

Traditional Milk Paint & Top Coat Instructions



As told to Joshua Farnsworth by Jerome Bias

"I really like the milk paint. It is easy to apply, non-toxic, and can be adjusted to fit whatever design effect you would like.

"For the buttermilk color that I used on the chest I mixed together white milk paint with light yellow ochre pigment... My recipe shows that I used about 2 TBS/quart. You might want to play around with the color.

"I mix up the milk paint as described in the instructions and then I apply with a foam brush. I tend to like a rather smooth texture, so I tend to lightly, (very lightly) sand between coats after the second coat. I will sand after the coat feels dry to the touch and doesn't load up the sand paper. I tend to apply 3-5 coats. I find the sanding takes off a bit so a few extra coats are required. I then let the piece dry for a day.

"I like the shiny look, so I slathering on a coating of boiled linseed oil (BLO). This changes the color of the milk paint back to what it was like when it was wet. It also gives a bit of depth. I let it dry over night

"Be careful of you rags they will spontaneously combust.

"I then follow this up with a 2-3 of coats of shellac. I use a 1lb cut (Zinsser diluted 1:1 with Denatured alcohol). And I apply it with a flat 1"taklon artist paintbrush that I got from Hobby Lobby. Yes the brush is small, but it dries fast and doesn't leave behind brush marks.

"I find that if I don't apply the shellac the BLO will dry out over the next year or so and the paint will take on a dry chalky appearance.

"The last thing that I do is to apply a thin coat of past wax .

"Oh yeah, if you are working with pine, use the shellac to seal any knots, or sap might creep through your finish.

"Good luck, I hope that this has been helpful."