marks after cleaning.

**When matte is the right call:** if your bedroom walls are older plaster with lots of texture variation, settling cracks, or obvious tape seams on drywall, matte's light-scattering quality can do a lot of cosmetic work for you. Older homes in Fredericton's Northside and downtown neighbourhoods frequently have walls with decades of paint layers and minor surface irregularities — flat paint forgives these imperfections in a way that eggshell does not. If you love the soft, gallery-wall look and your bedroom genuinely stays clean and undisturbed, matte is a beautiful choice.

### **Practical decision-making framework:**

- Children's bedroom or teen room: always eggshell, possibly even satin for the lower wall areas.
- Primary bedroom for adults who want the richest colour appearance and have good walls: matte is an option, but eggshell is still safer.
- Guest bedroom or any bedroom with plaster walls and visible imperfections: matte will look better day-to-day.
- Any bedroom with humidity concerns (ground-floor rooms, older NB homes without vapour barriers, basements): choose eggshell, which resists moisture better than matte.

**A note on NB's dry winter climate:** Fredericton homes during winter heating season can drop to 20-25% relative humidity indoors. Both matte and eggshell perform well in dry conditions — drying times are fast and levelling is excellent in winter, making it the best time for interior bedroom painting. Whatever finish you choose, use a quality product like Benjamin Moore Regal Select or Sherwin-Williams Duration Interior — the sheen differences between matte and eggshell are most flattering in premium paints that have a smooth, consistent film quality.

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**Q14**

## What exterior paint colour lasts the longest before fading on homes in New Brunswick?

**Lighter, neutral colours with earth-based pigments — whites, soft greys, warm beiges, and muted greens — fade the slowest on NB exteriors. Bright, saturated organic pigment colours (particularly reds, yellows, and some vivid blues) are the fastest to fade under UV exposure.**

Colour fade on exterior paint is driven primarily by **UV radiation**, and NB gets significant summer UV despite its northern latitude. South- and west-facing walls take the most punishment — they receive direct afternoon sun through the summer months, which is when UV intensity peaks. The speed of fading depends on both the colour's pigment chemistry and the quality of the paint's UV-resistant binders. Understanding this helps you choose colours that will still look great after five or seven years of NB winters and summers.

**The most fade-resistant colours** are those made with inorganic mineral pigments: titanium dioxide-based whites and near-whites, iron oxide-based earth tones (tans, taupes, warm browns, ochres, and terracottas), carbon-based

blacks, and certain blue-green colours derived from mineral pigments. These pigments are inherently stable under UV — they do not break down chemically when exposed to sunlight the way organic pigments do. This is why a classic white or a warm greige house in Moncton still looks fresh after a decade, while a house painted in a vibrant red or clear yellow can look washed-out within three or four years.

### **The fastest-fading colours on NB exteriors:**

- Bright, saturated reds — many red pigments are organic and highly UV-sensitive. If you love red, choose a deeper, more muted red-brown or brick tone (iron oxide-based) rather than a vivid crimson or scarlet.
- Pure yellows and oranges — organic yellow pigments fade quickly and can shift to a dingy cream or tan.
- Vivid medium blues — some synthetic blue pigments are less stable. Navy or slate blues tend to hold colour better than bright medium blues.
- Purples and violets — these often fade unevenly, shifting toward red as the blue component fades faster.

### **How to choose a long-lasting colour for your NB home:**

- Look for exterior paints with **fade-resistant or colour-lock technology** on the label — Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior and Sherwin-Williams Duration Exterior both use advanced UV-resistant resin systems that meaningfully extend colour life compared to standard exterior products.
- Ask the paint store which pigments are used in your chosen colour — a knowledgeable store can advise on the fade resistance of specific formulations.
- For south- and west-facing walls that receive the most sun, lean toward lighter shades of your chosen colour or opt for an earth-tone neutral.
- Accept that all exterior paint fades over time in NB's climate. The goal is to slow it down, not eliminate it. A premium paint's UV-resistant binder makes a tangible difference — expect 7-10 years of good colour retention with Benjamin Moore Aura or Sherwin-Williams Duration versus 4-6 years with a budget exterior paint.

One final practical note for NB homeowners: **dark colours absorb significantly more heat**, which causes the paint film to expand and contract more aggressively through the seasons and accelerates the breakdown of the paint binder. In NB's climate of extreme temperature swings, very dark colours on wood siding — while fashionable — require the highest-quality 100% acrylic latex exterior paint to hold up. If you are drawn to a charcoal or deep navy exterior, budget for premium paint and plan to repaint on the shorter end of the expected lifespan.

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Q15

## Is Dulux Diamond a good paint choice for a high-traffic living room in a Moncton home?

**Dulux Diamond is a solid mid-to-premium choice for a high-traffic living room, and it holds up well in Moncton's climate — but a few details about finish and prep will determine how well it performs long term.**

Dulux Diamond is a 100% acrylic latex interior paint that offers good scrubability, decent hide, and a fairly hard finish once fully cured. For a living room in a busy Moncton household — think kids, pets, furniture pushed against walls, and the inevitable scuff from a backpack or hockey bag — Diamond's durability is a genuine asset. It's available in eggshell and satin finishes at most hardware stores across NB, both of which give you enough sheen to wipe down marks without the reflective glare of semi-gloss that would make every wall imperfection glaringly obvious.

One thing to keep in mind is that full cure time for acrylic latex, including Dulux Diamond, is typically **28 days** even though it feels dry to the touch within a couple of hours. During those first four weeks, the paint film is still hardening, so avoid scrubbing fresh walls aggressively — gentle wiping is fine. In a Moncton winter, when you likely have the heat running and the air is drier, the paint will actually cure faster and more evenly than in humid summer conditions, which is one reason winter interior repaints often look better long-term.

**For a living room, choose eggshell or satin sheen.** Eggshell gives a subtle glow and hides imperfections better — ideal for older NB homes with walls that aren't perfectly flat. Satin has a bit more washability and is the better pick if the room sees heavy daily use. Skip flat finish on living room walls entirely; it marks easily and you can't clean it without leaving dull patches. Apply two full coats over a quality primer, and you'll get the best adhesion and colour consistency that Diamond can deliver.

**A step up if budget allows:** Benjamin Moore Regal Select or Sherwin-Williams Duration offer marginally better hide and durability in very high-traffic situations. But realistically, Dulux Diamond at around 0-60/gallon is a strong

performer that Moncton homeowners use successfully for living room walls every day. Two gallons typically cover a standard 12x15 ft living room with two coats.

A professional painter can apply Diamond beautifully if you want a smooth, consistent finish — especially on older NB homes with textured or imperfect walls where cutting in cleanly makes a noticeable difference. For a straightforward living room repaint on smooth walls, it's also a very manageable DIY project if you take the time to prep, prime, and tape properly.

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## What type of paint should I use on a concrete garage floor in New Brunswick?

**For a concrete garage floor in New Brunswick, your two main options are epoxy floor paint and masonry/concrete floor paint — and epoxy is the clear winner for any garage that sees regular vehicle traffic, chemical exposure, or New Brunswick's freeze-thaw-related moisture intrusion.**

Standard concrete paint (sometimes labelled masonry paint or porch and floor paint) is latex-based, easy to apply, and cheaper — typically 0-60/gallon — but it sits on top of the concrete rather than bonding into it. On a garage floor in NB, where moisture migrates up through concrete slabs during spring thaw and after rain, latex floor paint tends to peel within a season or two. It's acceptable for a utility room, storage area, or a low-traffic workshop, but for an actual car garage it's a short-term solution at best.

**Epoxy floor coating** is the professional choice for NB garages. A two-part water-based epoxy kit — brands like Rust-Oleum EpoxyShield, available at Home Depot in Moncton or Fredericton, or professional-grade options from specialty suppliers — chemically bonds to the concrete surface, creating a hard, glossy, chemical-resistant finish that can handle vehicle traffic, oil drips, road salt tracked in from NB winter roads, and the repeated freeze-thaw moisture cycle. Water-based epoxy kits run 20-200 for a double-car garage and are DIY-friendly. Solvent-based epoxy is harder and more durable but has much higher VOC content and requires better ventilation and faster application technique.

**The single most important factor with any garage floor coating in NB is moisture testing.** Before you apply anything, tape a piece of plastic sheeting to the concrete floor, seal the edges with tape, and leave it for 24 hours. If condensation forms underneath, you have moisture migrating up through the slab — a common issue in older NB homes and any garage without proper sub-slab vapour barrier. Epoxy applied over a damp slab will delaminate, sometimes spectacularly. If your concrete is damp, you need to address the moisture source or use a penetrating concrete sealer rated for moist substrates before coating.

### **Surface prep for garage floor coating:**

- Etch the concrete with a muriatic acid solution or a concrete etching product — this opens the pores for adhesion
- Fill cracks and expansion joints with a flexible concrete patch compound
- Sweep, vacuum, and clean thoroughly — oil stains must be degreased with a concrete degreaser or TSP
- Allow the floor to dry completely (48-72 hours minimum in NB spring conditions)
- Apply the epoxy base coat, then decorative flakes if desired, then a clear topcoat sealer for extra protection

A properly applied two-part epoxy on a well-prepped NB garage floor will last 5-10 years before it needs refreshing. Hire a professional coating applicator if the prep work feels daunting — the prep is 80% of the job, and mistakes at that stage mean the coating fails regardless of product quality.

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**Q17**

## How do I colour match an existing wall paint in my NB home when the original can is gone?

**Modern spectrophotometer colour-matching technology at any paint store can match an existing wall colour remarkably well — bring in a paint chip from an inconspicuous area of the wall and you'll get a match that's close enough for most touch-ups, or very precise for a full repaint.**

The best sample you can give a paint store's colour scanner is a small, flat chip of the actual dried paint — not a photo taken on your phone under fluorescent lighting, and not a memory. Use a razor blade or putty knife to pop a 2-inch chip off a hidden spot: inside a closet, behind a door, or low on a wall behind furniture. The paint scanner reads the light spectrum reflected off the chip and formulates a match in whatever paint brand the store carries. Benjamin Moore stores in NB, Sherwin-Williams, and Dulux stockists all offer this service for free or a small fee. It's surprisingly accurate.

A few things affect how well the match holds up on the wall. **Paint sheen matters just as much as colour** — if your original walls were painted in eggshell and you match the colour into satin, the repainted patch will look different even if the colour is identical. Always ask the store to match in the same sheen as the original. **Paint age and UV fading** are the other complicating factor. Older walls fade over time, especially on south- or west-facing

rooms that get strong afternoon sun through NB summers. A fresh colour match of the original formula will be slightly brighter and more saturated than the faded wall surrounding it. If you're just touching up a small spot, that difference will be visible. In that case, either repaint the entire wall from corner to corner, or blend the touch-up in while the paint is still wet to help it merge with the surrounding area.

**If you still have the original paint can** even with just a dried crust in the bottom, the store can sometimes read the colour code stamped on the lid. Many NB homeowners don't know that paint can lids from Benjamin Moore and Sherwin-Williams often have the colour name and formula printed right on them. Bring the lid in if you still have it.

For a small touch-up — filling a nail hole, fixing a scuff — buy the smallest quantity available, often a sample pot (-15), rather than a full gallon. For repainting an entire wall or room with a matched colour, get a full gallon and repaint wall-to-wall for consistency. If you're repainting a whole room, the slight mismatch between formula and faded walls won't matter since everything gets refreshed.

If the touch-up needs to be invisible (a rental property before handover, or a heritage home with custom colour), a professional painter can feather and blend touch-ups more seamlessly than most DIYers can manage. For most everyday touch-ups, though, a good colour scan and the right sheen will get you close enough.

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**Q18**

## **What paint is best for covering cigarette smoke stains and odour on walls in a New Brunswick home?**

**Covering cigarette smoke damage requires a shellac-based stain-blocking primer — standard latex primer will not hold nicotine stains back, and the smell will bleed through regular paint no matter how many coats**

## **you apply.**

Nicotine and tobacco tar are oil-soluble, and they penetrate deeply into drywall paper, plaster, and wood trim over years of smoking. If you try to paint over smoke-stained walls with a conventional latex primer or even a latex stain-blocking primer, the nicotine migrates through the water in the primer coating, re-dissolves, and bleeds right through your topcoat as yellow-brown streaks. Sometimes this happens immediately, sometimes it takes a few weeks as the wall warms up in summer — but it always happens.

**The product you need is Zinsser BIN shellac-based primer**, or a similar shellac-based blocking product. Shellac is alcohol-based, and nicotine does not dissolve in alcohol — the shellac physically seals the stain molecules behind a hard film before they can migrate. Zinsser BIN is available in NB at most paint and hardware stores, typically 5-65/gallon. Apply one full coat over all affected surfaces, let it dry (shellac dries fast — usually 45 minutes to 1 hour), and then apply your finish paint in whatever colour you've chosen. Two coats of finish paint over BIN primer will give you a clean, bright result.

**For odour**, the shellac primer is your best tool — sealing the walls and ceiling with BIN dramatically reduces the musty tobacco smell by encapsulating the volatile compounds in the wall surfaces. That said, odour also lives in carpets, soft furnishings, HVAC ducting, and even the gaps around electrical outlets. If you've painted with BIN and there's still smell, the source is likely the flooring, the ceiling tiles, or the ventilation system rather than the walls.

In heavier smoking situations — a home where someone smoked indoors for decades — the ceiling often carries the worst staining because smoke rises and settles. Don't just prime the walls; prime the ceiling too, including the inside of closets where clothes absorbed smoke. Wash all surfaces with a TSP (trisodium phosphate) solution or a heavy-duty degreaser before priming — this removes the surface layer of tar and gives the primer a cleaner surface to bond to.

**Ventilation during and after application is critical.** Shellac-based primer has a strong alcohol smell during application, distinct from the tobacco odour underneath. Open windows, run fans, and use a proper organic vapour respirator — not just a dust mask — while applying it. The smell dissipates quickly once dry, typically within a few hours.

This is a project most NB homeowners can handle as a DIY job, but in a heavily smoked home with floor-to-ceiling contamination, the volume of product needed and the thoroughness required — every surface, every closet, the ceiling — makes professional help worth considering. A painter experienced with smoke remediation will work efficiently and ensure no surface is missed.

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