

Get started – Painting

Required

Primer/undercoat

Paint (topcoat)

Sandpaper/sanding sponge (120 and 220 grits), or power sander (optional)

Paint brush, mini roller, or pad,

Clean rags or cloth, Solvent – for clean-up if using oil-based primer and paint

Dust mask and goggles

Latex gloves (optional)

Clean, safe, and well - ventilated working area. Use a drop sheet to protect floors. Wear overalls, an apron, or old clothes to avoid getting your own clothes messy.

Graphic of each item listed above required

Before you start...

MDF

MDF is an absorbent and requires a primer or undercoat. This coat seals the MDF fibres and allows the topcoat to adhere to the board with good strength - resulting in a longer-lasting finish, and allowing a truer shade of the topcoat to show.

No graphics, just text

Paints

Primers/undercoats can be acrylic/latex or oil based, acrylics are easier to work with and are ideal if you plan to use an acrylic-based paint for the topcoat. Acrylics can be thinned and cleaned up with water, which makes them less time-consuming to use, and are also friendlier to the environment. Oil-based primers give a more durable finish with better colour luminosity, but require mineral turpentine or other solvent to clean up.

No graphics, just text

1. – Start

Ensure you have a clean, tidy and safe working area. Put down drop sheets to protect floors. Your work area should be well-ventilated too.

Graphics required

2. – Prepare

Remove all dust & debris from the MDF surface. Use a rough-grit sandpaper such as 120 grit to do this. Then use a finer grit sandpaper to achieve a finish that isn't too rough, but will allow the undercoat to adhere to the surface. Pay special attention to the edges and ensure they are smooth so the primer will adhere and not soak up too much.

Graphics required

Safety: Dust mask, goggles (if using power sander)

3. – Clean

Use a damp cloth to clean the MDF surface(s) once sanded. This will ensure there are no loose particles on the surface and keep the undercoat adhered to the surface. MDF produces a fine dust when sanded, so take extra care to clean up all dust particles – for this step, it might be best to do this before the furniture is assembled. Allow the MDF to dry completely before beginning the next step.

Safety: Dust mask

Graphics required

4. – Seal

Apply a coat of primer. When the surface has dried fully, sand with a fine sandpaper (220 grit).

Apply a second coat of primer. Ensure the edges of the MDF are sealed well, as these are the areas most likely to absorb moisture.

Safety: Dust mask

Graphics required

5. – Topcoats

Once the primer has dried fully, you can move onto applying the topcoats. It is recommended that if you have used an acrylic primer, then use an acrylic topcoat. Likewise, if you have used an oil - based primer, use an oil based top coat. Avoid overloading brush or roller with paint. Apply a thin coat first, allow to dry then sand lightly. Again use a damp cloth to clean-up all dust. Apply a second coat. It's best to coat both sides of the MDF to help prevent any bowing of the board after the paint has dried.

Safety: Dust mask

Graphics required

6. - Finish

Allow paint to fully dry/cure (refer to manufacturers instructions for drying time). Dispose of any leftover paint responsibly.

Graphics required