

## **The long and the short:**

Milk paint adheres best to bare wood. It's self-priming and forms an excellent bond. That said, stripping a kitchen's worth of cabinets is no walk in the park. If you really want milk painted cabinets but aren't ecstatic at the thought of scraping and sanding umpteen cabinet parts down to bare wood, there's an alternative route though it's strongly recommend to strip to the bare wood...

### **Step 1: Sand to provide a key**

Use a scrap of prefinished plywood to sanded with 120 grit.

### **Step 2: Remove all dust**

This is crucial to all finishing. Do it.

### **Step 3: Mix milk paint and bonding agent**

Purveyors of pre-made milk paint sell products you can mix with paint to help it adhere to prefinished surfaces. Mix 1 part made-up milk paint with 1 part of bonding agent. Apply the mix with a bristle brush. Since the substrate is already sealed it will take far longer to dry than applied directly to bare wood.

#### **Note:**

If you apply a second coat, you needn't use the bonding agent, simply apply the paint.

If you're going to finish kitchen cabinets with milk paint it's strongly recommend to apply protective topcoats. Milk paint has a matte finish and will show marks. Although it's quite durable, it will be stained by many common kitchen substances and oils. (whether from a bottle, a stick of butter, or just your hands).

You can topcoat milk paint with almost anything, but the protection provided will differ from one finish to another. It's extremely important to do a test of your chosen finishing system thoroughly, not just a test of the milk paint, but of the top coats as well.

In addition to offering different levels of protection, different top coats will affect the look of the finish, so be patient and allow each coat to dry.

Finally, subject the finished sample to the kind of wear and tear it's likely to get in use. Divide the sample into a grid and apply a spoonful of different substances, red wine, rubbing alcohol, mustard, hot sauce, olive oil, butter, and so forth to each grid. Leave it set overnight. Sure, most cabinet surfaces are vertical, but this way you're getting the worst-case scenario.

Mix the milk paint powder with water using a stick then mix it with the same quantity of bonding agent. If don't mash out all of the lumps there will be more texture in the paint. With more mixing effort you obtain a smoother finish. Or simply sand out the lumps after the first coat has dried, The marks visible are the scars from where the lumps had been.

#### **Note:**

Increased viscosity of the mix plus the addition of the bonding agent makes the brush marks more noticeable. I like the textured look that when using milk paint. I am not looking for a perfectly uniform film. If you are, just use an acrylic or a latex.

#### **Note:**

The top coat finish will dramatically alter the appearance.