

FIRED EARTH

a guide to choosing paint



— est. 1983 —

FIRED EARTH

creating your look

There are many elements to consider when choosing paint colours for your home. The light, existing furniture, the natural flow through to other rooms. The shades you are naturally drawn to. How a particular colour makes you feel. After all, who has time to repaint every year...

Fired Earth's stunning Paint Collection allows you artfully create a look that is distinctively yours, allowing you to layer up your interior tone-on-tone over time. Key colours, for example, can combine with new naturals to act as a beautiful backdrop to treasured items and heirlooms.

The 120 colours that make up Fired Earth's palette have a delightfully matt and chalky finish. Our paints also boast exceptional coverage, leaving walls with a gorgeous depth of colour that cheaper, inferior brands cannot reproduce.



Left (clockwise from top left): [Storm](#), [Orchard Pink](#), [Graphite](#), [Skylon Grey](#) and [Yes Your Honour](#). Right: wall painted in [Bone White](#)

visit our showrooms for expert advice

Our showroom staff are trained colour experts who are passionate about our products and services. The team can guide you through how to create a beautiful colour scheme or how to choose the perfect paint tones to complement, for example, your sofa or curtains.

As a starting point, why not take along a piece of fabric you love or a magazine article showing a scheme you like. The team will then work with you to tailor the ideal colour palette for your home.

Our showrooms stock sample pots you can take home, but staff will also be able to show you large painted swatches of colours. These can help demonstrate the effects of different lighting environments on both colour and tone.

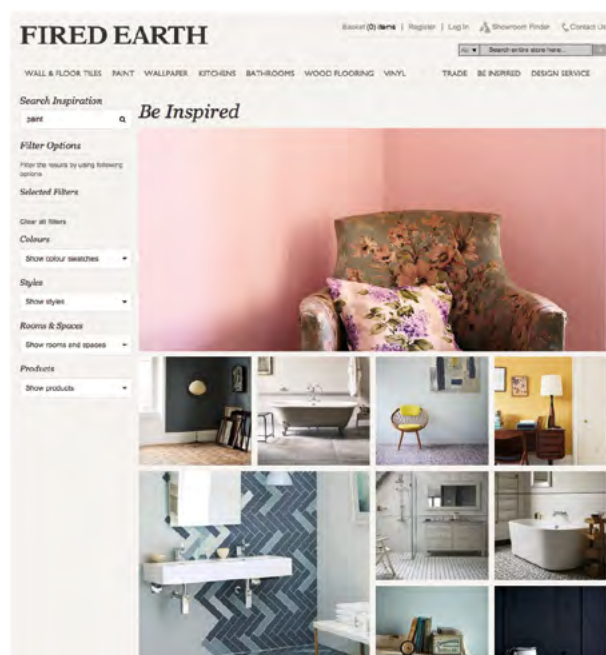
You could also pick up one of our seasonal trends leaflets or our paint and wallpaper brochure, which includes details of our full range and lots of inspirational ideas and practical advice. And if you can't visit one of our showrooms you will find details of how to order any of our products online to be delivered direct to your door.

using our website

When you visit fireearth.com and select any paint colour, a carefully chosen palette of other colours will automatically be displayed in a tonal group. This can help make it easier to choose complementary shades or hues that work well together.

In addition, we have curated six key Fired Earth paint looks which we hope will inspire and inform. The website also features a section which guides you through a selection of favourite colour schemes and inspirational roomsets.

As well as our comprehensive paint cards, we also sell a design swatch book which means you can view at home every one of our 120 colours in larger swatches.



The effect of different light on colour

natural daylight

Natural daylight varies according to both the time of day and weather conditions. The same colour can often appear completely different from area to area and according to the height of the sun. The light when the full sun, for example, is streaming through a window has a very different feel to the muted light of an overcast day. This changeability is, of course, fascinating, but it can add an extra dimension when it comes to choosing the ideal colour. In addition, the direction the room is facing can also have a profound effect on the wall colours.



Above: wall painted in [Oak Apple](#)

north-facing rooms

These can be the most challenging to decorate. Light coming in from the north is cooler and icier in tone and British light, in particular, lends itself to cooler blue/grey hues.

Consider using colours with a hint a warmer pigment, such as Oak Apple or Dowager. Or, if you are using blue, ensure the colour has a little more depth. Also, avoid pale cold colours which are saturated with high levels of white pigments.

Light yellow or cream-based whites, such as Debutantes Gown and Silica White, can help reflect light without looking too cold or clinical. Creams are very sympathetic and can help keep your décor on the sunnier side of the spectrum. You can also, of course, choose from a wide range of pinks, reds and taupes, but avoid anything with a lilac base – this will again reflect a cooler light.

east-facing rooms

The light in east-facing rooms can appear to be a little greener, so sometimes it's advisable to work with this and choose greens or blue/greens. This can help create as much light as possible while retaining some warmth. Take a look at pale delicate colours, such as Glass Samphire and Opal Green, which really come alive in the morning sunlight. The light coming into a room will change so dramatically through the day it is often good to team these with a darker tone, such as Weald Green or Blue Grass, on woodwork or furniture. This will make the walls appear lighter in contrast. If you want to work with white, choose one with an off-white base, such as Bone White or Yes Your Honour. Pinks and taupes will also intensify under this light, adding a delicious rosy glow.



Above (left to right): wall painted in [Southbank](#). Right: [Manna Ash](#)

south-facing rooms

Bathed in warm light all day, colours in south-facing rooms look vibrant and true, so offer more flexibility and choice. We recommend maximising the feeling of light and space in south-facing rooms by choosing pale tones. Soft blues, like Smoke Blue combined with Garden Folly, will create a wonderfully relaxed look. Gentle green/blues, such as Marram, can bring about a beautifully muted tonal feel. If you're looking for a sense of drama, consider painting some details in a statement-making colour such as Tempest or South Bank. Although deep and rich, these blues are perfect as a backdrop to works of art and look amazing as a pop of colour on a trunk or bookcase. A south-facing room is perfect for a smart grey paint like Modernist White or Little Owl, especially when twinned with skirting boards and trims painted in the grey toned white of Yes Your Honour.

west-facing rooms

West-facing rooms can be cooler at first light, then bursting with intensity later in the day. West-facing rooms can make the most of white walls as natural light reflectors that will flatter and colour of furnishings. It's why we often choose neutrals for our homes, but the effects are much enhanced when using white. Try Dover Cliffs or Apres Ski for a cotton fresh look. Even greyer neutrals, such as Manna Ash and Platinum Pale, should retain a feeling of light and neutrality – although the colour will change from morning to evening and the addition of lamps and spotlights will amplify warmth for a cosier feel.

working with pure white paints

White interiors will never go out of fashion. Go ceiling-to-skirting in one colour, such as Apres Ski. Or, for a softer effect, layer up a selection of our favourite off-whites to create a Danish-inspired palette.

artificial light

This will also affect how colours can appear in a room as different bulbs have different factors of light and wattage. Spotlight and luminescent bulbs emit a yellow fluorescent light that will make colours appear yellow toned. This is perfect if your scheme uses pretty yellow-based neutrals like Debutantes Gown and Silica White, but may counter the edgy urban look created by greys like Nightingale and Skylon Grey with their bluer undertones. LED lighting emits a bluer light and is more suited to modern interiors. Choosing a bulb which emits a white light will make colours appear as close as possible to daylight, so you will see the truest impression of the colour.

working with sample jars

Once you've narrowed down your choice of colour we always recommend painting a sample pot on to a piece of A4 paper or card to see how the colour is likely to work in your space. Then move it around the room and look at the colour at different times of the day so you can see how the colour is affected by the light. This can often be easier and more accurate than painting lots of different coloured rectangles of paint directly on to the walls. Instead, use the painted card to see how your chosen shades look very different against walls facing differing directions. Another benefit is that you won't end up with lots of paint blobs that will need to be painted over with your final choice.

small rooms without windows

The natural inclination is to use a pale colour to open up the space. This can work wonders, but in a small, windowless room the drama of a deep colour like Nightingale or Tempest can be fantastic against, for example, the glint of picture frames.

lightbulbs

Consider adjusting the wattage in bulbs and using lampshades to enhance colour. For example, a black or taupe shade not only looks luxe but will also help soften harsh lighting.

frequently asked questions

Q. I have recently painted my room, but on some walls the paint does not appear to be drying properly and looks very patchy. Why would this be the case?

A. All Fired Earth paints are water based and they dry by evaporation. It is important that paint is always applied to a surface that is perfectly dry. If the paint is applied to a background loaded with moisture this will inhibit the drying of the paint. We would suggest applying some paint to a different background, such as a piece of card, to test the behaviour of the paint.

Q. I'm painting a lighter colour over an existing darker colour. Why would the paint not appear to be covering that well?

A. As with all paints, Fired Earth recommends its paints are used in two coats. However, when painting over a high contrast colour, three coats may actually be required.

Q. The colour of the paint appears to be different from what I was expecting. Why would this be so?

A. Paints can separate on storage and should always be mixed thoroughly prior to use. Using an implement long enough to reach the base of the tin is advisable as some darker pigments within the paint can sink to the tin's base. The substrate beneath the paint may also affect the colour. We would suggest applying some paint to a different background, such as a piece of card, to test the colour.

Q. I'm using Fired Earth's Acrylic Eggshell paint, but it appears to slip when applied to a previously painted background. Am I doing something wrong?

A. Generally, the oil-based paint should be rubbed down with a fine sand paper and then thoroughly cleaned with sugar soap or white spirit prior to applying eggshell paint. We would recommend carrying out a small test in an inconspicuous area first to test the application of the paint. If the application of the paint continues to be difficult then it may be necessary to apply a suitable water-based acrylic primer or inter-coat.

Q. There was an unpleasant smell when I opened a tin of Fired Earth paint. What would this be caused by?

A. Occasionally if air gets in to the tins, they can become contaminated by bacteria. Please contact the showroom responsible for the sale of the paint to discuss a replacement.

Q. I'm about to re-paint a hallway. I'm worried about the paint marking. What is the best choice of paint for such a high-traffic area?

A. Paints can take more than two weeks to fully harden. If the paint has been recently applied it may be more prone to marking. Also, we would recommend using an eggshell paint in high-traffic areas such as hallways. This is because of the washable qualities of our eggshell paints.

Q. Fired Earth Matt Emulsion paint is classed as wipeable but not washable; what does this mean?

A. A wipeable paint means it will withstand wiping with a soft cloth using small amounts of water. This method would be used to remove light staining only. Heavy staining from boots, dogs or high foot traffic may be ingrained to the surface and may not be removable. A washable paint such as Fired Earth Eggshell could be cleaned with a very mild detergent, but harsh bleach-based products should never be used.

Q. I have heard that if a Matt Emulsion is used in a bathroom it can lead to problems with water marks. Is this the case?

A. Areas where there are copious amounts of condensation or water splashing should be painted with Eggshell rather than the Matt Emulsion. Fired Earth Eggshell is better suited to this type of environment.

Q. I've applied Fired Earth paint to several walls however, on some areas of the wall the paint appears to be flaking away?

A. If existing painted surfaces have not been prepared properly by removing loose or flaking paint then this will not provide a stable background for the new paint. Another source of paint not taking is areas covered by filler used to hide imperfections in the surface of the wall. Some fillers can be very porous and can cause the paint to shrink as moisture is rapidly drawn away from the paint. Prior to applying the paint, ensure any fillers are completely dust free and dry. Spot prime the filler with a well diluted mix of the paint and water (up to 25% thinning). Do not apply thick layers of paint which are more likely to shrink.



Above (left to right): wall painted in [Modernist White](#). Right: [Top Hat](#)