

# HOW TO CHOOSE A PAINT FINISH



## Choosing an Interior Paint Finish: Sheen and Gloss 101



Put the finishing statement on your paint color of choice by selecting a sheen that enhances the look of the surface. Sheen, or paint finish, is a measure of how much light reflects off a painted surface, resulting in gloss—or a lack thereof. Consider some of the common sheen uses listed below, or break from tradition and get creative with sheen. While some types of paint finishes may work better in certain areas than others, Benjamin Moore's legacy of innovation ensures that our portfolio of products delivers premium performance across the sheen spectrum.

### Sheen and Gloss 101

Sheens and glosses range on a scale from no shine to high shine. Different levels of sheen can affect how colors appear and add dimension to rooms. While there are many different types of sheen, you are most likely to see these seven key interior Benjamin Moore paint finishes during your painting journey:

- Flat
- Matte
- Eggshell
- Pearl
- Satin
- Semi-Gloss
- High Gloss

If you're stuck on sheen, ask your local Benjamin Moore retailer to recommend the best finish for your project.



Explore the variety of paint finish that Benjamin Moore has to offer.

## Common Sheen Uses

	Flat	Matte/ Ulti-Matte	Eggshell	Low Lustre	Pearl/ Satin	Semi-Gloss/ Soft Gloss	Gloss/ High-Gloss
INTERIOR	Ceilings, Walls in Low Traffic Spaces	Walls, Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, Bedrooms	High Traffic Walls, Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, Bedrooms	Doors, Trim	High Traffic Walls, Trim, Doors, Cabinets	Trim, Doors, Cabinets, Wainscoting	Trim, Doors, Cabinets, Architectural Details
EXTERIOR	Siding			Siding, Trim	Siding, Trim, Shutters, Doors	Trim, Shutters, Doors, Architectural Details	Doors, Architectural Details

MORE FORGIVING  
OF IMPERFECTIONS

MORE  
DURABLE



### Flat Paint

Flat paint is a term for a finish that does not reflect light, resulting in no sheen at all. This lack of reflection allows more paint pigment to come through, is more forgiving of flaws and allows for excellent hide, creating a uniform surface. [Waterborne Ceiling Paint \(508\)](#) is the flattest paint Benjamin Moore offers; with its ability to mask imperfections, it offers a flawless finish and is an ideal choice for ceilings and very low-traffic areas.

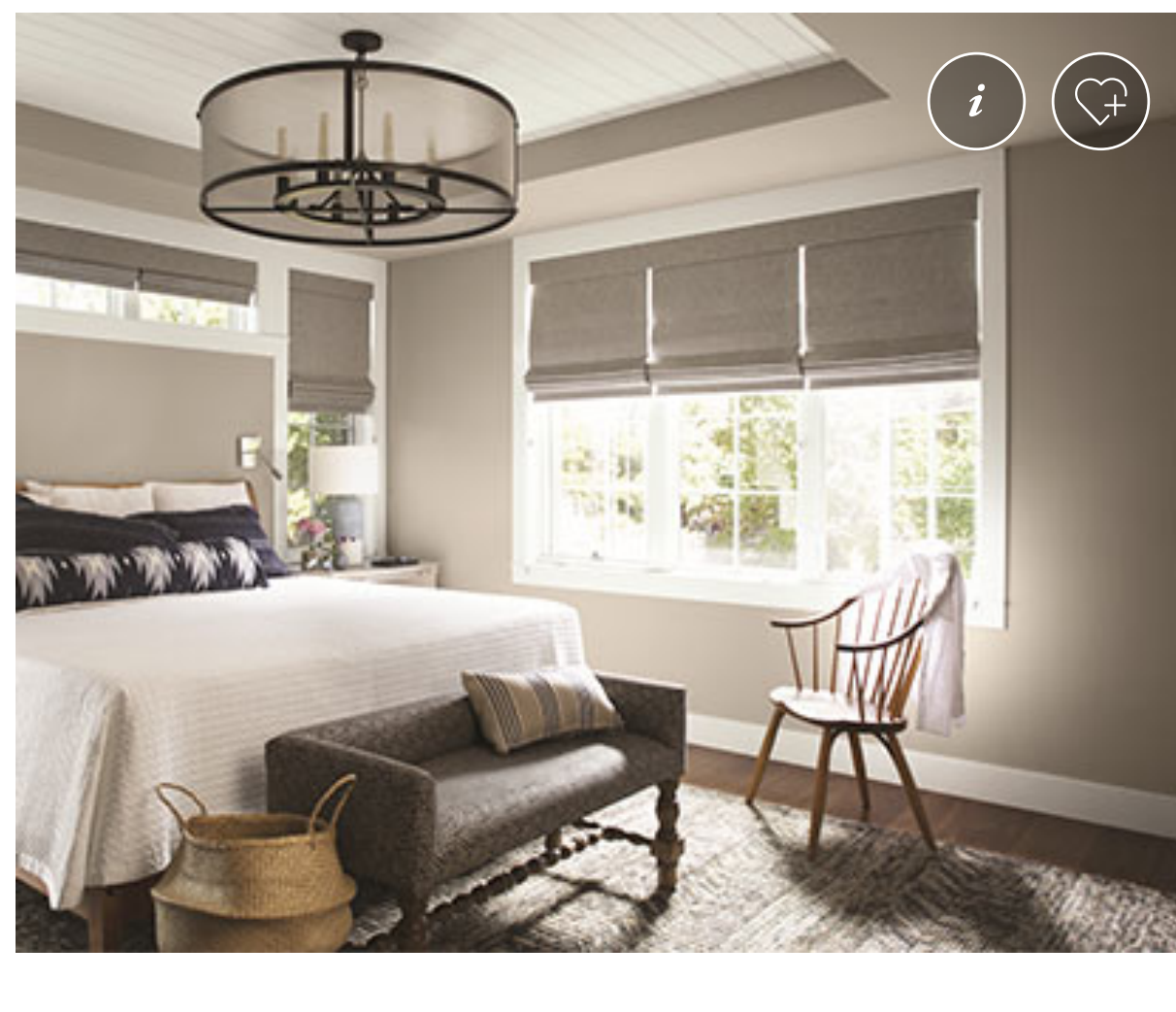
Similar sheens you may see in our portfolio are ultra flat or ulti-matte. These are close to flat in that there is very little sheen, but you may find slight differences between the three. Your [local Benjamin Moore retailer](#) can help you determine the sheen you need.

Use caution when considering flat paint in high-traffic areas that require frequent attention. Stains are harder to remove from low-sheen paint, and constant rubbing or cleaning can result in [burnishing](#).

### Matte Paint

Matte finish is nearly as shine-free as flat, again providing excellent hide and depth of color, with slightly more durability. [Regal® Select Interior Matte \(548\)](#) is a professional painter favorite for its ease of application and smooth feel after drying. Matte finish paint also withstands frequent washing, even when applied in busier areas like hallways and family rooms.

A matte look lends a luxurious touch to many interior spaces, including [bedrooms](#) and [dining rooms](#). [Bathrooms](#) and areas that are exposed to more moisture can be painted in a matte finish using [Aura® Bath & Spa \(532\)](#), which was designed to achieve exceptional durability, color retention and mildew resistance in high-humidity environments.



### Eggshell Paint

Eggshell finish, perennially popular with professional and DIY painters alike, has a low-sheen reminiscent of flat or matte, but it is infinitely more durable than its namesake.

Widely available in a variety of Benjamin Moore interior paints, eggshell (and its comparable—but not exact—sheen sibling, low lustre) provides an easy-to-clean, nearly shine-free finish, suited for most areas of a home, including family rooms and hallways. While it reflects more light than flat or matte finishes, its soft glow casts colors beautifully, especially in [Aura® Interior Eggshell \(524\)](#), our most premium paint, a great choice for your most-loved spaces.

### Pearl Paint

A pearl finish is a medium gloss that maintains high durability. Both beautiful and easy to clean, a pearl finish lends dimension to [trim](#) while being optimal for walls in high-traffic areas. [Regal® Select Interior Pearl \(550\)](#) has a finish that can be used everywhere from wainscoting to doors, and offers mildew resistance for high-humidity areas.

When choosing this finish, make sure you follow manufacturer's application tips and paint carefully, as paint with a pearl sheen is more susceptible to showing lap marks and other painting flaws.



### Satin Paint

Often confused with other finishes, the difference between eggshell and satin paint is that satin delivers a higher gloss, while offering better stain resistance and durability than lower sheens, including eggshell.

Satin paint is ideal for areas that crave definition. Use its distinctive lustre to highlight windows, shutters, trim and even interior doors. For [front doors](#), where architectural details like beveling and paneling are customary, consider [Aura® Grand Entrance Satin](#) to achieve a rich, lustrous look that evokes a look of elegance and luxury.

Also in this category is soft gloss paint, which, while not an exact match for satin paint, offers a similar higher-gloss, better-durability finish.

### Semi-Gloss Paint

The luminous look of a semi-gloss paint is perfectly suited to highlight the architectural details of your home on millwork, trim, and doors. Semi-gloss is available in most Benjamin Moore interior paints, but we especially love the look of [ADVANCE® Interior Semi-Gloss \(793\)](#); it cures to a smooth, furniture-like finish, and its glossy look makes it one of the best paint finishes for [kitchen cabinets](#).



### High Gloss Paint

Offering a mirror-like finish, high gloss sits on top of the sheen chart. This finish, offered in some paints such as [ADVANCE® High Gloss \(794\)](#), is extremely durable and offers elegant shine. It is easy to clean, stain-resistant and will add a stunning look to doors, trim, and even a high-traffic [kitchen](#).

Many interior designers (and adventurous homeowners) like to experiment with high gloss paint in unexpected areas, such as the ceiling or an accent wall. Keep in mind, however, that high gloss paints require careful application and preparation best left to a [professional painter](#). If you're committed to a DIY-approach, practice your technique and [prime](#) any surfaces to ensure they are even and clean prior to paint application. Since a gloss finish reflects light and can accentuate blemishes, avoid using it on areas that are not completely smooth.

**Have More Questions?** Visit your [local Benjamin Moore store](#) or contact [Customer Support](#).