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Find out how to make this Pinterest project on page 110.



## Pinning Down the Paint Trends of 2015

**W**ith the growing popularity of do-it-yourself TV shows, Pinterest projects, YouTube videos and other social sharing sites, today's consumers are more fashion-forward than ever—devoting more time to testing out the latest trends and diving into increasingly creative projects.

At the heart of most of these projects, you're likely to find a need for paint and paint sundries. So when customers come in asking for advice on their next DIY project, it's important that you and your employees are up to date on the latest trends.

The editors at *Hardware Retailing* have pinpointed five up-and-coming paint trends for 2015, as recognized by retailers and design experts across the country. They also identify trends that used to be chic but are now losing popularity. Unique DIY paint projects, as seen on the popular social media platform Pinterest, accompany each trend to provide project ideas and inspiration for your store. With this information, you and your staff should be fully equipped to assist the trend-savvy consumer.

If you want to share these 2015 trends with your paint department, visit [hardwareretailing.com/paint-trends](http://hardwareretailing.com/paint-trends) to download our Paint Selling Guide.

### Chalk it Up to DIY

The first misconception about chalk paint is that it's chalkboard paint, but it's not. Chalk paint is a product all its own.

Available in either powder or liquid, it can be applied to nearly any surface (wood, metal, glass, cement) via brush, roller or sprayer. No sanding or priming is necessary.

The calcium in the paint gives it a chalky finish that leaves no brush marks, and the look is sealed with a wax coat. Its versatility and smooth application is what makes chalk paint such a big hit.

Chalk paint keeps an old-world feel but adds an updated look. It comes in liquid or powder form, and the powder can be mixed with regular latex or acrylic paint, providing multiple color options. This unique product has lead retailers to host workshops and events across the country.

As refinishing and repurposing old furniture gains popularity, chalk paint has emerged as a popular finish option for these products. Consumers purchase yard sale items and then repaint or refinish them, creating a fresh new piece of furniture for half the cost of a designer store.

ReStyled, a locally owned Indiana store that specializes in refinishing old furniture, was founded on this DIY trend, specifically the use of chalk paint.

On ReStyled's website, there are different workshops and events customers can sign up for to refurbish their thrift shop finds. One session, Refunk Your Junk, teaches different chalk paint techniques.

While ReStyled specializes in chalk paint, White's Ace Hardware in Carmel, Indiana, has a multitude of paint options. However, customers still visit the store in search of this unique finish, according to Zach Stout, paint department manager.

"Refinishing furniture is a big trend these days, and chalk paint is one method to do so," Stout says.

The team at Mayer Paint and Hardware in Rochester, New York, is working to add a chalk paint line in their store.

“We have been looking at adding it to our selection because we’ve had quite a few people inquire about it,” says Emma Glaubinger, a paint sales associate.

Beth James, co-owner of Hardin True Value in Longview, Texas, has a lot of experience with chalk paint and decorative finishes. She combined her interior design store called decorating etc. with her husband’s hardware store and now leads the design initiatives with the help of her sister-in-law, Amanda James. Beth James has had great success with chalk paint, due to different workshops held at the store.

“I’ve definitely seen the chalk paint interest grow recently. I was the first one that brought chalk paint to our town, and everybody loves it,” Beth James says.

#### PROMOTE THIS TREND IN YOUR STORE:

Conduct a chalk paint workshop where a store employee instructs customers on the different chalk paint techniques. Hardin True Value has hosted about 15 chalk paint workshops, where 12-15 customers bring in small chairs or night stands to refinish. James attributes growing chalk paint sales, along with an increased customer base, to these workshops.

James also displays small pieces of furniture with a chalk paint finish throughout her store. These displays cultivate interest in not only the product but also the workshop. “Everybody sees our displays and asks, ‘How did you do that? What did you do?’” James says.



Photo courtesy of [orphanswithmakeup.com](http://orphanswithmakeup.com). This piece is an old dark walnut dresser that was refinished with white chalk paint to add a fresh and bright look. A special technique was used to create a distressed feel.



Attendees of **Hardin True Value**'s chalk paint workshop, which is taught by co-owner **Brenda James**, display their finished pieces.



Photo courtesy of [Melody Smith](http://mypassionforddecor.com) of [mypassionforddecor.com](http://mypassionforddecor.com). Originally gray with outdated flower ceramic hardware, Melody transformed this dresser with navy blue chalk paint and a dark wax top coat accompanied by clear knobs.



Photo courtesy of [coffeewithcake.com](http://coffeewithcake.com). This bedroom uses neutral hues, specifically gray, to highlight the blue accents.



Blue is a trendy color this year as it adds brightness to a room and makes neutral shades stand out.

### A Year in Color

Every year, paint manufacturers announce their Colors of the Year. Sometimes, these colors are all similar, whereas other years, paint manufacturers choose completely different color palettes, from Marsala to Guildford Green to Seared Gray.

While knowing the color of the year selected by manufacturers can help your sales associates recognize popular colors, there are other trends taking place.

After speaking with experts and retailers, a paint color that has been popular and continues to be a go-to in 2015 is gray. As with beige, there are multiple variations of gray that provide a serene and natural palette in any room.

Jill's Paint in Los Angeles sells a lot of gray hues, according to store manager Sam Villarroel. The trouble he has is helping customers select a shade within the many variations of the color. That's where his part-time designers come in. Villarroel says Jill's Paint relies on the designers to pair customers up with the appropriate grays for their projects.

Similar to Jill's Paint, Mayer Paint and Hardware has customers who come in asking for gray and do not realize how many options are available.

"We have seen a lot of grays, and I see it sticking around, since it can be so neutral yet so diverse," Glaubinger says. "People don't realize the variety. Customers are taken aback when they realize the scope of gray."

Blue tones are also picking up speed, an opinion supported by designers and color experts alike.

According to a *Wall Street Journal* article, Los Angeles designer Sasha Emerson says blue is a versatile color that complements a variety of colors.

Expert designer Kerrier Kelly from Zillow Digs also noted the versatility and use of blue in design.

"Pops of indigo blue or deep navy will become a staple in home design this year, as the deep natural hues become extra-vibrant against warm earth tones," Kelly says.

Other retailers agree. "I do see some people using grays. And people tend to pick a light blue or turquoise, along with red, in our workshops," James says.

Lakewood Hardware & Paint in Lakewood, Washington, has noticed blue making its way outside of the home. "It seems to be that more people are choosing a blue if they are not choosing a neutral," says Scott Shaw, the paint manager. "We've sold a lot of blue paint for the exterior of houses—specifically, a deep blue paint with a touch of gray."

To determine a definitive color of the year, ProTect Painters, a residential and commercial painting company, polled 15,000 interior designers to get their take on the colors of the year. The data gathered showed Blue Paisley from PPG Pittsburgh Paints was the "It" color, suggesting blue hues are here to stay.

### PROMOTE THIS TREND IN YOUR STORE:

Use sample pieces of drywall to display the widely different shades of gray or colors of the year from the manufacturers whose products you sell. Mayer Paint and Hardware painted their best-selling color on the wall behind the counter. This large display allows customers to see a large sample of the color as well as compare it to other shades. They also have a board for the Color of the Week, where employees get to display their favorite colors, drawing customers' attention to a new color every week.

### Wallpaper's Modern Twist

For the better part of the past 20 years, wallpaper was out, thought of as a throwback to the garish designs of the '60s and '70s. All that is changing now. Wallpaper is no longer the tacky flowers that covered every wall in your grandma's kitchen. It is a trendy application that, when used tastefully, adds textural and visual appeal to rooms.

"Today's wallpaper is all about brilliant graphics, bright (or not so bright) colors, and strategic application," according to realtor.com.

Other online platforms are highlighting this trend as well.

Wallpaper has been mentioned over the previous years, but it's ready to take off in 2015, says Jamie Beckwith, Zillow Digs designer.

"Wallpaper is coming back in a big way," Beckwith says.

While wallpaper may be trending again, Villarroel foresees consumers having a difficult time locating it.

"Not too many places carry wallpaper, but I do get a decent amount of customers asking for it," he says.

At Mayer Paint and Hardware, wallpaper is not part of the inventory, but wallpaper paste is.

"We do not sell wallpaper, but we do sell wallpaper paste, which customers have come in looking for," says Glaubinger. "In past years, customers have been asking how to remove wallpaper, but now we're seeing an increase in paste purchases."

Hardin True Value offers wallpaper, and is the only place in town that does so, having sold it for the past 12 years.

"Twelve years ago, wallpaper was dying out, except for designers and some builders; it became a luxury rather than something everyone put in their rooms. Now it costs a little more," James says.



Wallpaper is no longer reminiscent of the '70s, as bold, geometric wallpaper now provides a unique focal point in a room.

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“But we sell a lot of wallpaper,” she says. “It’s very geometrical now; the patterns are large. It’s no longer that tiny little grandma print.”

She says textured wallpaper is a big seller in her store, along with big, bold patterns.

“Certain wallpaper even has crystal glass beading on it,” she says.

Customers even cover their ceilings with wallpaper that resembles tiling, usually of a metallic color.

For the consumer that wants the look of wallpaper without the paste and hard work, removable wallpaper is now available. Melanie Royals, a pattern wall decor expert, says in a blog post that individuals searching for the look of wallpaper and patterned walls without the cost or commitment now have options.

With more than 60,000 removable wallpaper design photos posted on Houzz, this design option is a hit due to its ease of use and ease to replace.

#### **PROMOTE THIS TREND IN YOUR STORE:**

Consider adding wallpaper to your inventory or offer it on special order. Merchandise the wallpaper with a matching paint, similar to Target’s latest tactic. Target now merchandises self-adhesive wallpaper with coordinating paint, creating a project for DIYers to go home and try. An example of a project from Target’s website is: “Pop a fresh coat of paint on a panel door, then place wallpaper inside the panel. Great ideas for cabinets and vanities, too.”

If you forego adding wallpaper to your inventory, create partnerships with contractors or wallpaper applicators that are your customers, forwarding wallpaper inquiries to them. This mutually beneficial partnership will provide business for your pro customers while building trust and loyalty with them.



Bold wallpaper adds visual appeal to an otherwise neutral and simple bedroom.

## **Out With the Old**

Paint is an ever-evolving category, and due to its ease of use and inspiration from fashion, a color or pattern that’s “in” one day can be “out” the next day. Designers and fashion experts agree the following patterns and finishings have been overused in home decor and will remain in 2014.



### **Chevron**

In 2014, Chevron was all the rage on Pinterest. It made its way into nurseries,

bathrooms and college dorms. As Kerry Howard, an Atlanta designer, informed the *Wall Street Journal*, “You know it’s time to kill the trend when you can buy a Crock-Pot with a chevron pattern on it.”



### **Ombre**

Ombre, using one color and fading it from light to dark, was the go-to hairstyle in 2013. Soon

after, the ombre pattern was found in interior design elements, such as ombre pillows, ombre chairs and ombre-painted walls. Designers now agree the trend is tired and overdone and should be kept in the hair salon.



### **Painted Accent Walls**

As wallpaper makes a big splash in 2015, expect the solid

accent walls to diminish. Wallpaper and textured wall coverings will add a unique flair, unlike the previous flat, solid accent walls, according to an article by Zillow Digs.

### Shiny and New: Revived with Metallic

Metallic paint gives antiques a contemporary feel, explaining its use in homes across the country. Homeowners are using metallic spray paint to repaint doorknobs and metallic mica powder to antique old furniture. Metallic wallpaper is on the rise as well, adding an understated feel of luxury to bathrooms and ceilings.

Various versions of metallic paint are available, from brush to spray on, and consumers are using these products for “redoing lamps, painting chandeliers or even painting a decorative jewelry box,” says Glaubinger. She also says brass and antique bronze are big sellers at Mayer Paint and Hardware.

Villarroel has also seen a spike in metallic paint purchases. “People come into our store and purchase metallic paint for trims, awnings, bathrooms and more,” he says. “Our metallic paints are high-quality and can even be used on exterior surfaces. Some customers paint it on their gutters. I even have it on my own gutters.”

At Lakewood Hardware and Paint, homeowners purchase metallic spray paint to repair items and give them a fresh look. Shaw says metallic paint is offering a practical use for both DIY and pro customers.

“We see a lot of metallic paint on both sides of our business, homeowners along with apartment complexes,” Shaw says. “They are retouching light fixtures, lamps and doorknobs; usually just repairing items.”

Besides repairing items, customers use metallic paint for small projects such as antiquing or faux finishes, he says.

According to Shaw, brass and rose gold are the most popular metallic colorings.

At Hardin True Value, metallic paint has been used in a more ornamental way. “We’ve noticed an increase in metallic paint, but it is accompanying the chalk paint,” says James. “There are different kinds of metallic powders you can use to detail edges of furniture by distressing or scrolling, making furniture look a little more formal.”



Photo courtesy of [beautyandbedlam.com](http://beautyandbedlam.com). Cabinet pulls get a makeover with metallic spray paint. This simple change can transform any kitchen or bathroom.

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A unique take on metallic finishing that has been popular on Pinterest recently is a spray paint that transforms clear glass into a mirror-like surface. DIYers are using this spray paint on vases, candleholders and lamps to create their own mercury mirror glass.

**PROMOTE THIS TREND IN YOUR STORE:**

Place project pictures next to your metallic paint section. This graphic reference will help customers envision what a finished project would look like as well as inspire them to become adventurous with their own DIY projects.

**Expanding the Curriculum in Chalkboard Paint**

Chalkboard paint has been around for a while, but it's getting a makeover in 2015 with the addition of vibrant colors.

DIY consumers across America are reinventing the traditional classroom chalkboard in a big way this year. Simply search "chalkboard paint" on Pinterest and you will discover hundreds of craft ideas, with some attracting more than 3,000 shares.

These projects are not using traditional green or black chalkboard paint, but rather chalkboard paint in a wide array of colors.



This herbal pot was created using colored chalkboard paint, allowing plant labels to change with the plants.

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At Jill's Paint, chalkboard paint has become a huge seller. According to Villarreal, this trend gained more speed as manufacturers allowed customers to select chalkboard paint in any color, instead of the original black or green.

At White's Ace Hardware, customers often come to the store seeking help with their Pinterest projects, according to Stout. He says chalkboard paint projects have become very popular among customers.

Decoration, organization, creativity and entertainment are all reasons why DIYers are putting chalkboard elements in their homes. A few popular projects consumers are trying include chalkboard walls that add an artistic and decorative flare, chalkboard to-do lists on the insides of kitchen cabinets and chalkboard paint labels on Mason jars or drinking glasses. For some homeowners, a section of chalkboard paint on a wall in a child's room provides creativity and a drawing board that can be reused.

Glaubinger says customers are seeking out colored chalkboard paint in Mayer Paint and Hardware. "A lot of people are even more interested in chalkboard paint if they can customize the color," Glaubinger says. "Customers use it to paint their kids' rooms, teachers make mini chalkboards, and other customers try varying projects."

#### PROMOTE THIS TREND IN YOUR STORE:

Use signs to highlight the unique colored chalkboard paints or dedicate space on the front counter to showcase them. Create a welcome sign in your store using colored chalkboard paint so customers are aware of this trend as soon as they walk in the door. ➔



Photo courtesy of *Erin Spain* of *DIYonthecheap.com*. Children draw on a colored chalkboard table, which is a unique twist on the traditional green or black chalkboard surface.

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