

# ASK THE PURDY PAINT DOCTOR

## HELPFUL ADVICE FOR PROFESSIONAL PAINTERS

By Bruce Schneider, Training Coordinator and End-User Marketing Manager, Purdy

**Q: I need to paint a garage cement floor that has been subjected to many years of dog urine and poop. What should I clean this with to prepare and what type of primer, paint and roller should I use?**

PD: It all comes down to getting the waste out of the concrete.

If you can find real TSP (Tri-Sodium Phosphate), that's the best place to start. Be sure to use the instructions on the label.

If you can't get TSP, try Simple Green, or even laundry detergent. Use a stiff brush to work the product into the concrete and let it sit for five minutes. Make sure to keep the area wet if it begins to dry out. Rinse with clean water once or twice. Work with small sections; don't work with an area larger than 8' x 8' at a time. Any larger, and you'll end up moving the waste around without getting it off the floor. When finished, let it dry overnight.

If there are any areas that have a white residue, make note of where they are and then vacuum up the residue. Create a mixture of four ounces of OdorXit ([www.odoerxit.com](http://www.odoerxit.com)), 10 ounces of carpet cleaner and 114 ounces of water. Pour the mixture into a garden sprayer and spray onto the stained area. Keep the surface wet for at least 10 minutes. Check the areas where the white residue was; the entire area should be absorbing the mixture. If not, scrub those areas with a stiff nylon brush. If it starts to dry out, re-spray.

This will get the urine and waste out of the pores and not just off the surface.

If needed, repeat the operation until you feel it is clean enough. You may only need to do it once, but it might take multiple applications to get it clean and odor-free.

Paint the clean surface with a Purdy Chinex brush and, depending on the smoothness of the floor, you could also use a 9" X 3/8" or 9" X 1/2" Purdy White Dove roller cover.

As for paint and primer, please visit your local paint retailer for recommendations. The climate in your area will have an impact on the project, and you'll need to take that into consideration.

**Q: I want to paint a Formica countertop. Any suggestions?**

PD: Most manufacturers of polyurethane recommend using a wide lambswool applicator or a T-Bar for the smoothest application. Rollers tend to overwork the product and cause thousands of tiny bubbles to appear in the finish. Having tried many different applicators over the years, I would say the lambswool is the most forgiving for the aver-

age DIYer. A T-Bar tends to require a bit more skill as it is essentially squeegeeing the product across the surface.

**Q: I am ready to finish my piece of furniture. It's a hall table with a birdseye maple top. The legs are laminated blood wood, with a maple center and Peruvian walnut foot. It's fairly soft, similar to mahogany, but black. I plan to use shellac as a sealer/filler coat (three to four coats). I was going to use polyurethane, but read it is the wrong top coat finish. What do you suggest?**

PD: Chemically, shellac and polyurethane are not compatible finishes, as you mention, and I would not recommend using them on the same surface.

The poly will not properly bond to shellac and will lose contact/adhesion in a short amount of time. Further, the two products have different reactions to temperature fluctuations and have different hardness ratings, which will prevent the products from acting like a "system," and failure is likely. Loss of adhesion (which looks like blushing), spider cracking, and even peeling are common results when they are used together.

Some manufacturers specify a nitrocellulose lacquer over shellac; however, I do not have any specific brands to recommend at this time. You can visit the following link for general information about lacquers and shellac products, their history and compatibility so you can complete your project successfully.

If you have any additional questions, please ask.

The Paint Doctor is the alter-ego of Bruce Schneider, who serves on the IUPAT trade-school curriculum committee. With 30+ years of paint industry experience, if Bruce doesn't know the answer to your question, he likely knows who does. Most questions are answered within 48 hours.

Got a paint project question? Visit [www.purdycorp.com](http://www.purdycorp.com) and click on the "Ask the Paint Doctor" link.

