

# Paint Brush Cleaning



**Oil-based paints** and stains can add rich color and depth to a project but their cleanup requires special care. Oil-based paints and stains are considered a hazardous material and their improper cleanup can harm the local water supply and nearby plant and animal life.

**Latex paints** are safer for the environment and easier to cleanup, but should follow a few simple steps.

**All-natural paints** do not pose any health or environmental threat and are, therefore, the simplest to clean up.

How do I properly clean oil-based paints from brushes?



**PROTECT** Cover your surface with a drop cloth and always use rubber gloves to protect your hands. Ensure you are in a well-ventilated room.

**SOAK** After scraping as much paint as possible back into the paint can using a wire paint comb, add a couple of inches of solvent to an old coffee can or clean paint can and soak brushes for 5 minutes, swirling occasionally. Use paper towels or newspaper to gently blot the solvent from the paintbrushes. Repeat this process 2-3 more times using a fresh container each time and lay brushes out to dry.

**DISCARD** Combine the used solvents into one container for household hazardous waste discard or reuse. If the solvent is water-based, let the water evaporate and discard the remaining paint solids in a sealed plastic bag. Discard the solvent at the household hazardous waste center.

**RINSE** After scraping excess latex paint back into the can, squeeze brushes again with dry newspaper and rinse with warm soapy water.

**\*\*If your home is connected to the municipal sewer system, you can wash latex paint brushes directly in the sink using warm soapy water. For homes with septic tanks, use a small bucket to wash and a larger bucket to collect the dirty water after each rinse. Let the paint water evaporate outdoors for several days.\*\***

**DISCARD** Dried latex paint can be discarded with regular household trash. Recycle the empty paint container in your recycling cart.

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## Did you know?

You may be eligible for FREE disposal of household hazardous waste through the city's voucher program. Visit <https://recycle.georgetown.org> for more information.

For more information, find us at:  
<https://transportation.georgetown.org/storm-water-plan/>  
Email: [ms4operator@georgetown.org](mailto:ms4operator@georgetown.org)  
Customer Care Line: (512) 930-3640