

## Rye Flour Exterior Paint (for wood)

### Natural exterior paint for wood:

Rye Flour has been used as a binder for exterior wood paint for a very long time. It's been used in Northern climates since the Iron Age. Often called 'Swedish paint' (*the Falu-red coloured homes and cabins of Sweden*) it is one of the most popular natural exterior paints for wood because of its many positive and ecological features. Easy to make and incredibly durable. This inexpensive natural, almost matt paint usually covers in one good coat. Clean up is also easy and eco-friendly using just soap & water.

Similar to exterior Lime based paints and Lime washes favoured in Britain and Europe, as used on their stone or cob cottages; rye flour paint is best for new or aged sawn wood, wood sidings, wooden facades and exteriors (*it does not adhere as well to planed/sanded smooth wood surfaces or very hard closed grained woods*).

Dark mixes last the longest (*for Red, Brown, Dark Blue & Black pigments you can replace the quantity of Zinc Sulphate with Iron Sulphate as this bolsters the dark colours, also works as a mordant, with less fade over time, it also has similar anti-fungal properties to the Zinc*). Zinc Sulphate is best used with mid to light colours and white natural pigments.

The Dark paint mixture can last over 10 years with some maintenance and touch-up every few years in cold and wet environments. Lighter colours will last 8 to 9+ years with maintenance and touch-up every few years.

**The Ingredients:** [Red text makes about 2.5 ~ 3 litres. Larger amounts makes about 25 litres for painting whole homes, sheds, barns etc].

- (175~200 ml) 1.5 ~ 2 litres of Boiled Linseed Oil (Found at builders merchants and Farm shops)
- (100~110 g) 1 kg Zinc Sulphate (Found at Farm and Garden Centres)
- (2.3 litres) 24.5 litres of clean water (filtered rainwater works well)
- (100~110 g) 1 kg finely ground Rye flour (Wheat flour is a reasonable substitute)
- (350~400 g) 4 kg of powdered pigment (colour of your choice)
- NOTE. These amounts work well with some adjustment/tolerance if required.

### Method of Mixture (use personal protection):

This paint mixture has to be 'cooked'. In a very large and sturdy container, heat three-quarters of the water to be very hot, not boiling. Stirring, slowly add to it the Zinc or Iron Sulphate until dissolved, about 15 minutes. In a separate large mixing bowl combine the rye flour with some of the reserved cold water to a thin milk like mix, now slowly add in the rye flour mixture to the heating hot water, stirring continuously. The mixture will start to cook and thicken; continue mixing for a further 15 minutes on the heat. With your container still being heated, now add your pigment powder mixed with the reserve water - as you did with the flour (*natural dark pigments work best I've found*) to the colour depth you

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want, mixing for another 15 minutes to create a uniform mixture without streaks or lumps (*use a large kitchen whisk if making 2.5 litres*). Maintain the heat and now add in the linseed oil slowly, stirring well and quickly to create an emulsion, about 15 minutes. The Linseed oil should only make up about 8% to 10% of the total volume. You can use a powered mixer/stirrer (*or stirrer attachment for a drill*) as used by commercial painters, plasterers / builders, this makes mixing a lot easier, but be careful with the hot mixture. Mix to a creamy consistency, add or leave out the remaining reserve water, if any - not too thin and watery. Allow cooling of the paint mixture to a workable temperature before application.

### **Application:**

For use on new or old clean & dry rough, sawn, stable wood. Use a wire brush if needed to remove old loose paint or fungus. Stir frequently while applying.

Use a stiff or regular 35 ~ 50 mm paint brush in corners, edges, around trim or projections and under eaves etc, pushing the paint into the bare wood and joints. Over-paint and paint large areas using a 100 ~ 150 mm mop head brush/fence paint brush and/or a 250 ~ 300 mm sheepskin roller to apply a liberal coat in one metre areas, return to clean up runs and drips and correct the finish. Allow 4 to 6 hours before re-coating if needed. The added sulphate helps the paint mixture along with protecting the wood from the elements, insects and fungus etc.

Coverage varies a lot dependant on the wood substrate, as the paint soaks in; as a guide 1litre for 1.5 metre squared.

### **Drying time:**

This is a 98%+ matt paint that will dry in around 2 to 3 hours on a dry day out of direct sunlight, it usually penetrates and covers well in one application coat.

### **Clean up:**

Clean up containers and equipment as soon as possible with natural soap/organic laundry liquid and clean warm water. Pay particular attention to brushes & rollers.

### **Storage:**

Unused paint can be stored in a clean sealed container without a screw down or locking top for up to six months. As the paint uses natural ingredients it may ferment (*exploding the container if screw lid sealed - with paint everywhere*) before decomposing and becoming ready to recycle. Keep a note of your own recipe to recreate a new batch when the time comes to re-paint. *“Enjoy and be colourful”*.

Colin Perry

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