Cabinet Refinishing
A COMPLETE GUIDE
Step-by-step instructions to transform any cabinetry.
Update any cabinetry and achieve professional looking results.

Refinishing cabinetry is the quickest way to refresh a kitchen. Being skilled, knowledgeable and experienced in cabinet refinishing can be a huge competitive advantage. And transforming dated or worn-out cabinets can help make any space look completely new.

BEFORE  Years of use and wear quickly age cabinet doors, and the current stain or paint color might have gone out of style.

AFTER  The refinished cabinets have a contemporary color that gives the kitchen a refreshed new look.
Before you start, consider the results you’re looking for, the state of the cabinets you’re painting, and the amount of wear and tear they will have to withstand—then choose the paint that will work best for your project.

**URETHANE TRIM ENAMEL**
The best choice for the most durable results.

**HYBRID ACRYLIC-ALKYD**
Offers alkyd performance characteristics with acrylic properties.

**WATERBORNE ACRYLIC**
A good choice for cabinetry in an area with low traffic.

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**Emerald® Urethane Trim Enamel**
- Resists wear and tear over time
- Dries quickly for a fast recoat
- Excellent blocking and scratch resistance
- Ideal for kitchens and other areas that are frequently cleaned

For best results use with Purdy® Clearcut® brushes and Contractor Series® Soft Woven rollers.

**ProClassic® Interior Waterbased Acrylic-Alkyd**
- Excellent flow, leveling and sag resistance
- Non-yellowing compared to other conventional alkyds
- Great scratch resistance and durability

For best results use with Purdy® XL® brushes and Purdy Ultra Finish® rollers.

**ProClassic® Waterborne Interior Acrylic Enamel**
- Great adhesion and smooth finish
- Easy cleanup
- A unique wet and dry hide provides great coverage that can help save valuable time and money

For best results use with Purdy® Nylox™ Series brushes and Contractor Series® Soft Woven rollers.

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**SCRATCH TEST**
Heavy usage within a certain room means that a more durable paint may be necessary. Take a look at the scratch test results and compare them to a competitor’s leading product.

Scratch test is done by an Elcometer®. Per Elcometer, “The Elcometer 3000 Motorised Clemen Unit is a robust and accurate instrument for evaluating the resistance to scratching of a coated surface. The sample can be metal, wood, glass, plastic or other hard materials.” As tested by Sherwin-Williams ISO 9001 certified labs based on ASTM® standards, and other generally accepted industry standards, as applicable. All tests were done with semi-gloss paint.
Eight steps. One completely new look.

To create a beautiful, modern look with a project that doesn’t require heavy-duty equipment or costly components, follow these steps.

GET READY The best place to paint is in a temperature-controlled room that you can block off from any pets or traffic.

1 Remove doors and drawers

To begin, number your doors and drawers so you know exactly where each one goes. Even if all the drawers look the same, there may be slight differences that can cause issues once you put your freshly painted cabinetry back together.

TIP Prepare baggies so your handles and hardware don’t get lost.

TIP If you’re considering new hinges or handles, remember to drill and patch all holes before you start painting.

2 Wash and prep

This is the most important step—don’t overlook it. Thoroughly wash all areas that you plan to paint with a good cleaner, degreaser or an emulsifying dish soap. Rinse with clean water and let it dry before you continue to the next step. Mask or tape off your cabinet box—you should only paint the face and interior edges of your cabinetry.

TIP After washing, test a small area with your primer of choice. If it adheres well, sanding may not be necessary, and you could potentially skip to step four and prime the rest of your cabinetry.

3 Scuff sand

Scuff sand your cabinetry to create a surface profile that will better help the primer adhere. If there are any holes or imperfections, patch them with a quality wood putty or filler and then sand it down to create a smooth surface. Wipe the sanding dust off the cabinets with a damp rag and clean water and let dry.

4 Prime

Choose your primer—if you’re painting a slick surface or trying to cover up a dark finish, an adhesion promoting primer may be necessary. Use a mini-roller system to create a smooth primed surface on the doors and drawers as well as the frame. Spray application is also an option.

TIP For laminate or previously painted wood cabinets, use an adhesion promoting primer like our Extreme Bond™. For unfinished wood, use our Premium Wall & Wood Primer.

WARNING! Removal of old paint by sanding, scraping or other means may generate dust or fumes that contain lead. Exposure to lead dust or fumes may cause brain damage or other adverse health effects, especially in children or pregnant women. Controlling exposure to lead or other hazardous substances requires the use of proper protective equipment, such as a properly fitted respirator (NIOSH approved) and proper containment and cleanup. For more information, call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (in US) or contact your local health authority.
5 Fine sand

Once the primer has dried, use a very fine-grit sandpaper and scuff sand to get rid of any bumps, grooves, lint or dust that has appeared on your cabinetry. If you apply your finish before this step, any imperfections will be magnified.

**TIP** After sanding, clear away the dust with a damp rag and let it dry before moving on to the next step.

6 Apply the finish  Refer to the Product Guide on page 3.

Whether using a roller and brush or a spray application, always take your time and apply in the direction of the wood grain. If working with laminate, simply apply the paint evenly and vertically. To avoid runs, use the right amount of paint and don’t overwork it. Quickly smooth out any drips.

**TIP** If you notice drips and runs after the paint has dried, remove them with a putty or razor knife, lightly sand the affected area, and repaint if necessary.

7 Apply another coat

Go over your doors, drawers, and the frame once more, paying extra attention to the areas that need it most. Take your time, you’re almost done.

8 Let dry and reconstruct

Allow at least 24 hours of dry time—the longer the better. You want to avoid any dents or peeling that may occur with reattaching your doors, drawers and hardware. Because you numbered them and kept your hardware organized, this should be a breeze.

**YOU’RE FINISHED!** And so are the cabinets. You’ve broadened your skillset and created a completely new look. And with the right products and process, you can ensure long-lasting results.

To learn about additional coatings designed for new cabinetry, please contact your local Sherwin-Williams rep.