

GARAGE SALES

Chalk Paint Revives Used Furniture

Chalk paint is on trend right now in the furniture world. It's unique texture and sheen — or lack thereof — make it the darling of shabby chic decoration. It's also an easy way to update your garage sale finds into showpieces you'll be proud of.

PICKING OUT YOUR FURNITURE

It's essential that you know what kind of piece you're looking for and where you want it to go. Leave home with measurements of the space where your new piece will fit. Evaluate each potential purchase carefully, looking for loose arms or legs and insect or water damage. Upholstered pieces should be clean and free from tears and stains.

PREPPING FOR PAINT

Once your new treasure is home, give it a good cleaning. Take out drawers and shelves and open doors wide, making sure you hit any hinges and other mechanisms. Next, you want to sand it down lightly



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to remove imperfections like nicks, scratches and dings. Follow that up with another good cleaning to remove any sanding dust. Now you want to focus on any repairs the piece needs, like those loose legs. One more cleaning and you're ready to paint.

WORKING WITH CHALK PAINT

You don't need to sand it to use chalk paint. But it will make for a smoother finish at the end and a more professional look. You'll need chalk paint in your chosen color from your local hardware

store or hobby shop and a brush. You'll also need a can of wax and a wax brush to finish it.

Start applying your paint in even strokes to your clean piece of furniture. You may need two coats to get the coverage you need, and that's

fine. Just let the first coat dry thoroughly before the second. You can also choose one coat of different colors so that when you distress your furniture, the middle color shows through.

Once both coats of chalk paint are dry, use fine sandpaper to lightly distress your piece. Hit the edges and any parts where it would naturally distress, like the edges of doors and along the bottom. Clean up your sanding dust again with a damp lint-free rag. Once your piece is dry, it's time to wax.

You will need to buy the wax brush. It can be pricey, but it's also reusable if you decide to refinish more furniture. Apply the wax in small sections, using a lint-free rag to wipe the excess. Don't wax outside pieces; it can't hold up to outdoor conditions.

Let the wax set according to package instructions (it can be up to three weeks) before using your new furniture.

MAINTENANCE

Use a gentle cleaner and water to clean your new furniture. Don't use any kind of degreasing cleaners; that can damage the wax finish. Use coasters and trivets to protect the finish from hot or wet items. If you're doing a desk, consider using a blotter or desk protector to prevent damage.

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SELLER'S TIP

Put it to the Test

Look at each item you're planning to put out and think if you would buy it if you saw it. If the answer's no, chuck it.

AD SPACE