

NEW BRUNSWICK PAINTING

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# Specialty Finishes

Faux finishes, textured walls, accent walls,  
decorative painting, murals, and specialty  
techniques

15 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

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## How does a metallic epoxy floor coating hold up in a New Brunswick garage that experiences freeze-thaw cycles and road salt tracked in from driveways?

**Metallic epoxy floor coatings can perform well in New Brunswick garages, but success depends entirely on proper surface preparation, using a high-quality epoxy system designed for freeze-thaw conditions, and realistic expectations about maintenance in our harsh Maritime climate.**

Metallic epoxy creates a stunning, durable floor finish that's particularly popular for garage makeovers. However, NB's brutal winter conditions — with temperatures swinging from -20°C to +5°C and constant road salt exposure — put any garage floor coating to the test.

**Freeze-Thaw Performance** Quality metallic epoxy systems are inherently more flexible than standard concrete paint, which helps them handle NB's 100+ annual freeze-thaw cycles. The epoxy bonds chemically to properly prepared concrete and moves with the substrate as it expands and contracts. However, if the concrete itself has existing cracks or wasn't properly cured, freeze-thaw will eventually cause substrate failure that no coating can prevent. Before applying any epoxy system, ensure your garage floor is structurally sound with minimal cracking and good drainage.

**Road Salt Challenges** Road salt is the biggest threat to garage floor coatings in NB. Salt-laden slush tracked in from driveways sits on the floor for hours, creating a corrosive environment. Standard garage floor paints fail quickly under these conditions, but properly applied metallic epoxy handles salt exposure much better. The key is choosing a system with excellent chemical resistance — look for 100% solids epoxy or polyaspartic topcoats specifically rated for deicing salt exposure.

**Surface Preparation is Critical** The concrete must be diamond-ground or acid-etched to create proper adhesion. Many epoxy failures in NB garages happen because the concrete wasn't properly prepped — oil stains, concrete sealers, and surface laitance prevent proper bonding. The concrete should also be fully cured (minimum 28 days) and have moisture content below 4%. Winter application is challenging because garage temperatures often drop below the minimum application temperature (typically 10-15°C for most epoxy systems).

**Realistic Expectations** Even the best metallic epoxy will show wear patterns in high-traffic areas after 3-5 years in a typical NB garage. Salt exposure, sand, gravel, and tire chains create abrasion that eventually dulls the metallic finish. Plan for periodic maintenance cleaning and potentially a topcoat refresh every 5-7 years. The coating will likely outlast standard concrete paint by 2-3 times, but it's not permanent.

**When to Hire a Professional** Metallic epoxy application requires specialized equipment, precise mixing ratios, and experience with decorative techniques to achieve the signature metallic appearance. The window for application is

also narrow — once mixed, you have limited working time. Professional installers have heated spray equipment that can work in cooler temperatures and experience managing the complex application process. For a garage floor you'll see daily, professional installation typically delivers much better results than DIY.

For other garage renovation needs beyond flooring, find contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network at [newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com](http://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com).

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Q2

## Can a decorative glaze or colour-wash technique be applied over existing painted kitchen cabinets in a Saint John home to give them an aged or antique look?

**Yes, decorative glazing and colour-washing can absolutely transform existing painted kitchen cabinets to create an aged, antique appearance.** These techniques work particularly well over existing paint and are popular ways to update kitchen cabinets without the expense of full replacement or professional refinishing.

**Glazing** involves applying a translucent coating (usually tinted with raw umber, burnt sienna, or other earth tones) over the existing painted surface, then selectively wiping or manipulating it to create depth and age marks. The glaze settles into recessed panel details, corners, and edges while being wiped from raised surfaces, mimicking natural wear patterns. **Colour-washing** uses diluted paint or glaze applied with rags, sponges, or dry brushes to create subtle colour variations and texture that suggest years of gentle aging.

For Saint John homes, these techniques work especially well because many older kitchens have traditional raised-panel cabinet doors that naturally showcase the aging effects. The Maritime preference for warm, cozy interiors makes antiqued finishes particularly appealing, and the technique can help newer cabinets blend with the character of older homes common throughout the port city's neighborhoods.

**Surface preparation is crucial** for success. The existing cabinet paint must be thoroughly cleaned with TSP or a degreasing cleaner to remove kitchen grease and cooking residue. Lightly sand glossy surfaces with 220-grit sandpaper to give the glaze something to grip. If the existing paint is in poor condition with chips or peeling areas, spot-prime those areas with a bonding primer before proceeding.

**Choose the right products** for durability in a kitchen environment. Use a high-quality acrylic glazing medium mixed with artist's acrylic paints or universal tints for colour. Avoid water-based glazes in favor of acrylic or oil-based products that can withstand kitchen moisture and cleaning. Popular antique colour combinations include cream or off-white base paint with raw umber or burnt umber glaze, sage green with darker green glaze, or soft

blue-gray with charcoal accents.

**Application technique matters significantly.** Work one cabinet door at a time, removing doors and laying them flat when possible for best results. Apply the glaze with a brush, then immediately manipulate it with rags, cheesecloth, or specialized glazing tools. The key is working while the glaze is still wet and workable - typically 10-15 minutes depending on humidity. In Saint John's often-humid Maritime climate, you may have slightly longer working time, but don't count on it.

**This is an excellent DIY project** for homeowners comfortable with painting techniques. Unlike full cabinet refinishing which benefits greatly from professional spray equipment, glazing and colour-washing are hand-applied techniques that can achieve beautiful results with basic tools. The forgiving nature of antiquing means small imperfections actually enhance the aged appearance rather than detract from it.

However, **consider hiring a professional** if your cabinets are valuable wood that might be worth stripping and refinishing properly, if you're uncomfortable with the technique after testing on a hidden area, or if you want a very specific historical finish that requires advanced faux finishing skills.

Always **seal the finished glaze** with a durable topcoat suitable for kitchen use - either a satin or semi-gloss polyurethane or a high-quality acrylic sealer designed for cabinets. This protects your decorative finish from kitchen moisture, grease, and daily cleaning.

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

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Q3

## Can Venetian plaster be applied over existing drywall in an older Fredericton home or does the wall need special preparation first?

**Venetian plaster can be applied over existing drywall in older Fredericton homes, but proper surface preparation is absolutely critical for a successful, long-lasting finish.** The existing drywall condition and any previous treatments will determine exactly what prep work is needed.

**Surface Assessment and Cleaning** Start by thoroughly examining your drywall surfaces. Older Fredericton homes (particularly those built before 1980) often have textured paint, wallpaper residue, or multiple paint layers that must be addressed first. Clean the walls with TSP (trisodium phosphate) to remove any grease, nicotine film, or soap residue that's common in older homes. Any glossy or semi-gloss paint needs to be lightly sanded to create tooth for the base coat to adhere properly.

**Essential Base Coat Application** Venetian plaster requires a specialized base coat primer designed for decorative plasters - regular wall primer won't provide adequate adhesion. Products like Benjamin Moore's Fresh Start High-Hiding All Purpose Primer or Sherwin-Williams ProBlock work well in New Brunswick's humidity conditions. This base coat seals the drywall, prevents moisture absorption, and creates the proper surface texture for the plaster to bond. Skip this step and your expensive Venetian plaster will likely fail within a year or two.

**Moisture Considerations for NB Homes** Fredericton's older homes often lack proper vapour barriers, making moisture management crucial. Before applying Venetian plaster, ensure there are no hidden moisture issues behind the drywall - check for water stains, soft spots, or musty odors that indicate moisture problems. Venetian plaster is more moisture-sensitive than regular paint, so any underlying dampness must be resolved first. Consider running a dehumidifier during application and curing, especially in basements or bathrooms.

**Repair Work Requirements** Fill all nail holes, cracks, and imperfections with high-quality spackling compound and sand smooth. Venetian plaster's thin application and polished finish will highlight every flaw in the underlying surface. Pay special attention to drywall seams - they should be perfectly smooth and feathered. Any texture like stipple or orange peel must be sanded flat, as Venetian plaster cannot hide these irregularities.

**When to Hire a Professional** While DIY application is possible, Venetian plaster requires specific techniques for mixing, application, and polishing that take practice to master. Professional plasterers have the specialized trowels, timing knowledge, and experience to achieve the characteristic depth and luster. For high-visibility areas like living rooms or dining rooms in your Fredericton home, the difference between amateur and professional application is dramatic. A poorly applied Venetian plaster finish cannot be easily corrected and often requires complete removal and restart.

Find experienced decorative plaster contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network who understand both the product requirements and the unique challenges of older Maritime homes.

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## What is the difference between a water-based and solvent-based concrete stain for a basement floor in Saint John and which lasts longer?

**Water-based concrete stains penetrate less deeply than solvent-based stains but are easier to apply and maintain, while solvent-based stains offer superior durability and moisture resistance — crucial for Saint John's humid Maritime climate.**

The fundamental difference lies in how these stains interact with concrete and handle moisture. **Water-based concrete stains** use water as the carrier and typically contain acrylic resins. They penetrate 1-3mm into the concrete surface, creating a thinner but more uniform color layer. **Solvent-based stains** use chemical solvents as carriers and often contain epoxy or polyurethane components that penetrate deeper (3-5mm) and form stronger chemical bonds with the concrete.

For basement floors in Saint John specifically, moisture is your primary enemy. The city's Maritime climate means high humidity year-round, and many older Saint John homes (particularly those built before 1980) have concrete basement floors without proper vapor barriers underneath. Ground moisture wicks up through the concrete, and this is where the stain choice becomes critical.

**Solvent-based stains significantly outperform water-based options in moisture-prone environments.** They create a more impermeable barrier that resists moisture transmission from below. When ground moisture tries to push up through your basement floor, a quality solvent-based stain is less likely to bubble, peel, or develop white mineral deposits (efflorescence) on the surface. Water-based stains, being more porous, allow moisture to pass through more easily, which can lead to premature failure in damp Saint John basements.

**Durability and longevity** strongly favor solvent-based stains. In a typical Saint John basement with normal foot traffic, a quality solvent-based concrete stain should last 7-10 years before needing reapplication. Water-based stains typically need refreshing every 4-6 years, especially in high-traffic areas like workshop spaces or family rooms. The deeper penetration and stronger chemical bond of solvent-based products simply holds up better to wear, moisture cycling, and temperature fluctuations.

However, **water-based stains have significant advantages** that make them popular despite shorter lifespan. They have much lower VOC content, making them safer for basement application where ventilation is often limited. They dry faster (2-4 hours vs 6-12 hours), have minimal odor, and clean up with soap and water. For DIY application, water-based stains are much more forgiving — they're easier to apply evenly and mistakes can be corrected more easily.

**Application considerations for Saint John basements** include testing your concrete's moisture level before staining either product. Use a plastic sheet taped to the floor for 24 hours — if condensation appears underneath, you have a moisture problem that needs addressing before staining. Many Saint John basement floors benefit from a concrete sealer applied 6-12 months before staining to reduce moisture transmission.

**When to hire a professional:** Solvent-based stain application requires proper ventilation equipment, respiratory protection, and experience achieving even coverage. The fumes can be overwhelming in a basement environment, and the longer working time means more opportunity for lap marks and uneven color. Most Saint John homeowners should hire a professional for solvent-based basement staining, while water-based products are reasonable DIY projects with proper preparation.

For maximum longevity in Saint John's challenging basement environment, solvent-based stains are worth the extra cost and professional application. However, if you prefer a DIY approach or have ventilation concerns, a quality water-based stain with proper surface prep will still provide several years of attractive, durable flooring.

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**Q5**

**What is the best sealer to apply over an acid-stained or dye-stained concrete floor in a New Brunswick home to protect it through the winter heating season?**

**For acid-stained or dye-stained concrete floors in New Brunswick homes, a high-quality polyurethane concrete sealer is your best protection against winter heating season damage.** The dry indoor air from forced-air heating systems can cause unsealed stained concrete to dust, fade, and wear prematurely.

**Polyurethane concrete sealers** provide the most durable protection for interior stained concrete floors. Look for water-based polyurethane specifically formulated for concrete (not wood floor poly) such as Behr Premium Concrete Sealer, Varathane Triple Thick Polyurethane for Floors, or Benjamin Moore Concrete & Garage Floor Paint with built-in sealer. These products typically cost \$45-65 per gallon and cover 250-400 square feet depending on concrete porosity.

Water-based polyurethane sealers are ideal for NB homes because they have low VOCs (important for indoor air quality during winter when homes are sealed up), dry quickly in the dry winter air, and won't yellow over time like oil-based products. They also handle the dramatic humidity swings common in NB homes — from 60-70% in summer down to 20-30% during peak heating season.

**Acrylic concrete sealers** are a more budget-friendly option at \$30-45 per gallon, but they require reapplication every 2-3 years versus 5-7 years for polyurethane. Acrylic works well for basement floors or utility areas where maximum durability isn't critical.

**Application timing is crucial in New Brunswick.** Apply the sealer during the heating season (November through March) when indoor humidity is consistently low. The dry air helps the sealer cure properly and penetrate deeply into the concrete. Avoid application during humid summer months when concrete can absorb moisture and prevent proper sealer adhesion.

Before sealing, ensure the stained concrete has cured for at least 28 days and is completely clean. Acid-stained floors often have residual acid residue that must be neutralized with a baking soda solution and thoroughly rinsed. Any efflorescence (white mineral deposits) must be removed with a concrete cleaner before sealing.

**Apply two thin coats rather than one thick coat** for best results. Use a high-quality synthetic brush or microfiber roller, and maintain a wet edge to avoid lap marks. The first coat will soak in significantly on porous concrete; the second coat provides the protective film layer.

**Hire a professional for large areas or valuable decorative concrete** — spray application gives the most even coverage, and experienced concrete finishers know how to handle the unique challenges of sealing over acid stains without disturbing the color. For smaller areas like basement floors or single rooms, this can be a manageable DIY project with proper ventilation and attention to manufacturer instructions.

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Q6

## What is a faux finish and how much does it cost to have one done in a New Brunswick home?

A faux finish is a decorative painting technique that mimics the appearance of materials like marble, stone, aged plaster, wood grain, or textured fabric — and in New Brunswick, having one professionally applied typically costs \$8-20 per square foot of treated surface, depending on technique complexity.

Common faux finishes include colour washing (a soft, layered glaze effect popular in dining rooms), sponging (a textured multi-tone effect), rag rolling (a rolled cloth creates irregular organic texture), and more advanced techniques like marbling or Venetian plaster.

For a standard colour wash or sponge effect on a single accent wall in Moncton or Fredericton, expect to pay **\$300-600** for the wall. A full room treatment with a mid-complexity technique like rag rolling or glazing typically runs **\$600-1,500**. High-end techniques like trompe-l'oeil murals or multi-step faux marble panels can reach **\$1,500-4,000** or more.

In New Brunswick, faux finishes add warmth and character to older homes with original trim and high ceilings. The Maritime climate doesn't affect interior faux work directly, but humidity swings in summer can slow glaze drying times, so schedule this work in winter or early spring when NB homes run dry with the furnace on.

To find the right person, ask specifically for a **decorative or faux finish painter** — not every painting contractor has this skill. Ask to see a portfolio and a sample board before committing. Material costs are relatively modest (\$50-150 for glazes and specialty products) — you are primarily paying for the painter's skill and time.

This is firmly in **hire-a-professional territory**. A botched faux finish is difficult and expensive to fix because removing glaze layers without damaging the underlying surface requires repainting from scratch.

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## How do I create an accent wall with a bold colour in my Moncton living room?

Creating an accent wall with a bold colour is one of the most effective and approachable DIY painting projects — choose your focal wall (usually the one your furniture faces or the wall with the fireplace or TV), select a colour that's 2 to 3 shades deeper than your room's existing palette, and apply it with careful prep, good tape, and two full coats of quality paint. Done well, a single bold accent wall can completely transform how a Moncton living room feels without the cost or commitment of repainting the whole space.

**Choosing the right wall** is the most important decision. In most living rooms, the natural focal wall is where the TV is mounted, where the fireplace sits, or the wall that you see first when you enter the room. Avoid accent walls that are cut up by multiple doorways or windows — a wall with one large window can work beautifully, but a wall broken by three doors and two switches loses the impact. The wall behind a sofa or the wall facing the main seating area are the classic choices that almost always work well visually.

**Colour selection for a bold accent** in NB living rooms: the bold wall should relate to the rest of the room rather than clash with it. Deep navy, forest green, terracotta, charcoal, and rich jewel tones are all popular choices in Moncton right now and work especially well against NB's natural light levels, which tend to be softer and more muted than southern Canada. Take your time choosing — get large sample cards and paint a 30x60-centimetre test patch on the actual wall, then live with it for two days under both daylight and evening lighting before committing. Colours look dramatically different on a full wall than they do on a small chip or on a phone screen.

**For the actual painting process:** Start with a clean, smooth wall — patch any holes with spackling compound, sand smooth, and wipe down with a slightly damp cloth to remove dust. Apply a coat of quality interior primer if the existing wall colour is light and you're going very dark, or if you're painting over a glossy finish. Tape off adjacent walls, ceiling line, and trim using good-quality painter's tape (Frog Tape gives a cleaner edge than generic tape). Cut in the edges first with a brush, then use a 10mm (3/8-inch) roller for the field. Two coats is the standard — especially important with deep, bold colours, which often need a second coat for even saturation. Allow the first coat to dry fully (at least 2 to 4 hours) before applying the second.

**NB-specific tip:** In winter — when most Moncton homes have very dry heated air — interior paint dries fast and levels beautifully. Winter is actually an excellent time for this project. In summer, if your home doesn't have air conditioning and humidity is high, give extra drying time between coats and ensure good airflow with fans. Ventilate well with low-VOC interior paint, especially in winter when windows stay closed.

**When to hire a pro:** The accent wall itself is an excellent beginner DIY project. But if your living room has high vaulted ceilings, intricate crown moulding, or you're trying to achieve a perfectly crisp, sharp edge against a complex trim profile, a professional painter will save you the frustration of a wobbly tape line. Professional painters

can also advise you on the exact product and sheen — satin is the most popular for living room accent walls in NB, offering a slight sheen that makes colours look rich and is easily cleaned.

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Q8

## What are the options for textured wall finishes in a New Brunswick home?

**Textured wall finishes range from subtle orange peel applied by a spray gun to dramatic hand-trowelled plaster effects, and in a New Brunswick home you have more options than ever — from DIY-friendly pre-mixed texture paints to professional applied finishes that add genuine depth and architectural character.**

The choice depends on your aesthetic goals, your home's age and style, your budget, and whether you want to DIY or hire a specialist.

The most common textures you'll encounter or can choose for NB homes:

**Knockdown texture** is the most popular applied wall texture in newer NB construction. It's created by spraying or rolling a joint compound or texture product onto the wall, then lightly flattening the peaks with a wide knife before they fully dry — leaving a soft, irregular pattern that looks like stone or aged plaster from a distance. It's forgiving of wall imperfections and easy to paint over. Professional application runs .50 to .00 per square foot for knockdown, and it's a fairly achievable DIY project with a practice run on some scrap drywall first.

**Orange peel texture** is a fine, spray-applied texture that creates a surface resembling the skin of an orange — subtle and not immediately obvious but providing a slight grip and hiding drywall imperfections. Common in 1990s and 2000s NB tract housing. A spray can of texture product (available at paint stores in Moncton and Fredericton) lets you DIY small repairs to match existing orange peel texture.

**Smooth plaster (skim coat)** is the texture of choice in older NB homes — particularly pre-1960 houses in Saint John, Fredericton, and Moncton with original plaster walls. Skim coating involves applying a very thin layer of joint compound over the entire wall surface, sanding when dry, and painting — leaving a glass-smooth finish that's beautiful under raking light. This is a skilled trade and not beginner DIY territory; a poorly done skim coat looks worse than no skim coat. Professional skim coating runs to per square foot depending on the number of coats needed.

**Sand texture paint** is a DIY-friendly option available in pre-mixed paint-and-texture combinations at NB paint stores. Rolling it on with a thick-nap roller creates a fine, gritty texture that's popular in bathrooms and utility spaces where a non-slip feel on the walls is appreciated. Cost is roughly 5 to 5 per can, and it applies like regular paint.

**Venetian plaster** is at the premium end — a multi-coat trowel-applied lime or acrylic plaster that, when burnished, develops a genuine depth and sheen that no roller-applied product can replicate. It's the texture of choice for high-end dining rooms, foyers, and master bedrooms in NB renovation projects. Professional application costs to 0 per square foot, and finding a skilled Venetian plaster applicator in NB may require some searching — it's a specialized trade.

**NB considerations:** The humidity swings in Maritime New Brunswick mean that any water-based texture product needs to be fully cured before the space is subjected to high humidity conditions. In older NB homes, assess the underlying wall for moisture before adding any texture — adding layers over a wall with hidden moisture issues seals the problem in and leads to paint failure from behind. For heritage homes in Saint John and Fredericton, matching the existing plaster texture (often a subtle sand or roughcast finish) is a preservation consideration worth discussing with a skilled plasterer or decorative painter.

For knockdown, skim coating, and Venetian plaster, a professional is strongly recommended unless you have drywalling experience. New Brunswick Painting can help you find decorative painting and texture specialists through the New Brunswick Construction Network.

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## How do I remove a stipple or popcorn ceiling texture in my older NB home before repainting?

**Stipple or popcorn ceiling removal in an older New Brunswick home requires a mandatory lead and asbestos test before you touch anything — homes built before 1980 commonly have both in ceiling texture compounds.**

Once confirmed safe, the method is **wet scraping**: use a garden pump sprayer to mist a 2-3 square foot section, wait 5-10 minutes for the water to penetrate, then use a wide 10-inch drywall knife held at a low angle to scrape the softened compound off. Work in small sections — over-wetting causes the drywall paper underneath to tear.

Protect everything below: lay 6-mil poly sheeting on the floor, tape it to the walls, and wear safety glasses. After scraping, the ceiling will have low spots and gouges. This **skim coating** stage is where most DIYers run into trouble. Apply two or three thin coats of all-purpose drywall compound, feathering each coat smooth and allowing full dry time between coats (24 hours minimum in NB winter conditions). Sand lightly with 120-grit between coats and prime with a PVA primer (\$35-50/gallon) before painting.

**In New Brunswick**, stipple ceilings are extremely common in homes built between 1960 and 1990 across Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, and most NB suburbs. Many were applied over old plaster rather than drywall, which complicates removal.

Professional stipple removal and ceiling repaint costs **\$400-800 per room** in the NB market. For a typical 12x14 room, budget toward the higher end if significant skim coating is needed.

**Hire a professional** if your home was built before 1978 and you haven't confirmed the texture is asbestos-free, if the ceiling is plaster rather than drywall, or if the room is large.

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## What is a Venetian plaster finish and can I hire someone to do it in Fredericton?

**Venetian plaster is a high-end decorative wall finish made from slaked lime putty and marble dust that creates a polished, luminous surface with depth and texture — and yes, there are decorative painting specialists in Fredericton and across New Brunswick who can apply it, though you should expect to budget \$15-30 per square foot for professional application.**

True Venetian plaster is applied in multiple thin layers — typically three to five — each burnished with a stainless steel trowel while the material is still slightly wet. The burnishing process compresses and polishes the lime surface, creating the characteristic sheen and subtle colour variations.

For a feature wall in a Fredericton dining room or a fireplace surround in a Saint John heritage home, a standard accent wall of roughly 100-150 square feet will typically cost **\$1,500-4,500** for professional application including materials. The plaster products themselves (\$60-120 per litre for premium imported Italian products) are a significant portion of that cost.

**In New Brunswick**, Venetian plaster performs exceptionally well because lime-based finishes are naturally breathable and handle the humidity swings common in Maritime homes. In older Fredericton homes with original plaster walls, it is also a historically appropriate choice. The one consideration is moisture: bathrooms and below-grade spaces are poor candidates unless the moisture source is fully addressed.

To find a qualified applicator, ask specifically for a **decorative plaster specialist**. Request a physical sample board before approving the colour and sheen level. Also confirm they are using genuine lime-based product, not a synthetic "Venetian plaster effect" paint — synthetic options (\$600-1,500 per wall) can be a budget-friendly alternative.

This is **always hire-a-professional** work. Venetian plaster has almost no margin for DIY experimentation.

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Q11

## How do I paint stripes or geometric patterns on an accent wall in my NB home?

**Painting stripes or geometric patterns on an accent wall is one of the most rewarding DIY painting projects you can tackle — and with the right taping technique and a bit of patience, the results look professionally done.** The key to sharp lines is quality painter's tape, a methodical layout process, and sealing the tape edges before applying your pattern colour.

Start by deciding on your design. Vertical stripes are classic and make low-ceilinged rooms feel taller — a common consideration in older NB homes with standard 8-foot ceilings. Horizontal stripes visually widen a room. Geometric patterns like chevrons, diamonds, and triangles have become popular in Moncton and Fredericton homes over the last decade, especially in kids' rooms and master bedrooms used as feature walls.

**Laying out the design accurately is the most important step.** For stripes, measure the wall width and divide evenly into your stripe widths — typically 15 to 30 cm for a balanced look. Use a level and chalk line (or laser level) to mark perfectly vertical or horizontal lines in pencil before applying any tape. For geometric patterns, create a paper template or use a projector to trace the design onto the wall before taping. Apply FrogTape or 3M ScotchBlue Painter's Tape along your pencil lines, pressing firmly along both edges. Once the tape is down, lightly run your finger along the tape edge and apply a thin coat of your BASE colour paint over the tape line first — this seals any gaps and prevents bleed-through. Let that dry, then apply your pattern colour over top. When the pattern colour is dry to touch (about 1-2 hours for most latex paints), remove the tape slowly at a 45-degree angle while the paint is still slightly soft for the cleanest edge.

**In NB's climate, humidity plays a role even indoors.** In summer without air conditioning, interior humidity can reach 60-70%, which slows drying considerably. In that case, wait at least 2-3 hours between your sealing coat and the pattern colour, and 2-3 hours before pulling the tape. In winter with the heat running, drying is much faster — 60-90 minutes between steps is usually sufficient. NB winters are actually ideal for this kind of precision indoor painting project since the dry forced-air heat helps paint level and dry quickly for crisp edges.

**Practical tips for sharp results:** Use a small foam roller (10 cm wide) rather than a brush for applying paint within taped sections — it gives more even coverage and less chance of paint seeping under the tape. Choose paints with the same sheen for both colours, or intentionally go one step apart (satin base, eggshell pattern) for a tone-on-tone dimensional effect. Benjamin Moore Aura and Dulux Diamond are worth the premium here because they have better film build and levelling, giving crisper edges. If you're doing a complex geometric with many tape lines, work

in sections rather than taping the entire wall at once to avoid disturbing dried lines.

**When to hire a pro:** Simple two-colour vertical stripes are well within DIY territory for most homeowners. Complex multi-colour geometric patterns, large-format designs spanning a full living room wall, or specialty finishes like metallic geometric accents are best left to a professional painter who has the tools and experience to achieve precise, repeatable results. A professional can also advise on whether your existing wall surface is smooth enough for sharp tape lines — heavily textured walls make crisp stripes nearly impossible without skim-coating first.

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**Q12**

## **What is limewash paint and does it work well in New Brunswick's humid climate?**

**Limewash paint is a traditional mineral-based coating made from limestone that has been burned and slaked with water, creating a finish that gives walls a soft, aged, multi-dimensional appearance — and yes, it can work beautifully in New Brunswick, though the humid Maritime climate requires some important precautions.**

Limewash has been used on masonry, plaster, and stucco for centuries across Europe and is experiencing a major revival in Canadian interior design. Unlike regular latex paint that sits on top of a surface, limewash penetrates into porous substrates and becomes part of the wall. The characteristic look — soft colour variation, translucency, almost a weathered European feel — is achieved through multiple thin coats applied with a wide brush in overlapping, irregular strokes. The effect is organic and highly textured in a subtle way that conventional paint cannot replicate.

**The key question for NB homes is: what surface are you applying it to?** Traditional limewash is formulated for plaster, brick, stone, and unpainted masonry — not for standard drywall. Applying traditional limewash directly to drywall can cause adhesion problems and an uneven, blotchy result. However, the current market offers modern reformulated limewash products (Portola Paints Lime Wash, Roman Venetian Plaster, and Romabio Classico Limewash are popular options) that are designed to bond to drywall and previously painted surfaces. These modern versions use additives that improve adhesion significantly and are more forgiving on the standard gypsum drywall common in NB homes built after 1960. If your home has original plaster walls — common in older Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton homes built before 1950 — traditional limewash is actually an excellent match for the substrate.

**Humidity is a genuine consideration.** Limewash is more breathable than latex paint, which is actually an advantage in NB's humid Maritime climate — it allows moisture vapour to pass through rather than trapping it behind the coating. This reduces the risk of blistering and peeling in rooms prone to humidity fluctuations. However, interior limewash is not waterproof and will streak or mark if directly splashed with water repeatedly. For that reason, bathrooms and kitchens above the tile line are not ideal candidates for limewash — stick to living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, and hallways where the look is most impactful and moisture exposure is minimal.

**Application tips for NB conditions:** Apply limewash in thin coats — two to four coats is standard, and each coat should dry completely before the next (allow 4-6 hours in summer humidity, 2-3 hours in winter with heat running). Temperatures should be between 10°C and 30°C during application and curing, which aligns well with NB's interior conditions year-round. Avoid applying near open windows on very humid July or August days when exterior humidity is above 80%. Modern limewash products are low to zero VOC, making ventilation requirements minimal, though adequate air circulation during drying is always recommended.

**Limewash is a project where a professional's touch shows clearly.** The finish quality depends heavily on brush technique — the overlapping strokes, varying pressure, and layering method that creates depth. DIY results can range from stunning to inconsistent, often on the same wall. If the look is important to your renovation, consider having a professional decorative painter do at least a test area or full wall before you commit to the entire room. The material cost for a standard bedroom with modern limewash products runs 50-300 in material; professional application typically adds 00-800 in labour.

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## How do I paint a chalkboard wall or magnetic wall in a kids room in my Moncton home?

**Chalkboard paint and magnetic primer are both straightforward DIY projects that work reliably in Moncton homes — and combining them lets you create a surface where kids can stick magnets and write or draw, which is one of the most popular feature wall ideas for children's rooms.** The key is applying enough coats and conditioning the surface properly before use.

**Chalkboard paint** is essentially flat latex paint with a very high pigment load that creates a porous, chalk-receptive surface. It comes ready-mixed in black and dark green (the classics), but many paint stores including those in Moncton and Fredericton can tint it to a custom colour — navy, dark teal, and deep burgundy are popular in kids' rooms for a less institutional look. Benjamin Moore and Sherwin-Williams both offer quality chalkboard paint. A 946 mL (quart) covers roughly 9-11 square metres with two coats, which is plenty for a single accent wall or a designated writing zone. Apply two to three coats, lightly sanding between coats with 220-grit sandpaper for the smoothest possible writing surface. Once the final coat is completely dry (allow 24 hours), condition the wall before first use: rub the flat side of a full piece of chalk over the entire surface, then erase it completely. Skipping this conditioning step means your first drawings will leave ghost impressions that never fully erase.

**Magnetic primer** goes on before the chalkboard paint and contains iron powder suspended in a latex binder. It is applied in three to four thick coats (roll it on, do not brush) with 2-4 hours between coats. The magnetism is not as strong as a proper metal surface — lightweight magnets with notes will hold, but heavy toy magnets may slide.

Apply it to your wall first, allow it to dry fully (24-48 hours), then topcoat with chalkboard paint as described above.

**Important note:** magnetic primer is heavy, smells strongly during application, and contains iron particles — ensure good ventilation in the room during application and drying, and keep children out of the room for at least 24 hours after the magnetic primer is applied. Modern magnetic primers are low VOC but still require adequate airflow.

**In Moncton specifically,** humidity considerations matter even for interior projects. In summer without air conditioning, kids' rooms can get quite humid — above 65% relative humidity. Apply both products when humidity is under 60% if possible, and allow extra drying time between coats in humid conditions. Winter is actually the ideal season for this project in NB: forced-air heating keeps indoor humidity low (30-40%), and coats dry more quickly with better adhesion. The room should be above 10°C during application, which is easily met year-round indoors.

**Practical tips:** Use a 6 mm (1/4 inch) nap foam roller for the smoothest chalkboard surface — a thicker nap creates a slightly rough texture that makes writing feel scratchy. Tape off the area cleanly with FrogTape before applying magnetic primer or chalkboard paint since both are difficult to remove from baseboards and trim once dry. If you want the chalkboard zone clearly defined, consider framing it with simple trim moulding painted in a

contrasting colour, which gives the feature a finished, intentional look. For a full-wall chalkboard, budget about 0-80 in materials (one quart chalkboard paint, one litre magnetic primer) for a standard 3 x 2.5 metre kids' room wall.

**When to hire a pro:** These are genuinely DIY-friendly products that most parents can apply successfully over a weekend. The only reason to hire a professional is if you want a very smooth, perfectly even surface for writing — in that case, a pro painter can skim-coat the wall first, then apply the chalkboard paint, resulting in a surface as smooth as a real chalkboard.

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**Q14**

## **What is the cost to have a mural painted in my NB home and how do I find a mural artist?**

**A custom interior mural in a New Brunswick home typically costs \$500-5,000+ depending on the size, complexity, and the artist's experience — with a simple children's room design running \$500-1,500 and a large-scale realistic mural in a main living area reaching \$3,000-8,000 or more.**

A straightforward hand-painted design on one wall of a child's bedroom — perhaps forest animals or a favourite storybook theme — in a roughly 8x8-foot space might run **\$500-1,200**. A highly detailed photorealistic scene or a multi-wall installation in a dining room will cost **\$2,500-6,000** or more from an experienced NB mural artist.

Factors that affect price include: overall square footage, colour complexity, travel (an artist in Moncton travelling to Miramichi will often add a travel fee of \$75-150/day), whether a detailed custom design is included in the quote, and whether surface prep and priming are included.

**Finding a mural artist in New Brunswick** takes a bit more searching than finding a general painter. Instagram and Facebook are the best places to find local artists — search terms like "New Brunswick mural artist" or "Moncton mural painter." Universities with fine arts programs in Fredericton often have alumni who take on mural commissions. Local arts councils in Fredericton, Saint John, and Moncton can also make referrals.

**Before hiring**, ask for a portfolio of wall-scale work specifically, a detailed quote with number of site visits, whether a digital mock-up is included, what type of paints are used, a clear timeline (1-3 days for straightforward work, 1-2 weeks for complex pieces), and a written agreement.

For a mural in a child's room or main living area, ask about **paint durability and washability** — a sealer coat (\$50-100 extra) can significantly extend the mural's life.

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Q15

## Can I do a colour wash or rag-rolling technique on my walls as a DIY project in NB?

**Yes — colour washing and rag-rolling are among the most forgiving decorative painting techniques for confident DIYers, and both produce beautiful, layered results that are difficult to achieve with flat paint alone.** The good news is that these techniques are inherently imperfect by design, which means small inconsistencies actually contribute to the charm rather than detracting from it.

**Colour washing** involves applying a thin, semi-transparent glaze coat over a dried base colour using a wide brush in loose, overlapping X-shaped strokes. The glaze is typically made by mixing latex paint with a commercial glazing medium (available at most NB paint stores) in a ratio of roughly 1 part paint to 4-6 parts glaze, creating a

translucent wash that allows the base colour to show through and creates depth. The effect is soft, atmospheric, and reminiscent of aged plaster — popular in dining rooms, living rooms, and foyer spaces. A warm terracotta wash over a cream base, or a soft sage green over white, creates an earthy, cottage feel that suits NB's older housing stock particularly well.

**Rag-rolling** is slightly more physical but equally accessible to determined DIYers. You apply a glaze coat to the wall (usually with a roller), then use a crumpled damp rag or cheesecloth to either roll through the wet glaze (subtractive method) or apply glaze with the rag (additive method). The subtractive method — apply glaze by roller, then roll the rag through it while it's still wet — tends to give the most consistent results for beginners. The rag creates a mottled, fabric-impression texture in the glaze that is irregular and organic-looking.

**Working in NB's climate:** The critical factor for both techniques is working time — how long the glaze stays wet enough to manipulate. In NB's summer humidity (65-80% relative humidity), glazes stay open and workable for longer, which is actually an advantage for beginners — you have more time to blend and correct before the glaze sets. In winter with the heat running and low indoor humidity (30-40%), the glaze can dry faster than expected, making it harder to blend sections seamlessly. For winter projects, add a touch more glazing medium to the mixture to extend working time, and work in smaller wall sections (no more than 1 metre wide at a time). Always work with a partner on large walls — one person applies the glaze, the other rags it immediately while it's wet. Trying to do both alone on a large wall leads to lap lines where one section dried before you could get back to it.

**Practical setup and tips:** Apply your base coat (satin or eggshell finish) and allow it to cure fully — at least 24-48 hours — before beginning the glaze coats. A satin base allows the glaze to slide smoothly; flat paint grabs glaze too fast and creates a patchy look. Mix your glaze thoroughly and test it on a piece of primed cardboard before touching the wall. Have several rags or crumpled plastic bags on hand so you can swap out as the rag becomes saturated with glaze. For colour washing, use a wide, soft brush (100-120 mm) in flowing arcs. Keep a damp cloth nearby to wipe off the brush occasionally and remove excess glaze buildup. For both techniques, feather out the edges of each section while the glaze is still wet to avoid visible seams.

**Be realistic about the commitment:** A colour washed or rag-rolled living room in a typical NB bungalow takes most of a full weekend for a novice — prep, base coat, and then the glaze work itself. The results are genuinely impressive when done well, but the techniques require patience and a comfortable pace.

**When to hire a pro:** If you are aiming for a very precise or dramatic effect — multiple glaze layers, complex tone-on-tone patterns, or a large open-plan living area — a professional decorative painter will deliver more consistent results. Professionals can also advise on the best glaze formulations for NB's humidity conditions. That said, for a single room project in a casual or rustic setting, this is genuinely within the reach of a motivated NB homeowner willing to invest a weekend.

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