



## Common sense and careful working

### LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Whenever you are carrying out a DIY job, you should always put safety first. Take a few moments to plan the work, read the instructions and make sure you have all the equipment you need. Don't rush or take risks and you'll complete the job safely.

### WATCH THE FAMILY

- Keep small children and pets away from areas being painted.
- Store paint, materials and tools well out of childrens' reach.
- Don't let them play under ladders or scaffolding.
- Make sure dust sheet edges don't become trailing trip hazards.

### USING THE PRODUCTS

- Remove any paint that splashes on your skin with a recognised skin cleaner followed by soap and water.
- Gloss, undercoat, primer and white spirit are flammable so should be stored well away from any source of ignition.
- Wear protective clothing, eye protectors and a face mask when necessary.
- Lead was used in some paints (particularly paint for wood and metal) until the mid-1960s. If you are removing paint which may have lead in you should take extra care. The best approach is to use a liquid chemical paint stripper as this will not release any harmful lead-containing dust. If you need to sand the surface to remove the last traces of paint, use moistened Wet-and-Dry paper rather than sandpaper. At all times make sure you wear protective clothing and a facemask and do not eat or drink whilst working. (NB All Sandtex products are free of added lead)

### LADDERS

How's your head for heights? First make sure you feel confident up a ladder. Don't take any risks – you don't need to fall far to do real damage. Use ladders with care and make sure they are safe before climbing.

- An extension ladder is the most important extra tool you'll need for exterior painting.
- Get one that when in position is 60-90cm (2-3ft) taller than the highest point you want to reach.
- Always make sure ladders are safely erected, secured and stable.
- The ideal distance from the wall is about 25cm for every metre of the ladder height.
- On an uneven or soft surface, use a strong, flat board under the ladder base.
- On hard ground, use stabilisers.
- To stop slipping, tie the ladder at the top to the eaves.
- Do not lean over sideways – get down and reposition the ladder.
- Never have more than one person up a ladder.
- Use a scaffolding tower for extra stability, but double check you've erected it safely.
- Stepladders are designed to be used square onto a wall, rather than parallel to it, for maximum stability.

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## Safety Guide

### MIND YOUR BACK

Back injuries are common and can be serious, the following guidelines should help to reduce strain on your back and prevent injury.

- The ideal way to lift is to squat down to lift from the floor, keep an upright position and lift with the legs, not with the back.
- Avoid lifting if you can, push or roll rather than lift. Install casters or wheels to make it easier.
- Keep your load close to your centre of gravity, such as carrying a box in the pit of your stomach instead of at arms' length, or under one arm.
- Increasing your abdominal pressure helps decrease rupture and fractures. Before lifting take a breath, and hold while you lift. Once you have the load in carrying position, keep your abdominal muscles contracted and breathe slowly. When unloading, hold your breath again and release it slowly when done.
- Avoid sudden, rapid and wide movements.
- Stretch slowly before lifting.
- Use deliberate movements.
- Clear your path and watch out for obstacles that might make you change direction or speed suddenly.
- Lift in stages, changing your grip as you get the load to your carrying position.
- When unloading, release the weight gradually, then straighten up slowly.

### BE A BRIGHT SPARK

Follow these safety tips to help reduce potential risks when you are working with power tools.

- Examine the cords on your drills, paint strippers and any other electrical tools, whether you've used them recently or not. Make sure they aren't frayed, worn or damaged.
- Always use the correct fuse in plugs.
- Check that you're not overloading outlets and extension cords.
- Protect electrical equipment with a Residual Current Device (RCD) when you're doing outside work.
- Be sure to unwind extension leads fully when using them.
- Remember to unplug electrical appliances before cleaning or inspecting them.
- Read manufacturers' instructions before using.



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**NEED ADVICE?**

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