



step by step: kitchens



step by step: painting laminate & melamine cabinetry

Kitchen cabinets take a lot of day to day abuse. They're opened and closed countless times a day – often with dirty, greasy hands – and the atmospheric conditions in the kitchen change constantly. That explains why your cabinetry looks the way it does. These days paint products are available specifically for refinishing laminate and melamine surfaces, to rejuvenate your existing cabinetry. Here's how to use them...

1 Preparation

A good finish always starts with good preparation. You will need to make sure all your cabinetry is free of grease and grime. Use rubber gloves and a quality degreaser. To make the whole job easier, you will need to remove the handles and you may even choose to remove all the doors and draws – just make sure you label them so you know exactly which position they go back into. If you don't want to remove all the front facing surfaces, at least apply a masking tape around trims, once your cabinet surfaces are dry.

2 Prime the surfaces

Next, prime the surfaces with a bonding primer. A quality primer will give you a strong, stable surface on which to build. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully, and open all windows to ventilate the area. You will need to leave the primer for the manufacturers recommended time to dry.

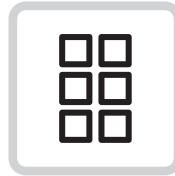
3 Apply the paint

Begin painting, applying with a roller and moving in one direction to get a smooth finish. Apply two or three thin coats as required, allowing the correct drying time between coats.

4 Seal and finish

Allow finish to dry and harden (24–48 hours) prior to use before reinstalling your cabinet doors and draws and refitting your handles. It takes more time but it will strengthen the integrity of your finish.

We are happy to provide Bretts "step by step" project sheets. And our friendly staff are always available to talk through your renovation needs. However, if you are considering a major building or renovation project, we suggest you speak with a professional first. You can use our Trade Services Search Directory at www.bretts.com.au to find someone who can help with your project.



step by step: tile your splashback

Tiling totally transforms a dowdy and dated kitchen, leaving you with a fresh, clean look. Tiling can be a fiddly job, but most handy people could manage tiling a kitchen splashback. And the effect can be amazing. Remember, to be effective your splashback should be at least 200mm high...

1 Preparation

Your wall area should be clean and sound – make sure you sand any glossy painted surfaces. Planning is important, so work out your tile layout before you begin to minimise the amount of cutting needed. And pencil layout marks onto wall to act as a guide.

2 Cutting the tiles

Mark any cut lines onto your tiles with a marker. If your project involves a lot of cutting think about using a tile saw (which you can rent). Or you can use a hand cutter. For curved cuts, use tile nippers; for holes, use a carbide-tipped hole saw in your electric drill.

3 Spread the adhesive

Spread adhesive onto the wall area using the smooth edge of a notched trowel. Load adhesive to about two-thirds the thickness of the tile. Then comb with the notched edge of the trowel. Work in sections, using only as much as you can cover with tiles in about 15 minutes.

4 Tiling

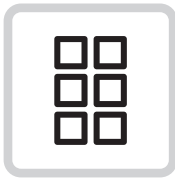
Starting at the bottom, press tiles onto the adhesive using small sliding movements to position each tile in the correct position. Use tile "spacers" between tiles for perfect placement and use a straightedge to check the alignment. Repeat until your splashback area is completely covered with tiles. Wipe off any excess adhesive with a damp sponge and leave to dry – this could take up to 48 hours.

5 Grouting

Mix your new grout. It should be the consistency of toothpaste - detailed instructions will be included with your product. Sweep a rubber float or squeegee diagonally across the tiles to push grout into the gaps. Leave it to set for 30 minutes then use a damp sponge and clean water to wipe away the excess. The grout will also take up to 48 hours to cure.

6 Seal the grout

Add a bead of flexible kitchen and bathroom sealant along the joint between the bottom row of tiles and bench-top. Finally, apply a sealer with a small paintbrush. Use a rag clean any excess of the tiles. The sealer will prevent water from penetrating the grout and mould forming.



step by step: regROUT your tiles

RegROUTing can totally rejuvenate an old tiled area. But even more importantly, over time grout in old kitchens can loosen, allowing water to get behind your tiles.

RegROUTing is cheaper than retiling and it's a DIY project anyone can handle.

- 1 Remove the old grout**
Remove loose grout using a toothed carbide grit-edge cutting blade. The angled handle means you can apply heavy pressure where needed.
- 2 Clean up**
When all loose grout is removed, vacuum to get rid of all the dust and then wash the surface with a solution of water and white vinegar.
- 3 RegROUT the tiles**
Mix your new grout. It should be the consistency of toothpaste - detailed instructions will be included with your product. Sweep a rubber float or squeegee diagonally across the tiles to push grout into the gaps. Leave it to set for 30 minutes then use a damp sponge and clean water to wipe away the excess.
- 4 Seal the grout**
The grout will take up to two days to cure. After that you can apply a sealer with a small paintbrush. Use a rag clean any excess of the tiles. The sealer will prevent water from penetrating the grout and mould forming again.



step by step: paint your kitchen

Painting offers the biggest "bang for buck" when it comes to renovating. The heat, steam and grease that results from cooking means the kitchen has special needs though, but painting your kitchen's still an easy DIY project. Here's how...

- 1 Preparation**
First, you need to prepare the area by making sure the surface is perfectly clean and ready for the paint. We recommend using Sugar Soap for cleaning.
 - 2 Mask up**
Now mask off the kitchen with your painters tape. Tape around all of the surfaces that you won't be painting - including the ceiling. Press the tape firmly to guard against paint bleed.
 - 3 Shake up and pour**
Shake the paint bucket thoroughly, then stir. It is important to ensure the paint is properly mixed so be thorough. Pour a small amount of paint onto a painters tray or small bucket to get started.
 - 4 Outline the room**
Dip your brush in the paint. You're about to outline the room. While this is the trickiest part of the job, it will affect the overall impact of the room, so be patient. Make sure you use a small brush to get into the fiddly bits around and behind the fittings. If you do 'paint outside the lines', clean up while the paint is still wet, as that's when it's easiest to remove excess paint.
 - 5 Roll the rest**
Now you can tackle the larger areas with a roller. This will happen much more quickly. Make sure you roll the roller in the paint tray until it is completely covered with paint - but not dripping - to get even coverage.
 - 6 Touch ups**
Once you've done painting, leave the room for a while. When you return with "fresh eyes" you can easily spot any areas that need to be touched up. When the paint is completely dry, remove the painters tape. And you're done!
- FINAL TIP:** See our "step by step: painting laminate & melamine cabinetry" overleaf, to refinish your kitchen cabinets.

the diy toolkit: essentials

by graeme homewood from renovatehomes.com.au

The purpose of the nail bag is to carry the essentials for day-to-day projects. The essentials are a hammer / measuring tape / pencil / timber chisel / small and large nail punch / ruler / carpenter's pencil and a combination square.

The style of an apron is a personal taste. I always prefer multiple pouches so that things are easy to find and you can organize things to suit yourself.

When setting yourself up an apron start with a belt and just purchase the attachments to suit your needs, for example chisel pouch, pliers pouch, ruler pouch and holster for your battery drill.

When purchasing a hammer avoid going too heavy. You will carry it around all day and, along with your tape, it will be the most used item in your kit.

When selecting a measuring tape my preference is 8 metres long and about 25mm wide blade. This will allow you to push the tape about two metres before it bends. This is great for measuring up walls or in between openings.

In all construction work it is important to keep your levels, straight and plum so you'll require a level, string line and preferably a straight edge about 2.4 metres.

Things like timber saws, one fine and one medium tooth will absolutely last for years if kept dry and a thin coat of Vaseline used in between use.

Purchase well, keep maintained and you will have many years with the enjoyment of renovating and maintaining your property as it grows in value.

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