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A-Z
TRADE TERMS EXPLAINED WITH CLEAR DEFINITIONS

The Painter & Decorator's DICTIONARY

A COMPLETE A–Z GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL DECORATING TERMINOLOGY



CLEAR DEFINITIONS

A-Z TRADE TERMINOLOGY

RELATED TERMS AND CROSS-REFERENCES

PROFESSIONAL TRADE LANGUAGE

UK, EU, US, AU, NZ TERMINOLOGY

PUBLICATION & COPYRIGHT

The Painter & Decorator's Dictionary

Author: Matthias Holford
Publisher: H&C Publications | H&C Academy
First Digital Edition | 2026 | United Kingdom
Format: Free digital PDF | www.hcspaces.co.uk

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THE PAINTER & DECORATOR'S DICTIONARY

Painting & decorating terminology as used around the world

1,366 A-Z headwords

United Kingdom | North America | Europe | Australia | New Zealand | International

H&C PROFESSIONAL TRADE REFERENCE

Matthias Holford |

About this dictionary

This A-Z reference brings together 1,366 painting and decorating headwords used in the United Kingdom, North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and other regions.

Regional labels identify usage that is especially common or has a distinct meaning in that region; they do not imply exclusive use. Where trade wording varies or a term has several meanings, the entry notes that context matters. Related terms are explained separately where they are not exact equivalents.

This is a terminology reference, not a step-by-step manual. Product names, standards and performance claims should be checked against the relevant current product data and specification.

Use the letter contents to navigate the print edition. The PDF text is searchable, and the page can be scaled for A4 or A5 printing.

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H&C ACADEMY

About the Author

Matthias Holford has worked in painting and decorating for more than 25 years, beginning in the trade as a teenager and choosing decorating as his main career direction at 16.

His training includes NCFE Construction Maintenance and City & Guilds and NVQ Level 2 Painting & Decorating. He went on to establish HBH Painters & Decorators while still young, later developing Holford&Co and working across domestic, commercial and heritage environments.

His career has included work on homes, shops, offices, hotels, restaurants, academies, listed properties and larger sites, as well as membership of recognised decorating trade organisations. At 19, his early business journey was featured in *Business Matters* magazine.

Today Matthias is the founder of H&C Cleaning and Maintenance and H&C Academy. Alongside continuing professional work, he is focused on passing practical trade knowledge to the next generation through reference books, training material and the H&C How-To Academy.

The Painter & Decorator's Dictionary draws on that experience to bring professional decorating terminology together in a practical A-Z reference for decorators, apprentices, students and others interested in the trade.

A

Abrasion - Wearing or removal of material through rubbing, sanding, brushing or another form of friction. In decorating, abrasion can be intentional surface preparation or unwanted wear to a coating.

Abrasion resistance - A coating's ability to withstand rubbing or scuffing without wearing through, losing appearance or exposing the substrate. Results depend on the test method, cure, thickness and surface conditions.

Abrasive - A hard particle or material that cuts, scratches or smooths another surface. Common forms include mineral-coated paper, mesh, pads and blasting media; grades describe relative coarseness, not a universal particle size across every system.

Abrasive blasting - Surface preparation in which propelled abrasive particles remove contamination, old coating or corrosion and create a profile for a new coating. The process is controlled by abrasive type, pressure, distance and cleanliness requirements.

Abrasive disc - A circular abrasive sheet or wheel fitted to a powered or hand-held backing tool for sanding or grinding. The backing, diameter, attachment and abrasive grade determine its suitable use.

Abrasive mesh - An open-weave abrasive sheet that lets dust pass through its holes, often when used with extraction. It is less likely than a solid sheet to clog, although performance depends on the surface and abrasive grade.

Abrasive paper - Flexible paper or cloth carrying bonded abrasive grains, used to remove material, smooth a surface or key a coating. "Sandpaper" is a common informal name even when the abrasive is not sand.

Abrasive sponge - A flexible foam block coated with abrasive material. Its shape allows it to conform to profiles, corners and mouldings that are difficult to sand with a rigid block.

Absorbency - The extent to which a porous substrate takes in liquid. Uneven absorbency can make paint dry at different rates and contribute to patchiness, flashing or inconsistent sheen.

Absorption - The process by which a material takes liquid, vapour or energy into its body. In decorating, the term commonly describes water or coating liquid entering a porous substrate; it is distinct from surface adsorption.

Accelerated weathering - Laboratory exposure intended to reproduce selected effects of outdoor weather, such as light, heat, moisture and temperature cycling, over a shorter test period. It compares performance under specified conditions and does not translate directly into an exact number of service years.

Accelerator - An ingredient or component that speeds a chemical reaction, setting or curing process. Its use and dosage are product-specific; it is not the same as a thinner or general-purpose additive.

Accent colour - A colour used in a limited area to draw attention or create contrast with the main colour scheme, such as on a feature wall, door or trim.

Acetone - A volatile solvent used in some cleaning, degreasing and industrial coating operations. It dissolves many materials, evaporates quickly and is highly flammable; compatibility and safety depend on the product and substrate.

Acid etching - Chemical treatment that reacts with a mineral surface, often concrete, to alter or lightly roughen it. It is a specialised preparation method, not a substitute for removing oils, laitance or other contaminants.

Acid resistance - The ability of a coating or material to withstand contact with specified acids at stated concentrations, temperatures and exposure times. The term is incomplete unless the test or exposure conditions are known.

Acid-resistant paint - A coating formulated to resist specified acidic substances under defined conditions. It does not mean resistance to every acid or concentration; the product data and chemical-resistance schedule define its limits.

Acoustical wallcovering - A wallcovering designed to absorb some sound energy and reduce reflected sound within a room. It can improve room acoustics but is not, by itself, soundproofing between rooms.

Acrylic - A family of polymers and resins based on acrylic or related methacrylic chemistry. In coatings, acrylic binders are used in many water-borne and solvent-borne products, with properties varying by formulation.

Acrylic eggshell - An eggshell-sheen coating whose principal binder is acrylic or acrylic-based. The name describes a broad product type; sheen, washability, suitability and cure vary by manufacturer and formulation.

Acrylic latex - US and some international terminology for a water-borne coating in which acrylic polymer particles are dispersed in water. "Latex" here describes a dispersion and does not necessarily mean natural rubber latex.

Acrylic paint - Paint using an acrylic polymer as its principal film-forming binder. It may be water-borne or, in some specialist systems, solvent-borne; the word alone does not specify sheen, durability or intended substrate.

Acrylic primer - A primer using an acrylic binder, selected to provide a stated function such as adhesion, sealing or preparation of a compatible substrate. "Acrylic" identifies binder chemistry, not a guarantee that it suits every surface.

Acrylic PVA (Southern Africa) - Regional trade wording for a water-borne acrylic/PVA-type coating or paint. Product usage varies by country and manufacturer, so it should not be assumed to mean the same formulation as a UK PVA adhesive or every product called acrylic paint.

Acrylic render - A render containing acrylic polymer, commonly used as a thin decorative or protective finish over a compatible base coat or façade system. It is not interchangeable with every cement or lime render.

Acrylic resin - A polymeric binder made from acrylic or methacrylic monomers. It forms or contributes to a coating film and influences properties such as adhesion, flexibility, weathering and water resistance.

Acrylic scumble - A water-borne decorative glaze or translucent coating with an acrylic binder, used to create layered or textured visual effects. Its open time and application behaviour differ from traditional oil-based scumbles.

Acrylic wall putty - A regional term, especially in South Asia, for a polymer-modified filler or skim material used to smooth suitable wall surfaces before painting. Composition and application thickness depend on the product; it is not a universal synonym for joint compound.

Activator - A component that initiates or enables a chemical reaction in a coating or adhesive system. It may be supplied separately and mixed in a specified ratio; the exact meaning is product-specific and should not be confused with a catalyst where the chemistry distinguishes them.

Acute-angle lighting - Light directed across a surface at a very shallow angle to reveal texture, ridges, sanding marks or surface irregularities. Also called raking light; it can make minor defects appear more pronounced than under normal viewing conditions.

Additive - A substance added in a small proportion to a coating or related material to modify a particular property, such as flow, drying, foam control or preservation. Additives are formulation-specific and are not automatically compatible with every product.

Adhesion - The attraction or bond between a coating and the surface beneath it, or between successive coating layers. It is distinct from cohesion, which is the internal strength of a material.

Adhesion failure - Loss of bond at an interface, such as between paint and substrate or between two coating layers. The visible coating may peel or detach; diagnosis considers contamination, moisture, preparation, compatibility and curing conditions.

Adhesion promoter - A primer or additive intended to improve bonding to a particular difficult or low-energy surface. It only works within its stated substrate and coating system; it does not replace cleaning or other specified preparation.

Adhesion test - A defined method for assessing how strongly a coating is bonded to a substrate or another layer. Methods include qualitative tape tests and quantitative pull-off tests; results are meaningful only with the method and acceptance criteria stated.

Adhesive - A material that joins surfaces by bonding them together. Decorating adhesives include products for wallcoverings, floor coverings, trim and construction; their chemistry, open time and suitable substrates differ.

Aerated concrete - Lightweight concrete containing many small air voids, manufactured as blocks or panels. Its porosity and lower density affect fixing choices, moisture movement and the preparation or coating system required.

Aeration - The introduction or presence of air in a liquid or material. In paint, unwanted aeration can create foam or bubbles; in some processes, controlled air mixing or atomisation is intentional.

Aerosol paint - Paint packaged under pressure and dispensed through a valve as a spray. The propellant and formulation produce a fine spray, but aerosol delivery does not by itself define the coating's binder, performance or suitability.

After-tack - Residual stickiness that remains after a coating appears dry or after its expected drying period. It can result from slow cure, incompatible layers, excessive film thickness or environmental conditions; it is not the same as normal wet-film tack.

Ageing - The changes a material undergoes over time through light, heat, oxygen, moisture, use or chemical exposure. For coatings, ageing may alter colour, gloss, flexibility, adhesion or strength.

Air cap - The part of a conventional spray gun that directs compressed air around the fluid nozzle to atomise the coating and shape the spray pattern. Its orifices and design influence fan shape and droplet formation.

Air-assisted airless - A spray method that uses hydraulic pressure to atomise coating through an airless tip, with a smaller amount of air added at the gun to refine the spray pattern and reduce heavy edges. It differs from conventional air spray and pure airless spraying.

Air-drying - Drying or curing that occurs under ambient conditions without a separate oven or forced high-temperature process. The term may describe solvent evaporation, oxidative curing or another mechanism, depending on the coating.

Air-purifying coating - A coating marketed or formulated to capture, bind or chemically reduce specified airborne substances at its surface. Its effect is limited to the substances, test conditions and service life stated by the manufacturer; it is not a replacement for ventilation.

Airless atomisation - The breakup of coating into droplets by forcing it at high pressure through a small spray tip, without compressed air being the primary atomising force. Tip size, pressure, viscosity and material affect the pattern and droplet size.

Airless filler - A filler formulated for application through compatible airless spraying equipment. Its consistency, tip requirements and maximum build are product-specific; ordinary hand-applied filler is not automatically suitable for spraying.

Airless gun - The trigger-operated spray gun used to control material flow in an airless spray system. It holds the tip and guard and must be rated for the system pressure.

Airless hose - A high-pressure hose that carries coating from an airless pump to the spray gun. Its pressure rating, internal diameter, length and compatibility must match the equipment and material.

Airless paint sprayer - A pump-driven machine that forces coating at high pressure through a small tip to create a spray. It differs from a compressed-air spray gun; the high-pressure fluid stream presents a serious injection hazard.

Airless spray tip - A calibrated opening fitted to an airless gun that shapes the fan and limits material flow. Tip codes typically indicate orifice size and fan width according to the manufacturer's system.

Airless spraying - Applying coating by pumping it at high pressure through a spray tip so it atomises without compressed air as the main atomising force. It is used for suitable coatings and larger areas, subject to containment and equipment controls.

Airless-applied filler - Filler or surfacing compound deposited by an airless spray system. The phrase describes the application method; the material must be designed and approved for the equipment and substrate.

Algae - Simple photosynthetic organisms that can grow as green, brown or red surface films where moisture and light are available. On buildings they may mark coatings or masonry and are distinct from mould, which is a fungus.

Algaecide - A substance formulated to kill or control algae. It may be used as a treatment or be incorporated into a coating; its approved use, contact time and environmental precautions are product-specific.

Algicidal paint - Paint containing an ingredient intended to inhibit or kill algae on the coated surface. It does not correct the moisture, shade or drainage conditions that encourage growth, and performance depends on the product and exposure.

Alkali - A soluble substance with a pH above 7 that can neutralise acids. Strong alkaline conditions in fresh cementitious materials can damage or discolour coatings that are not suitable for them.

Alkali resistance - A material's ability to withstand alkaline conditions without unacceptable breakdown, softening, loss of adhesion or colour change. It is relevant to coatings on fresh or damp cement-based substrates.

Alkali-resistant coating - A coating formulated to tolerate alkaline substrates or exposure within stated limits. The description does not establish resistance to all concentrations, moisture levels or curing conditions.

Alkali-resistant primer - A primer intended for compatible alkaline mineral surfaces, helping provide an appropriate base for a specified coating system. It must not be used to conceal unresolved moisture or substrate problems.

Alkyd - A synthetic polyester resin modified with oils or fatty acids, used as a binder in many traditional oil-based paints and enamels. Alkyd coatings commonly harden through solvent loss followed by oxidative curing.

Alkyd resin - The film-forming polyester resin used in alkyd coatings. Its oil length, composition and modification affect drying, hardness, flexibility and resistance.

All-purpose filler - A general-purpose repair compound intended for a range of minor filling tasks on specified substrates. "All-purpose" is a product claim, not proof that one filler suits every depth, material or exposure.

All-purpose joint compound (US/Canada) - A ready-mixed or powdered gypsum-based compound used in drywall jointing and surface finishing. It is designed for several jointing stages, although specialist compounds may be faster-setting or easier to sand.

All-round coating - Informal description of a coating promoted for several uses or substrates. It is not a standardised technical class; the product data must identify the actual permitted surfaces and conditions.

Alligatoring - A coating defect in which the surface develops a pattern of cracks resembling reptile skin. It commonly reflects ageing, excessive or incompatible coating layers, or a hard top film over a less stable layer.

Aluminium paint - Paint containing aluminium flakes or pigment, often producing a metallic appearance and, in some products, reflective or protective properties. Composition and suitability vary; the name alone does not indicate heat or corrosion performance.

Amine blush - A waxy, greasy or cloudy surface deposit that can form on some amine-cured epoxy coatings when amines react with moisture and carbon dioxide during cure. It can impair adhesion of later coats if not dealt with as specified.

Anaglypta (UK; originally a proprietary name) - A familiar UK name for embossed decorative wallcoverings, especially paintable patterned papers. It is also used colloquially for similar products from other makers, though those products are not necessarily the Anaglypta brand.

Anchor pattern - The microscopic or visible arrangement of peaks and valleys created in a substrate by abrasive blasting or mechanical preparation. The pattern provides a key for a protective coating when its depth and cleanliness meet the coating specification.

Anchor profile - The measured surface roughness or peak-to-valley depth produced by preparation, commonly specified for protective coatings on metal. It is not the same as surface cleanliness, which must be assessed separately.

Angle box (US/Canada) - A drywall-finishing tool used to apply joint compound into an internal corner, often as part of a mechanical jointing system. Names and designs vary by trade and manufacturer.

Angle brush - A paintbrush with bristles cut or set at an angle, allowing controlled access to corners, edges and narrow profiles. It is also called an angled sash brush in some markets.

Angle head - An angled attachment or head fitted to a spray, sanding or finishing tool to reach a surface that is not directly aligned with the handle or machine. The precise meaning depends on the equipment.

Angle roller - A small or specially shaped roller intended to coat corners, edges or confined profiles. The term is not fully standardised; tool shape and use vary by manufacturer.

Anti-condensation coating - A coating designed to reduce visible condensation on a surface, often by holding a limited amount of moisture or changing the surface temperature slightly. It cannot prevent condensation where ventilation, insulation or moisture conditions remain unsuitable.

Anti-corrosive coating - A coating formulated to slow corrosion of a substrate, especially metal, by acting as a barrier or using corrosion-inhibiting pigments. Protection depends on preparation, film build, exposure and the complete coating system.

Anti-fouling - A coating that discourages the attachment or growth of organisms on submerged surfaces, especially boat hulls. Many systems use regulated biocides; the term is not ordinarily used for general building paint.

Anti-graffiti coating - A coating or surface treatment intended to make graffiti easier to remove or reduce its adhesion. Systems may be sacrificial or permanent and have different cleaning and recoating requirements.

Anti-microbial coating - A coating containing or incorporating an agent intended to inhibit specified microorganisms on its surface. Claims are limited to tested organisms and conditions; such a coating does not sterilise a room or replace cleaning.

Anti-mould coating - A coating formulated to resist mould growth on its surface under stated conditions. It does not remedy leaks, persistent condensation or other causes of dampness.

Anti-pollution coating - A coating intended to reduce the adhesion of airborne dirt or help break down selected pollutants, often through photocatalytic chemistry. Performance depends on light, exposure, formulation and test conditions.

Anti-slip coating - A coating system designed to increase traction on a surface, commonly by including or broadcasting a textured aggregate. Slip resistance depends on the complete system, contamination, wear and test conditions.

Anti-static coating - A coating designed to dissipate or control electrostatic charge, usually by providing a specified level of electrical conductivity or resistance. The required electrical performance must be measured and maintained.

Anticato (Italy) - Italian decorative-finish terminology associated with an aged, distressed or deliberately irregular surface effect; exact usage can vary among makers and applicators. It should not be treated as a single standardised coating chemistry.

Antique glaze - A translucent decorative medium used to create an aged appearance over a base colour, often allowing the underlying surface to show through. The term describes a finish material or effect rather than one fixed formulation.

Antiquing - A decorative process or effect that makes a surface appear aged, worn or historically altered, often through translucent glazes, tonal variation or selective distressing.

APF - Abbreviation whose meaning depends on context. In UK respiratory protection, it commonly means **Assigned Protection Factor**, the level of protection a correctly selected and worn respirator is expected to provide under specified conditions. It should not be expanded without checking the document or industry in which it appears.

Application rate - The quantity of material intended to cover a stated area, usually expressed as litres per square metre, square metres per litre or mass per area. It affects coverage and film thickness and is not necessarily the same as practical spreading rate.

Application temperature - The air, surface or material temperature range permitted during application and often during early drying or curing. Product data should clarify which temperatures matter; a suitable air temperature does not guarantee a suitable substrate temperature.

Applicator - A person or tool that applies a coating, adhesive, filler or decorative material. The term can refer to a brush, roller, spray equipment or the tradesperson using it.

Apron - Protective clothing worn over other garments to shield the front of the body from paint, adhesive or other materials. Its material and coverage determine the protection it provides.

Architectural coating - A coating intended for buildings and building components, including interior or exterior decorative and protective paints. In North American regulation, the term may have a defined scope that differs from general trade usage.

Architectural filler - A filler or surfacing compound intended to repair or smooth building surfaces as part of a decorative or protective finish system. Its permitted depth, substrate and exposure are product-specific.

Architectural film - A thin self-adhesive decorative or functional film applied to building surfaces, such as glazing, doors, panels or furniture. It is distinct from liquid-applied paint and requires compatible, properly prepared surfaces.

Architrave - The moulded or plain trim framing a doorway or window opening, covering the joint between the wall finish and the frame. In classical architecture, the word also has a more specific meaning as the lowest part of an entablature.

Art coating - A coating formulated for artistic or craft work rather than general building decoration, such as a medium, varnish or specialist finish. The phrase is broad and should be clarified by the named product and intended use.

Art paint - Paint intended for fine-art, craft or creative applications, such as artist's acrylic, oil or watercolour. Its pigments, binder and permanence may differ from architectural paint.

Artistic coating - A broad description of a coating used to create a visual or tactile artistic effect. It is not a defined chemistry or performance class.

Atomisation - Breaking a liquid into a spray of small droplets. In decorating, atomisation is produced by air pressure, hydraulic pressure or a combination, and is affected by material viscosity, equipment and settings.

Atomised fan - The fan-shaped spray pattern formed when atomised coating leaves a spray gun or tip. Its width, edge distribution and droplet uniformity affect how evenly material can be deposited.

Automatic dipping - A mechanised coating process in which components are immersed in and withdrawn from coating by automated equipment. It is generally a factory or industrial finishing term, not ordinary site painting.

Automatic taper (US/Canada) - A mechanical drywall-jointing tool that feeds and applies paper tape and joint compound along board joints. It is part of a taping system and is not simply a hand-held jointing knife.

Awkward-access brush - A brush with a shaped handle, angled head or extended reach intended to paint behind obstructions or into difficult spaces. The term describes function rather than a standard brush design.

B

Back-brush - A brush used to work coating into a surface, redistribute it or remove excess after another application method. The term can also mean a brush with bristles set at the back or edge of its head, so local usage matters.

Back-brushing - Brushing over a freshly applied coating, often after spraying, to work it into a textured or porous surface and even the film. It is distinct from simply applying a second coat.

Back-roll - A roller used after a coating has been sprayed or otherwise applied, commonly to even the film or press it into a substrate.

Back-rolling - Rolling over a freshly sprayed coating to improve contact, distribute material or create a consistent texture. The need and timing depend on the coating and substrate.

Backing coat - A supporting or preparatory coating beneath a finish coat. In wallcovering, it may also refer to a layer on the reverse of the covering; the specific system determines the meaning.

Backing paper - Paper attached to or forming the rear layer of a wallcovering. It may provide stability, take adhesive or separate from the decorative face in products designed for strippability.

Badger blender - A soft, broad-bristled brush traditionally made with badger hair or a synthetic imitation, used to blend or soften transitions in decorative paint effects.

Badger softener - A soft, fine-bristled brush used to gently soften marks or transitions in glaze and other decorative finishes. Modern versions may use synthetic fibres rather than badger hair.

Bagging (UK, masonry finishing) - A thin mortar-based finish worked over masonry joints and faces to give a textured or partly filled appearance. It is a masonry finish, not a paint coating.

Banjo (US/Canada) - A hand-held drywall taping tool that carries a roll of tape and feeds joint compound onto it as the tape is applied. It is a manual alternative to larger mechanical taping equipment.

Barrier coat - A layer intended to separate incompatible materials, isolate contamination or prevent a substance from passing through to the next layer. Its effectiveness depends on the contaminant, substrate and coating system.

Barrier coating - A coating designed primarily to restrict the passage of water, vapour, chemicals or other agents. "Barrier" describes a function, not a guarantee of impermeability under every exposure.

Base coat - The coat or layer beneath a later finish layer. It can be a primer, intermediate coat, coloured ground or render layer, depending on the system.

Baseboard (US/Canada; skirting board in UK) - The trim fixed along the bottom of an interior wall to cover the junction with the floor and protect the wall edge. The UK equivalent term is usually **skirting board**.

Batch - A quantity of product made together under one manufacturing run or a quantity of mixed material prepared at one time. Context determines which meaning applies.

Batch number - A code identifying a particular manufacturing batch. It helps trace production details and is useful when comparing product, colour or finish variations.

Batch variation - A difference in colour, appearance or performance between separate production batches of nominally the same product. It may be reduced by mixing containers together where the manufacturer recommends it.

Bazooka (US/Canada) - Trade slang for an automatic drywall taping tool that applies tape and compound to joints. It is a brand-independent nickname in some markets, not the formal name of every model.

Bead - A narrow raised line or rounded deposit of material, such as sealant, adhesive or compound. In trim and plastering, it can also mean a shaped strip or profile used to form or protect an edge.

Beading - The application or presence of material in bead-shaped lines, often sealant at a joint. In decorative finishes, it can also describe the rounded texture or droplets formed on a surface.

Bedding coat - A layer of adhesive or compound into which another material is pressed, such as wallcovering, tape, mesh or a reinforcing fabric. It supports and bonds the embedded layer.

Benchmark area - A designated sample area used as the agreed reference for assessing finish quality, colour, texture or workmanship on a project.

Benchmark sample - A physical or applied sample accepted as the comparison standard for a product, colour or finish. It records an agreed appearance but does not by itself define every site condition or acceptance tolerance.

Binder - The film-forming component of paint that binds pigment particles together and anchors them to the substrate. Binder type strongly influences adhesion, durability, flexibility and resistance.

Binder-to-pigment relationship - The proportion or balance between binder and pigment in a coating. It affects film continuity, opacity, porosity, sheen and durability; it is related to, but not identical with, pigment volume concentration.

Bio-based coating - A coating containing some raw materials derived from biological or renewable sources. The term does not mean that the whole product is renewable, biodegradable, non-toxic or lower-impact; the proportion and evidence matter.

Biocide - A substance intended to kill or control harmful organisms such as fungi, algae or bacteria. In coatings, its permitted use and claims are regulated and depend on the active ingredient and jurisdiction.

Biocorrosion resistance - A material's ability to resist corrosion caused or accelerated by microorganisms and their by-products. It is a specialised protective-coating property, distinct from ordinary weather resistance.

Bituminous coating - A coating containing bitumen or related asphaltic material, often used for water resistance or protection of buried and concealed surfaces. It is generally dark and may be incompatible with some later coatings.

Bladder pump - A pump that moves liquid using a flexible internal bladder which expands and contracts, isolating the liquid from moving mechanical parts. The term occurs in specialist pumping and coating applications.

Blast cleaning - Surface preparation using propelled abrasive or other blast media to remove rust, scale, old coating or contamination. The specified cleanliness and surface profile are separate requirements.

Blast profile - The roughness pattern and peak-to-valley height left by abrasive blasting. It provides a mechanical key for coating, but must be appropriate to the coating thickness and specification.

Bleaching - Lightening or removing colour by chemical or photochemical action. In decorating, it may refer to treating a stain or timber, but the appropriate agent depends on the material and cause of discolouration.

Bleed-through - The migration of colour or soluble staining material from a substrate or lower layer through a new coating, leaving visible marks. Common sources include tannins, dyes, nicotine, rust and water-soluble contaminants.

Bleeding - The movement of a soluble colourant, resin or contaminant into or through a coating, often causing a stain or colour change. It may occur from the substrate or from an underlying layer.

Blister - A local raised bubble or dome in a coating, often caused by loss of adhesion or pressure beneath the film. It may contain air, vapour, liquid or corrosion products.

Blistering - The formation of one or more blisters in a coating. Causes include trapped moisture, heat, contamination, poor adhesion or coating over a damp or hot surface; appearance alone does not identify the cause.

Blocking - Unwanted sticking between two coated surfaces when they touch, such as a painted door against its frame. It can occur when a film has not cured sufficiently or has inadequate block resistance.

Bloom - A cloudy, dull or whitish surface deposit or appearance on a coating. It can result from moisture, condensation, migration of ingredients or other causes and is not one single defect mechanism.

Blooming - The development of a cloudy or dull bloom on a coating surface, commonly associated with moisture or condensation during drying or curing. It should be distinguished from efflorescence, which is salt deposited from masonry.

Blown vinyl (UK) - Expanded or foamed vinyl wallcovering with a raised surface pattern, often paintable. It is a wallcovering type, not a description of paint bubbling.

Blue tape - Low- to medium-adhesion painter's masking tape commonly coloured blue in North America. Adhesion strength and removal time vary by product; colour alone is not a universal technical specification.

Board finish - The visible face or surface condition of a board, such as plasterboard or fibre-cement board, after manufacture or installation. It may also describe the finishing level achieved over board joints.

Booked strip (wallcovering) - A pasted wallcovering length folded adhesive-to-adhesive for a stated period so the paste can soak in and the strip can relax evenly before hanging.

Booking (wallcovering) - Folding a pasted length of wallpaper or wallcovering back on itself, paste-to-paste, and allowing it to rest before hanging. Booking time is product-specific.

Box lining (UK) - A plain lining paper applied to a wall, often to create a more even base beneath decorative wallcovering or paint. Its grade, direction and intended finish affect the result.

Box the paint (UK trade) - To combine paint from several containers in one larger clean container and mix it thoroughly, reducing visible colour differences between cans.

Boxing paint - The process of mixing several containers of the same coating together in a larger container to even out batch variation. It does not correct a wrong colour or a product that has been mixed incorrectly.

Breaking strength - The force required to rupture a material under a specified test. For wallcoverings, fabrics or coatings, the value is meaningful only with the specimen direction, conditioning and test method stated.

Bridging - The ability of a coating, sealant or filler to span a small gap, crack or surface irregularity without breaking. Bridging capacity depends on film thickness, flexibility, movement and substrate condition.

Bristle - A natural or synthetic filament in a brush. Bristle stiffness, taper, flagging, resilience and compatibility with the coating affect paint pick-up, control and finish.

Broad knife (US/Canada) - A wide, flat-bladed hand tool used to apply or smooth joint compound, filler or plaster. In UK usage, a similar tool may be called a filling knife, jointing knife or taping knife depending on size and task.

Broken colour - A colour that has been modified by adding a small amount of another colour, reducing its intensity or purity. In decorative painting, it can also describe a mottled effect made by layering colours.

Brush - A hand tool with bristles fixed into a head and handle, used to apply paint, varnish, adhesive or other material. Brush shape, filament, size and stiffness are selected for the product and surface.

Brush cleaner - A liquid or gel formulated to remove paint or residue from brushes. The appropriate cleaner depends on whether the coating is water-borne, solvent-borne or chemically reactive.

Brush drag - Resistance felt as a brush is drawn through a coating. Excessive drag can indicate high viscosity, poor flow, unsuitable brush, rapid drying or other application conditions.

Brush loading - The amount and distribution of paint held in a brush before application. Correct loading supports controlled spreading; overloading can cause runs, while underloading can cause dry, uneven work.

Brush mark - A visible line, ridge or texture left by brush application. Some finishes intentionally retain brush marks; in a smooth finish they may indicate levelling, viscosity, drying or technique issues.

Brush out - To spread and level a material with a brush, often after placing it on the surface with another tool. It can also refer to an area or section completed using brush application.

Brush spinner - A hand-operated or powered device that spins a cleaned brush to remove excess water or solvent from the bristles. It is a maintenance tool, not a paint applicator.

Brush stroke - A single movement of a brush or the resulting directional mark in the coating. Stroke direction and overlap can affect the visible appearance, especially in glossy or translucent finishes.

Brush wash - A liquid or cleaning solution used to wash paint from a brush. In some regional or product contexts it can mean a brush-cleaning container or station.

Brush-off blast cleaning - Light abrasive blast cleaning that removes loose rust, mill scale and coating while leaving tightly adherent material. In some standards it has a defined preparation grade; it is not equivalent to near-white blast cleaning.

Brush-out - A brushed application or the act of brushing a coating to spread and finish it. The term can also mean a sample panel painted with a brush to assess colour or application behaviour.

Brushability - How easily and evenly a coating can be picked up, spread and worked with a brush. It includes factors such as drag, flow, levelling, spatter and the ability to maintain a wet edge.

Brushed effect - A surface appearance in which visible directional brush texture is intentionally retained or created. It may be decorative or an expected characteristic of the material.

Brushed Marmorino - A decorative mineral plaster finish in the Marmorino family worked to show a brushed or linear texture. Product composition and finish method vary; it is not a single standard recipe.

Brushing machine - A powered machine using rotating or reciprocating brushes to clean, abrade or texture a surface. The brush type and machine settings determine whether it removes contamination, coating or substrate material.

Bubbling - The formation of bubbles in wet paint or in a drying film. It can arise from entrained air, excessive agitation, porous substrates, heat or application conditions; bubbles may collapse or leave pinholes.

Build - The thickness or amount of coating deposited on a surface, usually considered as wet-film or dry-film thickness. Sufficient build is needed for the specified protection, but excess can cause sagging, cracking or slow cure.

Build coat - A coat intended to add film thickness or surface build before the finishing coat. It is used in protective systems and some decorative or surfacing systems.

Burn-in repair - A local repair made by applying a hard, melt-in repair material and blending it into a damaged finish, commonly on furniture or factory-coated surfaces. It is a specialist repair term.

Burnished cement finish - A cementitious surface whose appearance has been compacted or polished by working it while plastic or through later finishing. It is a mineral finish and may be too dense or smooth for some coatings without preparation.

Burnisher - A tool used to rub or polish a surface to produce a smoother or higher-sheen finish. The term may describe a hand tool, powered tool or a polishing pad depending on the trade.

Burnishing - Rubbing a surface to compact, smooth or polish it, often increasing sheen. In paint finishes it may also mean polishing or polishing-like marking caused by friction on a coating.

Burnt-cement effect - A decorative finish designed to resemble darkened, mottled or heat-marked cement. It describes an appearance and may be produced with coatings, plasters or other finishes.

Butt joint - A joint where two edges meet end-to-end without overlapping. In drywall, it commonly describes the joint across the short ends of boards; the term is also used in carpentry and other trades.

Butt seam (wallcovering) - A wallcovering joint in which the edges of two strips meet without overlapping. Correct edge alignment and adhesive control are needed to avoid gaps or raised seams.

C

Cabinet refinishing - Renewal of an existing cabinet surface by cleaning, repairing and applying a new finish, such as paint, stain or clear coating. The term covers the finishing work, not necessarily structural cabinet repair.

Calce (Italian) - The Italian word for lime, used in decorative-finishing terminology for lime-based binders, plasters and paints. A product called calce may have a specific formulation; the word alone does not define its composition.

Calce grassello (Italian) - Lime putty made by slaking quicklime with excess water and allowing the resulting paste to mature. It is used as a binder in traditional lime plasters and decorative finishes; it is not the same as dry hydrated lime powder. [1]

Capillary moisture - Moisture drawn through fine pores in a porous material by capillary forces. It may move through masonry or plaster and can carry dissolved salts toward a surface.

Capillary rise - Upward movement of liquid water through connected pores in a material, such as masonry, against gravity by capillary action. Its height and persistence depend on pore structure, water supply and evaporation.

Catalyst - A substance that changes the rate of a chemical reaction without being consumed in the overall reaction. In coatings, the word is sometimes used loosely for a curing component, but it should be distinguished from a hardener or co-reactant where the chemistry requires it.

Cathodic protection - Corrosion control that makes a metal structure act as the cathode of an electrochemical cell, reducing its tendency to corrode. It is used with coatings on structures such as pipelines, tanks and marine installations.

Caulk (US/Canada; often sealant in UK) - A flexible material used to fill or seal a joint, gap or crack. In North American trade usage it commonly means a sealant; in UK usage, "caulk" may refer more narrowly to a paintable decorator's filler for internal joints.

Caulking gun - A hand or powered tool that holds a cartridge or foil pack and pushes sealant or adhesive through a nozzle under controlled pressure.

Ceiling paint - Paint formulated or marketed for ceiling surfaces, often with low sheen and properties intended to reduce visible application marks. The term does not guarantee a particular hiding power or suitability for every ceiling substrate.

Cellulose adhesive - An adhesive based on cellulose derivatives, commonly used as a powder mixed with water for certain wallcoverings. Different products are formulated for different paper weights and substrates.

Cellulose lacquer - A fast-drying lacquer using cellulose nitrate or related cellulose derivatives as a principal film former, typically carried in volatile solvents. It is a specialist coating and differs from water-borne acrylic lacquer.

Cement effect - A decorative appearance intended to resemble cement or concrete, created with paint, plaster, microcement or another finish. It describes an aesthetic, not necessarily a cement-based material.

Cement paint - A powder or liquid coating based on cementitious binders, used mainly on compatible masonry. It sets through hydration and is distinct from ordinary paint containing a polymer binder.

Cement-based wall putty - A cement-containing filler or skim material used to smooth compatible masonry or plaster before decoration. It is generally more suited to mineral substrates than ready-mixed gypsum fillers, but product limits govern its use.

Cement-tile roof - A roof covered with tiles made from cementitious material, often concrete. It is distinct from clay tile and may be coated only with a system suitable for the tile's porosity and condition.

Cementitious waterproofing - A waterproofing material based on cement and mineral components, sometimes modified with polymers, intended to resist water on suitable substrates. It may be rigid or flexible and is not automatically suitable for every moving joint or immersion condition.

Cemento pulido (Spanish/Portuguese usage) - Literally "polished cement"; a cement-based surface finished to a smooth or polished appearance. In decorative trade language it may refer to a specific regional floor or wall finish, so it should not be assumed to mean industrially polished concrete.

Chalking - Formation of a loose, powdery layer at a coating surface as the binder degrades or fails to hold pigment firmly. It is commonly associated with weathering of exterior paint and can interfere with adhesion of a new coat.

Chamois - A soft, absorbent cloth, traditionally made from leather or now often synthetic, used to wipe or polish surfaces. In decorating, it may be used to dab or mottle a wet decorative finish.

Chase out - To cut or rout a narrow channel into masonry, plaster or another substrate, commonly to house a service or remove unsound material. The term may also mean opening a crack to a sound profile before repair.

Checking - Fine, shallow cracks in a coating, usually not extending through the full film thickness. It is distinct from deep cracking or crazing, although trade usage can overlap.

Cheesy - Trade description of a material that has a soft, curd-like or cheese-like consistency, often because it is partially dried, contaminated or chemically unstable. It is a symptom description, not a formal defect classification.

Chemical stripper - A chemical product that softens, dissolves or loosens paint or another coating so it can be removed. Formulations vary in strength and hazards; the term does not identify a particular active ingredient.

Chipping - Local breaking or flaking away of a coating or substrate, producing small fragments. It may result from impact, brittleness, poor adhesion or inadequate preparation.

Chroma - The perceived strength or vividness of a colour relative to a neutral grey of similar lightness. In colour science it is related to saturation but is not always used as an exact synonym.

Chromatic effect - A visual effect involving colour or colour variation, especially a result produced by contrasting or interacting hues. The term is broad and may refer to a coating effect or the appearance of a colour scheme.

Chukum (Yucatán, Mexico) - A regional wall and surface finish associated with the resin of the chukum tree, Havardia albicans, used with lime, cement or other mineral ingredients in formulations that vary. It can be used decoratively and in some systems for water-exposed surfaces; the name alone does not establish waterproof performance. [2, 3]

Cimento queimado (Brazilian Portuguese) - Literally "burnt cement"; a Brazilian decorative finish or effect that resembles mottled, smooth concrete, commonly produced with cementitious or polymer-modified materials. It is an appearance category and does not necessarily mean the surface was made from structural concrete. [4]

Cissing - A coating defect in which wet paint withdraws from small areas, leaving bare spots or crater-like openings. It is often linked to surface contamination or poor wetting, including oil, silicone or grease.

Clear coat - A transparent or translucent coating applied over a coloured or decorative layer to provide protection or a specified sheen. It may be water-borne, solvent-borne or reactive; compatibility with the underlying finish is essential.

Coalescence - The joining of dispersed polymer particles into a continuous film as a water-borne coating dries. It requires suitable conditions and is assisted in some formulations by a coalescent.

Coalescent - A temporary solvent-like ingredient in many water-borne coatings that helps polymer particles soften and merge into a continuous film during drying. It generally evaporates or diffuses after film formation.

Coarse-grain render - Render containing relatively large aggregate or textured particles, producing a rougher surface than fine render. Grain size and binder vary by system.

Coat - A single applied layer of paint, varnish, render or another finish material. The term may also refer to the coverage operation; a coat is not always the same as a complete coating system.

Coating - A material applied to a surface to provide colour, protection, decoration or a functional property. It can be liquid-applied, powder-applied or formed as a film, and may consist of multiple layers.

Coating adhesion [wallcovering] - The bond strength between a wallcovering's decorative coating and its backing or face material. Poor adhesion can cause the surface layer to crack, flake or separate during hanging or service.

Coating compatibility - The ability of one coating or layer to be applied over another without unacceptable defects or loss of performance. Compatibility depends on chemistry, surface condition, drying and curing, not merely whether both products are called paint.

Coating failure - Loss of a coating's intended appearance or function, such as peeling, blistering, cracking, corrosion or excessive fading. The visible symptom may have several possible causes and needs diagnosis before repair.

Coating system - The complete specified arrangement of substrate preparation and coating layers, including primers, intermediate coats and finish coats. Performance belongs to the system as a whole, not necessarily to one product alone.

Cobwebbing - Fine string-like strands or threads formed when sprayed coating partially dries in flight or at the gun and lands as filaments instead of smooth droplets. It is associated with particular materials and spray conditions.

Cocciopesto (Italian) - A traditional lime-based mortar or plaster containing finely crushed fired clay, brick, tile or pottery. The ceramic aggregate can give colour and may influence moisture behaviour; the term is also used for related decorative finishes. [5]

Cohesion - The internal strength that holds a material together. For coatings, cohesive strength is distinct from adhesion, which is the bond to the substrate or another layer.

Cohesive failure - Failure occurring within a material rather than at the interface between layers. A coating may split internally, leaving material on both sides of the separation.

Cold cracking - Cracking that develops in a coating or material at low temperature, often because it becomes less flexible or cannot accommodate substrate movement. The precise meaning depends on the coating and test context.

Cold-cracking resistance - A coating's ability to resist cracking when exposed to low temperatures or temperature cycling, assessed under a stated test or service condition.

Colour blocking - Use of separate, clearly defined areas of colour, often with sharp edges or geometric forms, within a surface or room scheme.

Colour fastness - The ability of a coloured material to resist fading, bleeding or other change when exposed to agents such as light, washing or rubbing. The relevant exposure and test must be specified.

Colour gamut - The range of colours that a device, pigment set or colour system can reproduce. A paint colour may fall outside a display's gamut and therefore look different on screen.

Colour matching - The process of adjusting or selecting colour so that a sample or coating visually corresponds to a target under defined viewing conditions. Match quality can vary with lighting, sheen, substrate, film thickness and observer.

Colour retention - A coating's ability to maintain its colour over time under service exposure. Sunlight, weather, heat, chemicals and binder or pigment choice can affect retention.

Colour temperature - A description of the apparent warmth or coolness of light, usually expressed in kelvins for a light source. It changes how paint colours are perceived; it is not a property of the paint itself.

Colour wash - A thin, translucent application of coloured material that lets the underlying colour or texture remain visible. The phrase may describe either the material or the decorative effect.

Colourant - A material added to a base product to impart or adjust colour. Colourants may be pigments or dyes and must be compatible with the coating system.

Colourway (wallcovering/design) - A particular colour arrangement of a pattern or design. One wallpaper design may be produced in several colourways.

Combing - A decorative technique in which a comb or toothed tool is drawn through a wet glaze or coating to create parallel lines or patterns. It can also refer to the resulting finish.

Commercial blast cleaning - A blast-cleaning grade in which most visible rust, mill scale and old coating are removed, while tightly adherent residues may remain. In standards-based specifications, the exact preparation grade and reference standard should be named.

Commercial vinyl - A durable vinyl wallcovering intended for higher-traffic or contract interiors. It commonly has a thicker face than domestic paper wallcovering, but construction, cleanability and fire performance vary by product.

Compatibility - The ability of materials, layers or products to be used together without harmful interaction or unacceptable performance loss. It may refer to coating chemistry, substrate, cleaner, adhesive or decorative materials.

Compound - A prepared mixture of ingredients or a workable material used for a specific purpose. In decorating and drywall work it often means joint compound or filler; outside that context, the meaning is broader.

Compound pump - A pump designed to transfer or deliver joint compound, filler or another thick material. Its capacity and wetted components must suit the compound being handled.

Concrete effect - A decorative finish designed to resemble exposed concrete, including its colour, mottling or texture. It may be made with paint, plaster or a specialist coating rather than actual concrete.

Concrete roof tile - A roof tile made from cement, aggregate and water, formed and cured into shape. It is often called a cement tile in trade speech but is not the same material as fired clay tile.

Concrete sealer - A liquid treatment applied to concrete to reduce absorption, bind surface dust or provide a protective film. Sealers may penetrate or form a film, and those types are not interchangeable.

Condensation - Liquid water formed when moist air contacts a surface at or below the air's dew-point temperature. It can dampen coatings and encourage mould but is distinct from water entering through a leak or masonry.

Conductive coating - A coating formulated to conduct electricity within a defined range, often for electrostatic control, grounding or specialist industrial use. Electrical properties must be specified and tested.

Consistency - The body, thickness or flow behaviour of a material. It is influenced by formulation, temperature, storage and mixing; it is related to viscosity but is often used less technically.

Construction timber coating - A finish formulated for structural or building timber, with properties suited to its exposure and movement. It may be preservative, protective, decorative or a combination.

Contact adhesive - An adhesive applied to both mating surfaces and allowed to reach a specified state before they are pressed together. It bonds on contact and usually permits little repositioning once joined.

Containment - Measures or enclosures used to prevent dust, spray, vapour, debris or contaminants from spreading beyond a work area. In protective coating work it can include blast or paint-removal enclosures.

Contamination - Unwanted material on or within a substrate or coating, such as oil, grease, dust, salts, silicone or biological growth. Contamination can impair wetting, adhesion, appearance or cure.

Contract matt (UK) - Trade term for a low-sheen, generally water-borne interior wall and ceiling paint commonly specified for new-build or contract work. Washability and scrub resistance vary and are often lower than in specialist durable matt products.

Contract wallcovering - A wallcovering specified for commercial or public interiors, often with durability, cleanability and fire-performance requirements. The term does not itself guarantee compliance; the product specification must be checked.

Conventional spray - Spray application in which compressed air atomises coating at the gun, unlike airless spray where hydraulic pressure is the primary atomising force. It is also called air spray.

Cool-roof coating - A roof coating designed to reflect more solar radiation and/or emit absorbed heat effectively, helping reduce roof-surface temperatures. Performance depends on tested solar reflectance, thermal emittance, colour and ageing.

Cool-wall coating - A coating designed to reflect a higher proportion of solar energy from an exterior wall, reducing heat absorption. The term is performance-oriented and should be supported by relevant test data.

Copolymer - A polymer made from two or more different monomer types. In coatings, copolymer composition can be selected to balance properties such as flexibility, hardness and water resistance.

Corner bead - A straight protective profile fitted over an external corner, commonly beneath plaster or drywall compound, to create a durable, defined edge. It may be metal, paper-faced metal or plastic.

Corner finisher - A hand tool or mechanical tool used to smooth compound in an internal corner, especially drywall joints. It may be used with a corner box or finishing system.

Corner roller - A small roller shaped or arranged to apply material in internal corners or narrow junctions. The term can also refer to a roller used to press wallcovering into a corner.

Corrosion - Deterioration of a material, especially metal, through chemical or electrochemical reaction with its environment. Rust is the familiar corrosion product of iron and steel.

Corrosion inhibitor - A substance that slows corrosion when incorporated into a coating or applied to a metal surface. Its protection depends on the metal, environment, concentration and coating system.

Corrosion-resistant coating - A coating system designed to protect a substrate from corrosive exposure. The term is broad; service life depends on preparation, specified film thickness, defects, environment and maintenance.

Corten effect - A decorative appearance resembling the weathered, rust-brown patina of weathering steel. It is an imitation effect and does not mean the coating is genuine Corten steel or provides its corrosion performance.

Corten-effect coating - A decorative coating system formulated to reproduce the colour and mottled patina of weathering steel. It may use layered products or reactive components; the term describes appearance, not structural weathering-steel behaviour.

Coverage - The area that a stated quantity of coating can cover under specified conditions, commonly expressed in square metres per litre. Actual coverage varies with substrate porosity, texture, application method and film thickness.

Covering power - A coating's ability to obscure the colour or pattern beneath it. It is related to opacity and hiding power, though trade and test terminology may distinguish them.

Crack accommodation - The ability of a coating system to tolerate movement or changes in the width of an existing crack without failing. It is usually assessed for a stated crack width and temperature range.

Crack bridging - The ability of a coating or membrane to span a crack and remain continuous when the crack opens within specified limits. It does not mean that the coating repairs the underlying structural cause.

Crack-covering coating - A coating intended to mask or bridge fine cracks in a surface. Its ability to do so depends on crack width, movement, film build and system design.

Cracking - Separation within a coating or substrate that forms a line or network of fissures. It may result from movement, shrinkage, excessive thickness, ageing, poor flexibility or incompatible layers.

Crackle finish - A decorative coating effect in which a top layer deliberately cracks to reveal a contrasting layer beneath. The crack pattern is created by the interaction of the finish materials, not by accidental coating failure.

Cratering - Formation of small bowl-shaped depressions in a wet or drying coating, sometimes with a particle or contaminant at the centre. It can result from poor wetting, contamination or application conditions.

Crazing - A fine network of hairline cracks in a coating or glazed surface. In paint it can result from ageing, excessive film build, rapid drying or incompatibility; the term's use overlaps with checking in some trades.

Critical lighting - Lighting that makes surface irregularities unusually visible, often because it is intense, directional or close to the surface. It is important when assessing smooth finishes but may exaggerate defects compared with normal room lighting.

Crocking - Transfer of colour from a surface to another material through rubbing, either dry or wet. It is used especially for textiles and pigmented surfaces; test conditions determine the crocking rating.

Crocodiling - A pattern of large, irregular cracks in a coating resembling crocodile skin. It is commonly used as a synonym for alligatoring, though some sources distinguish crack scale or pattern.

Cross-cut adhesion test - A test in which a grid of cuts is made through a coating and tape is applied and removed to assess coating detachment. Results depend on the specified standard, spacing, tape and coating thickness.

Cross-hatch test - Another name for a grid-cut adhesion test in which intersecting cuts form small squares. It is a comparative test and should be interpreted using the chosen test method's rating scale.

Cross-linking - Chemical joining of polymer chains into a network during curing. It can increase a coating's hardness, chemical resistance and durability, depending on formulation and cure conditions.

Cross-machine direction - The direction across the width of a sheet or web as it moves through a manufacturing machine, perpendicular to the machine direction. It matters in paper and wallcovering strength, stretch and dimensional change.

Cure - The chemical or physical process by which a coating or material develops its final properties. Curing may involve evaporation, oxidation, polymerisation or reaction between components; it is not always complete when the surface feels dry.

Cure time - The time required for a material to reach a stated degree of cure under specified conditions. It may differ from touch-dry, recoat or handling time.

Curtain - A heavy downward flow or hanging ridge of wet coating caused by excessive application or poor flow control. It is a larger form of sagging or running.

Curtaining - The formation of broad, curtain-like runs or folds in a wet coating. It can result from excessive film thickness, low viscosity, unsuitable application or environmental conditions.

Cut - A trimmed or severed edge, or a deliberately opened groove in a material. In decorating, "cutting in" also describes painting a neat boundary with a brush.

Cut edge - An exposed edge created by cutting a sheet, board, coating or other material. It may absorb more moisture or expose an unprotected core and can require sealing or finishing.

Cut in - To paint a neat boundary or edge with a brush where a roller cannot be used or where two colours meet. It can also refer to creating the perimeter band before rolling the main area.

Cutting brush - A brush selected for precise work along edges, corners and junctions. It may have an angled or tapered head, but the term is not a single standard brush shape.

Cutting-in - The process of painting a controlled edge around trim, corners, ceilings or other boundaries before or alongside rolling. The goal is a clean transition without unwanted overlap or visible framing.

Cutting-in brush - A brush designed or selected for controlled edge painting. Common forms include angled sash brushes and oval or tapered brushes; the best type depends on the user's control and the surface.

D

Dado - The lower portion of an interior wall, traditionally treated differently from the upper wall and sometimes separated by a dado rail. In classical architecture it also means the plain central section of a pedestal.

Dado rail (UK) - A horizontal moulding fixed to an interior wall, traditionally near waist height, separating the dado from the upper wall. It may be decorative or protect the wall from chair backs.

Damp - The presence of unwanted moisture in a building material or space. It describes a condition, not a diagnosis; sources may include leaks, ground moisture, condensation or moisture retained during construction.

Damp-proof coating - A coating intended to resist moisture passage or protect a surface from damp exposure. It is not necessarily a damp-proof membrane and will not correct the source of moisture.

De-aeration - Removal or release of air bubbles from a liquid or material. In paint manufacture and application it can reduce foam, pinholes or voids in the dried film.

Dead flat - A very low-sheen finish that reflects little light. Exact sheen limits vary by manufacturer and test method; the term is not a single universal gloss value.

Deadband - A narrow uncoated or differently coated strip left between adjacent applications, sometimes intentionally to avoid overlap or sometimes visible as a defect. Meaning can vary with trade context.

Deep fill - A filler or repair compound designed to fill cavities deeper than those suited to a fine surface filler. Its maximum layer thickness and shrinkage behaviour are product-specific.

Defoamer - An additive used to reduce or prevent foam in a liquid coating during manufacture or application. It differs from an air-release additive, although formulations can address both effects.

Degloss - To reduce the gloss of a surface, either by abrasion or by applying a compatible deglossing product. The aim is usually to improve appearance or provide a key for a new coating.

Deglosser - A chemical preparation intended to dull a glossy coating or help clean it before recoating. It does not automatically replace sanding, cleaning or compatibility checks.

Degreaser - A cleaner formulated to remove grease, oils and similar contaminants from a surface. Different products suit different substrates and may leave residues that need rinsing.

Degreasing - The removal of grease, oil or oily contamination from a substrate. Effective degreasing is a preparation step; spreading contamination with an unsuitable cloth or cleaner can make adhesion worse.

Dehumidification - The removal of moisture from air to lower relative humidity, usually with mechanical equipment. It can support drying or environmental control but does not by itself repair a water source.

Delamination - Separation of one layer from another in a coating, laminate or substrate. It may occur at an interface or within a weak material layer and is a form of coating failure.

Denatured alcohol (US/Canada) - Ethanol made unsuitable for drinking by adding denaturants. It is used as a solvent or cleaner in some applications; formulations and names vary by jurisdiction.

Denib - To remove a small raised fibre, nib or speck from a dried coating, usually by light abrasion or careful cutting.

Denibbing - The light removal of dust nibs, raised fibres or other small surface imperfections between coats or before polishing. It is distinct from sanding back an entire coating.

Density - Mass per unit volume. In coatings and fillers it influences weight, spreading, settling and packaging calculations, but it is not the same as viscosity.

Descaling - Removal of rust scale, mill scale or mineral deposits from a surface. The method may be mechanical, chemical or abrasive and must match the substrate and preparation specification.

Desempenadeira (Brazil) - A hand float or trowel used to spread and smooth plaster, render, filler or decorative finish. The exact shape may be rectangular, trapezoidal or specialised.

Desempenadeira inox (Brazil) - A stainless-steel finishing float or trowel used to apply or smooth plaster and decorative coatings. The stainless blade resists rust staining and can produce a polished finish.

Desert exposure - Service conditions characterised by strong sunlight, heat, dust and often large temperature changes or low humidity. These exposures can stress exterior coatings, but local climate and design matter.

Design repeat (wallcovering) - The distance over which a printed or embossed pattern repeats along a wallcovering. It determines how pattern alignment affects cutting and material requirements.

Dew point - The temperature at which air with a given moisture content becomes saturated and water vapour begins to condense. Coating specifications may require the substrate to be a stated number of degrees above dew point.

Dew-point spread - The temperature difference between a surface and the dew point of the surrounding air. It indicates the margin before condensation can form on that surface.

DFT - Abbreviation for **dry-film thickness**, the thickness of a coating after it has dried or cured. It is commonly measured in micrometres and compared with a specification.

Diffusion-capable coating - A coating that permits some water vapour to pass through it. The amount is measurable and varies by product; the term does not mean that liquid water can pass freely.

Diffusion-capable substrate - A substrate that allows water vapour to move through its pore structure. Its vapour permeability depends on material, thickness, moisture and any surface layers.

Diffusion-open coating - A coating with relatively high water-vapour permeability, often described as allowing a surface to "breathe." The phrase is comparative and should be supported by a stated vapour transmission value or class.

Dimensional movement - Change in a material's length, width or thickness as moisture content or temperature changes. Timber and paper wallcovering are common examples.

Dimensional stability - The ability of a material to retain its dimensions despite changes in moisture, temperature or other conditions. It matters for timber components, boards and wallcoverings.

Dimensionally stable timber component - A timber product engineered or selected to undergo relatively little movement in service compared with solid timber. "Stable" is relative and does not mean movement is impossible.

Direct-to-metal / DTM - Coating described as suitable for application directly to properly prepared metal without a separate primer. Actual suitability depends on metal type, corrosion condition and product specification.

Direct-to-rust coating - A coating formulated to be applied over specified levels of rust after preparation. It does not mean loose rust or scale can be left in place.

Dirt pick-up - Accumulation or adhesion of dirt on a coating surface during service. It can make a coating look stained or dull.

Dirt pick-up resistance - A coating's ability to resist the adhesion or retention of airborne dirt. It is distinct from washability, which concerns removing dirt after it has accumulated.

Dirt retention - The tendency of a surface or coating to hold dirt rather than release it. It is influenced by surface texture, tack, static charge and exposure.

Dirt-repellent coating - A coating designed to reduce the adhesion of dirt or make it easier to remove. The term is a performance claim and depends on the test and service conditions.

Dirt-repellent timber coating - A timber finish formulated to reduce surface soiling or make dirt easier to clean. It still requires suitable maintenance and does not prevent weathering or biological growth.

Discoloration/discolouration - A change from the intended or original colour of a material. Causes include light, heat, moisture, chemical reactions, staining or migration from a substrate.

Dispersant - An additive that helps keep pigment or other particles evenly distributed in a liquid and reduces clumping or settling. It acts during formulation and storage.

Dispersing agent - Another term for a dispersant: an ingredient that assists the distribution of solid particles through a liquid phase. It is not necessarily the same as a wetting agent, though some products perform both functions.

Dispersion filler - A ready-mixed filler in which solid particles are dispersed in a liquid binder, commonly water-borne. It is generally distinct from a powder filler mixed with water before use.

Dispersion silicate paint - A coating combining silicate/mineral binder chemistry with an organic polymer dispersion. It can offer properties between pure mineral and conventional polymer paints; formulation and substrate compatibility vary.

Dispersion-bound coating - A coating whose binder is supplied as polymer particles dispersed in a liquid, commonly water. As the liquid leaves, the particles come together to form the film.

Distemper (traditional UK) - A traditional water-based decorative coating, often made with chalk or whiting and a glue or size binder. It is generally less washable than modern emulsion and can be softened by water.

Distressing - Deliberately creating signs of wear or age in a decorative surface, such as rubbed edges, exposed underlayers or marks. It is an aesthetic treatment, not accidental damage.

Double cut (wallcovering) - Cutting through two overlapping wallcovering layers along a joint so their edges meet closely. It is used where an overlap is required to form a neat seam.

Double-cut seam - A wallcovering seam made by trimming through overlapping strips and removing the cut waste so the edges form a close joint. The method is unsuitable for some substrates or coverings.

Drag - Resistance to movement of a brush, roller or tool over a surface or through a coating. Excessive drag may indicate high viscosity, rapid drying, roughness or an unsuitable applicator.

Dragging - A decorative technique in which a dry brush, comb or similar tool is drawn through wet glaze to create long linear marks or a striated finish.

Drop match (wallcovering) - A pattern match in which the design on each adjacent strip aligns only after the next strip is shifted vertically by a specified distance. It creates more cutting waste than a straight match.

Dry edge - A boundary where previously applied coating has dried before the next section overlaps it, leaving a visible lap or change in sheen. Maintaining a workable wet edge helps avoid it.

Dry fall - A spray coating formulated so overspray dries into powder-like particles before settling on nearby surfaces, allowing easier removal. It is intended for controlled applications and is not harmless airborne dust.

Dry film - The coating layer remaining after volatile components have evaporated and/or the material has cured. Its properties differ from the wet paint in the container.

Dry spray - A spray defect in which droplets partly dry before reaching the surface, producing a rough, powdery or poorly integrated film. It can result from distance, airflow, temperature, pressure or material choice.

Dry-film thickness - The measured thickness of a coating after drying or curing, excluding volatile material that has evaporated. It is often abbreviated DFT and is central to protective coating specifications.

Dry-sandable filler - A filler that can be abraded to a smooth surface after it has dried or cured. Sandability and the time before sanding depend on formulation, depth and conditions.

Drying - The physical or chemical change by which a wet coating becomes a solid or stable film. It can involve evaporation, oxidation, chemical reaction or several processes together.

Drying time - The time needed to reach a stated drying stage, such as touch-dry, recoat, hard-dry or full cure. The label should identify which stage is meant and the conditions assumed.

Drywall (US/Canada; plasterboard in UK) - A wall or ceiling lining made from gypsum plaster between paper facings, fixed to framing or another support. The UK trade term is usually plasterboard.

Drywall compound - Jointing material used to embed tape, fill joints and finish drywall surfaces. It may be ready-mixed or setting-type powder, with different working and drying characteristics.

Drywall finishing - The stages of filling and smoothing drywall joints, corners, fasteners and surface defects so they are ready for decoration or another finish.

Drywall mud (US/Canada, informal) - Common trade slang for drywall joint compound. It does not indicate a particular formulation or drying time.

Drywall sander - A hand or powered sanding tool designed for smoothing drywall compound. Some models connect to dust extraction to reduce airborne dust.

Dull-rubbed effect - A low-gloss appearance created by rubbing or polishing a surface to reduce or even its sheen. It may be intentional or describe a worn finish.

Durability - The ability of a material or coating to retain its required performance over time under specified use and exposure. It is not a single property and should be linked to the intended service conditions.

Dust class - A category describing the hazard or containment requirements associated with a dust, or the performance class of a dust extractor under a relevant standard. The governing system must be stated because meanings differ.

Dust exposure - Contact with or inhalation of airborne dust during work. Risk depends on the material, particle size, concentration, duration and controls.

Dust extraction - Capturing dust at or near its source using a hood, tool connection and extraction unit. Effective extraction reduces airborne dust but does not eliminate the need for appropriate controls.

Dust extractor - A vacuum or extraction machine designed to capture and contain dust, often connected to sanding or cutting equipment. Filtration class, airflow and safe bag handling must suit the dust and task.

Dust resistance - A coating's ability to resist becoming dusty, powdering or retaining dust. The phrase can also describe a surface's resistance to dust accumulation; context and test method matter.

Dust-resistant coating - A coating designed to resist dust accumulation, powdering or surface marking under stated conditions. It does not mean the surface cannot collect dust.

Dusting brush - A soft-bristled brush used to remove loose dust from a surface before finishing or between coats. It should not redistribute oily or harmful contamination.

Dutch metal - Thin imitation metal leaf, commonly made from brass or a copper-zinc alloy, used for decorative gilding. Unlike genuine gold leaf, it can tarnish and usually requires protective sealing.

E

Efflorescence - Crystalline salts deposited on masonry, render or plaster when moisture dissolves salts within the material and carries them to the surface, where the water evaporates.

Eggshell - A low- to medium-sheen coating finish named for the subtle lustre of an eggshell. Exact gloss, durability and washability vary among product ranges and regions.

Elastic exterior coating - An exterior coating designed to stretch and recover to accommodate limited substrate movement. Its crack-bridging ability is specific to the product and film thickness.

Elastic recovery - The ability of a material to return toward its original shape after being stretched or deformed. In coatings it helps describe flexibility after movement.

Elastomer - A polymer that can undergo substantial deformation and recover much of its original shape. Elastomeric coatings use such polymers to provide flexibility.

Elastomeric coating - A flexible coating formulated to stretch and recover, often used on exterior masonry to bridge fine, non-structural cracks. It cannot stabilise moving structural cracks or solve water ingress by itself.

Elastomeric façade system - A multi-layer exterior coating system using flexible materials to protect a façade and accommodate limited movement. The system may include primer, reinforcing layer and finish coat.

Electrostatic spray - A spray method in which coating droplets receive an electrical charge and are attracted to an oppositely charged or grounded object. It can improve transfer to suitably shaped conductive parts but requires compatible equipment and controls.

Embodied carbon - Greenhouse-gas emissions associated with a product's extraction, manufacture, transport, installation, use and end-of-life, depending on the declared assessment boundary. It is commonly reported as carbon dioxide equivalent.

Emission classification - A label or rating describing emissions from a product, such as volatile organic compounds released into indoor air, under a specified test or regulatory scheme. Ratings from different schemes may not be directly comparable.

Emulsion - A mixture of two liquids that do not normally dissolve in each other, with one dispersed as droplets in the other. Water-borne decorative paints are commonly polymer dispersions, often loosely called emulsions in the UK.

Emulsion paint (UK) - Common UK term for water-borne decorative paint used mainly on interior walls and ceilings. It contains pigment and binder dispersed in water; sheen, scrub resistance and intended use differ by product.

Enamel - A hard, smooth-looking coating, traditionally associated with oil-based paints but now used for many formulations. The term describes a finish category and does not specify one binder chemistry.

Encaustic - A finish made using pigments bound in hot wax, or a surface resembling that finish. In wider trade usage it can also refer to decorative effects inspired by wax painting.

End grain - The exposed ends of timber fibres where the wood has been cut across the grain. It absorbs liquids more readily than side grain because the fibre channels are open.

End-grain sealer - A coating or treatment intended to reduce liquid absorption through the exposed ends of timber fibres. It is selected for the timber and intended coating system.

End-grain treatment - A preservative, sealer or coating applied to cut ends of timber to limit moisture uptake or protect the exposed fibres. The product must match the timber use and exposure.

Enlucido (Spanish) - A plastering or rendering finish applied to a wall or ceiling; the exact material and finish vary by region. It may refer to the act of plastering or the finished coat.

Environmental Product Declaration / EPD - A standardised, independently verified document reporting environmental impacts of a product across defined life-cycle stages. An EPD presents data; it is not automatically a claim that a product is environmentally preferable.

Epoxy - A reactive resin system based on epoxy chemistry, commonly cured with a separate hardener or curing agent. Epoxies can provide strong adhesion and chemical resistance but may chalk under ultraviolet exposure.

Epoxy filler - A two-component or otherwise reactive filler using epoxy resin, selected for durable repairs and adhesion to specified substrates. Mixing ratio, pot life and permitted repair depth are product-specific.

Epoxy floor coating - A coating system using epoxy resin to protect or finish floors. It may be solvent-borne, water-borne or high-solids and is usually mixed with a curing component before application.

Epoxy primer - A primer based on epoxy resin, often used in protective coating systems on prepared metal, concrete or other compatible substrates. It must be recoated within the specified time or prepared as directed.

Epoxy resin - A resin containing reactive epoxide groups that can form a cross-linked solid when cured with a suitable curing agent. It is a component of many adhesives, fillers and protective coatings.

Espátula (Spanish/Portuguese; also used internationally) - A spatula or flat-bladed hand tool used to spread, scrape or smooth material. In decorating, it may refer to a filling knife or finishing spatula; shape and name vary by region.

Estuco (Spanish-speaking regions) - A broad term for stucco, plaster or a decorative wall finish, with meaning varying by country. It may describe a mineral render or a decorative coating and should be interpreted locally.

Estuco acrílico (Latin America) - Acrylic stucco or render: a polymer-modified exterior or interior wall finish, often textured. Formulations and substrate requirements differ among manufacturers.

Estuco plástico (Latin America) - Regional term for a plastic-modified or polymer-based stucco, plaster or wall finish. It commonly denotes a workable decorative surfacing material, but exact composition varies by country and product.

Etch primer - A primer containing an acidic component that reacts with a suitable metal surface to assist adhesion and provide a key. It is commonly associated with non-ferrous metals and must be used within its specified system.

Etching - Chemical or mechanical alteration of a surface to create a key, remove contamination or change appearance. Acid etching is one method used on some mineral surfaces; "etching" alone does not identify the process.

Evaporation rate - The speed at which a liquid changes to vapour under stated conditions. In coatings it affects open time, drying, flow and solvent exposure.

Expansion joint - A designed gap or flexible joint that accommodates movement in a building element or finish system. It should not be filled rigidly with ordinary filler or paint if movement is expected.

Extender - A relatively low-cost mineral or other solid added to a coating to modify properties such as volume, texture, sheen or application behaviour. It is distinct from the binder that forms the film.

Extension pole - A telescopic or fixed-length pole that attaches to a roller, brush or other tool to increase reach. It is not a substitute for safe access equipment where work cannot be reached securely.

Exterior colour durability - The ability of a coating's colour to resist change under outdoor exposure, especially ultraviolet light and weather. Pigment choice, binder, orientation and climate all influence performance.

Exterior eggshell - An exterior coating with a low-to-medium sheen and a formulation intended for outdoor exposure. "Eggshell" describes the appearance; weather resistance and suitable substrates are product-specific.

Exterior masonry paint - A coating formulated for exterior masonry, render or similar mineral surfaces. It may be smooth or textured and varies in permeability, water resistance and resistance to weathering.

Exterior wall putty - A filler or skim compound intended for exterior walls and exposure. It must tolerate the expected weather and substrate conditions; interior filler is not automatically suitable outdoors.

Exterior wood oil - An oil-based or oil-containing finish for exterior timber, intended to penetrate or protect the surface while retaining a natural appearance. Products differ in pigmentation, water repellency and maintenance interval.

Extraction - Removal of dust, vapour, fumes or overspray from a work area, typically by local exhaust ventilation or a vacuum system. In spray equipment, it can also refer to the ventilation system around the application area.

Eye protection - Personal protective equipment such as safety spectacles, goggles or a face shield used to protect eyes from dust, splashes, particles or spray. The type must match the hazard and fit the wearer.

F

Fabric effect - A decorative finish or wallcovering appearance designed to resemble woven or textured fabric. It describes appearance rather than a particular material.

Face filling - Applying filler or compound across the face of a surface to fill pores, joints or shallow defects before finishing. It is distinct from filling only isolated holes.

Face layer - The visible outer layer of a composite material or wallcovering. Its material and finish determine appearance and some surface performance.

Factory-applied coating - A coating applied under controlled manufacturing conditions before a product is delivered to site. Its chemistry and cure may differ from coatings applied on site.

Factory-coated cladding - Building cladding with its decorative or protective coating applied during manufacture, often under controlled conditions. Site cutting and fixing can expose edges that need treatment as specified.

Fade resistance - A material's ability to resist colour loss under light exposure. It depends on pigments, dyes, binder, exposure and test conditions.

Fading - Loss or change of colour, commonly through sunlight, weather or chemical exposure. Fading may be uneven where parts of a surface receive different exposure.

False body - Apparent thickness or structure in a liquid that is reduced by stirring or shear. It can describe a coating whose resting consistency differs from its consistency during application.

Fan - The shaped spread of coating droplets from a spray gun or the broad pattern made by a brush or roller. Context distinguishes the spray pattern from the tool shape.

Fan pattern - The shape and distribution of a spray as it leaves a gun or tip. Pattern width and uniformity affect overlap and film build.

Fan width - The width of the spray pattern at a stated distance from the nozzle. It varies with tip, pressure, material and equipment.

Fastener spotting - Discoloured spots appearing over metal fasteners beneath paint or joint compound, often caused by corrosion or movement of the fastener through the finish.

Fat edge - An excessively thick or raised coating edge, often created where application areas overlap or material accumulates at a boundary.

Faux bois (French) - Decorative painting that imitates wood grain; literally, "false wood." It is a graining effect rather than actual timber veneer.

Faux concrete - A decorative finish made to imitate concrete. It may be formed with paint, plaster or specialist coatings and is not structural concrete.

Faux finish - A decorative treatment that imitates another material or surface, such as stone, timber or aged plaster. "Faux" means false or imitation.

Faux finishing - The practice of creating decorative painted or coated effects that imitate materials or textures.

Faux marble - A decorative finish that imitates the colour variations and veining of marble, often called marbling.

Faux stone - A finish designed to resemble natural or worked stone in colour, texture or pattern.

Feather edge - A thin edge of filler, coating or repair material tapered gradually into the surrounding surface so it does not leave a visible step.

Feather out - To taper a repair or coating gradually into the surrounding area, reducing a visible ridge or edge.

Feather-to-zero - A repair profile that thins until it ends at almost no measurable thickness. Not all fillers or coating systems can be applied this way.

Feathering - Tapering material smoothly at its edge or blending a repair into the surrounding surface. It can also describe softly blending colours in a decorative finish.

Felted finish - A textured plaster or render surface created by rubbing with a felt-faced float or similar tool. It produces a fine, even texture rather than a polished face.

Ferrous metal - A metal containing iron, including steel and cast iron. It is generally susceptible to rust unless protected or made from a corrosion-resistant alloy.

FFLP - Abbreviation for **Fine Finish Low Pressure**, a type of spray tip or system designed to produce a fine finish at lower pressure than conventional airless application. Usage is often manufacturer-specific.

Fibre-cement roof - A roof made from fibre-cement sheets or tiles, with fibres reinforcing a cementitious matrix. Older products may contain asbestos and require identification before disturbance.

Fibreglass mesh tape - Open-weave glass-fibre tape used to reinforce joints or cracks in some plasterboard, plaster or render systems. It must be embedded in a compatible compound.

Fibreglass wallcovering - Wallcovering woven from glass fibres, used as a durable reinforcing or decorative surface. It is commonly painted and may have a patterned weave.

Filiform corrosion - Thread-like corrosion that develops beneath a coating, often on aluminium or steel in humid environments. It can spread from a coating defect or exposed edge.

Filler - A material used to fill holes, cracks, joints or surface irregularities. Fillers differ in binder, hardness, flexibility, depth capability and suitable substrate.

Filler knife - A hand tool with a flexible blade used to apply or smooth filler. Blade width and flexibility vary by task.

Filler roller - A roller designed to apply thick filler or surfacing compound to a wall or other surface before smoothing.

Filling blade - A flat hand-tool blade used to press filler into a defect or level it across a surface. It may be part of a filling knife or spatula.

Filling coat - A coating or surfacing layer used to fill or reduce minor surface irregularities before the finish coat. Meaning varies between decorative and industrial systems.

Film - A continuous layer formed by a coating after application and drying or curing. A film may be transparent, coloured, flexible or rigid depending on the material.

Film build - The thickness or amount of coating accumulated on a surface. It may refer to wet or dry film and should specify which when used technically.

Film formation - The process by which applied coating particles or ingredients combine into a continuous film. Water-borne paints commonly form films as water evaporates and polymer particles coalesce.

Film integrity - The continuity and soundness of a coating film, including absence of holes, cracks or other breaks that compromise its function.

Film thickness - The thickness of a coating layer, measured wet or dry. The two values differ because solvents or water evaporate and chemical curing may change volume.

Film-forming wood stain - A pigmented or coloured timber finish that leaves a continuous coating layer on the surface, unlike a penetrating stain that mainly enters the wood.

Fine filling - Filling small defects or applying a thin skim to achieve a smooth surface before decoration. It is not intended to bridge large gaps or correct structural movement.

Fine-finish application - Application intended to produce a smooth, visually refined coating surface with minimal texture, overspray or tool marks.

Fine-finish tip - A spray tip designed to produce a finer atomisation or pattern for smooth finishes. Tip choice must match the material and equipment.

Fine-grain render - Render containing small aggregate particles, producing a relatively smooth or fine texture compared with coarse-grain render.

Fine-surface filler - A filler formulated for shallow imperfections and final smoothing rather than deep repairs. It generally sands easily and can be applied thinly.

Fine-textured exterior coating - An exterior coating containing fine particles or structured ingredients that create a subtle texture and can disguise minor surface irregularities.

Fingering - Uneven ridges or finger-like marks left in wet filler, plaster or coating by a tool or hand. It may describe application marks or a surface defect.

Fingers - In spray finishing, narrow streaks of excess material extending from the edge or ends of a spray pattern. The term may also describe raised finger-like marks in a decorative finish.

Finish coat - The final coat in a specified coating system, selected to provide the required colour, sheen and surface performance.

Finished lighting conditions - The lighting present in the completed space under which the decorated surface will normally be viewed. It matters when judging colour and surface defects.

Finishing box (US/Canada) - A mechanical drywall tool that applies and smooths joint compound over taped joints. Box sizes and stages correspond to different joint-finishing tasks.

Finishing compound - A joint compound or surfacing material intended for the final smoothing stage. It is often finer or easier to sand than bedding compound.

Finishing plaster - A fine plaster coat used to create the final smooth surface over a base coat or suitable background. Formulation and thickness depend on the plaster system.

Finishing spatula - A flexible flat-bladed tool used to spread, smooth or refine a decorative coating, filler or plaster finish.

Fire-retardant coating - A coating designed to reduce flame spread, delay ignition or contribute to a tested fire-protection system. It is not automatically a fire-resisting coating; classification applies only to the tested assembly and conditions.

Fire-retardant timber coating - A coating applied to timber as part of a tested fire-performance system. Its rating depends on timber type, coating build, application and approved end use.

Fisheye - A circular crater or small bare spot in a wet coating, often caused by silicone, oil or other contamination that prevents the paint from wetting the surface.

Fitch - A small, narrow brush, often with long bristles, used for detailed work and narrow recesses. It may have a pointed or round profile.

Fixative/Fixativ - A clear or lightly tinted binder applied to a powdery or weak surface to bind it and reduce dusting or suction. Product names and permitted substrates vary; a fixative is not automatically a primer.

Flaking - Separation of coating in small flakes, usually caused by loss of adhesion or cohesion. The failure may occur between layers or within a weak surface.

Flame spread - The rate or extent to which flame travels over a material's surface in a specified test. Ratings apply to the tested product or assembly and test method.

Flash coat - A thin initial or quick coat applied to promote adhesion, seal a surface or establish a base. Its exact meaning is system-dependent.

Flash dry - To become surface-dry rapidly, often before the rest of the film has levelled or cured. Rapid surface drying can trap solvent or create poor flow.

Flash off - The period after application when volatile material evaporates before the next coat or process. The required time depends on the product and conditions.

Flash point - The lowest temperature at which a liquid gives off enough vapour to ignite momentarily when an ignition source is applied under a specified test. It is not the temperature at which the liquid itself catches fire continuously.

Flash rust - Rapid, light rusting that forms on freshly cleaned steel when moisture and oxygen reach the surface before primer is applied. It can compromise coating adhesion.

Flashing - A visible variation in colour or sheen, often appearing as dull or shiny patches after drying. Causes include uneven porosity, film thickness, application or local repairs.

Flat - A low-sheen paint finish; in some regions it means very low sheen and in others is a broad category. The manufacturer's gloss value is more precise.

Flat box (US/Canada) - A drywall-finishing box with a flat applicator head, used to apply compound over taped flat joints.

Flatting (UK, traditional) - Rubbing down a dried coating with abrasive material to reduce texture or sheen and prepare for another coat. In some contexts it can mean polishing to a lower gloss.

Flatting agent - A finely divided additive used to reduce the gloss of a coating by scattering reflected light. It may affect clarity, abrasion and application if used excessively.

Flexible exterior coating - An exterior coating formulated to tolerate limited movement or cracking in the substrate. The term does not indicate a standard stretch value unless supported by data.

Flexible exterior film - A dried exterior coating film that can deform to a specified extent without cracking. Flexibility depends on binder, temperature, age and film thickness.

Flexible filler - A filler formulated to accommodate some movement after curing. It should not be used to bridge movement beyond its stated capacity.

Flick over - To apply a quick additional pass or light application over a surface, often to correct or even appearance. It is informal trade language and context determines the exact operation.

Flocking - Application of short fibres to an adhesive-coated surface to create a soft, velvet-like texture. It is a specialist decorative or manufacturing process.

Flogging - Informal trade term for working or spreading coating vigorously with a brush or tool. It can also describe rough, forceful application and is not a formal method specification.

Flow - The movement of a coating after application as it spreads and levels. Good flow can reduce brush or roller marks, but excessive flow may cause runs or sagging.

Flow coat - A coating applied in a way that allows it to flow and level into a smooth surface, often in factory finishing. The term may also refer to a specific coating layer.

Flow coating - A process in which a component is coated by flowing or pouring material over it, often with excess coating collected and reused. It is common in industrial or factory finishing.

Flow-out - The levelling of a wet coating after application as surface tension and viscosity reduce tool marks and irregularities.

Fluid tip - The nozzle opening in a spray gun through which liquid coating exits. It controls material flow and works with the air cap or other atomising components.

Fluorescent additive - An ingredient that fluoresces under specified light, such as ultraviolet, making a coating or marking visible. It is distinct from phosphorescent material that continues glowing after the light is removed.

Fluorescent finish - A coating containing fluorescent pigments or dyes that absorb short-wavelength light and emit visible light, appearing unusually bright under suitable illumination.

Fluoropolymer - A polymer containing fluorine, used in some coatings for chemical, weather or low-friction properties. The term covers different polymers and does not guarantee identical performance.

Foil wallcovering - A wallcovering with a thin metallic or metallic-look foil face, usually laminated to a paper or fabric backing. It can be easily marked and requires suitable adhesive and handling.

Formaldehyde-emission class - A category indicating a product's measured formaldehyde emissions under a specified regulatory or voluntary scheme. Class names and limits differ between jurisdictions.

Formaldehyde-reducing coating - A coating formulated or marketed to capture or chemically reduce formaldehyde under stated conditions. The claim depends on independent test data and the coating's active life.

Foundation paper - A plain wallcovering or paper layer used as a base beneath a decorative wallcovering, print or other finish. It can help stabilise the background but must suit the system.

Frattazzato (Italian) - Describes a finish worked with a **frattazzo** (float), often leaving a characteristic floated texture. It is a method or surface description, not a single material formulation.

Frattazzo (Italian) - A hand float used to spread, compact or finish plaster, render or mortar. Float material and shape affect the resulting surface.

Frattazzo inox (Italian) - A stainless-steel float used to finish plaster or decorative coatings. Its smooth, corrosion-resistant blade is useful for compacting or polishing certain finishes.

Frattazzo veneziano (Italian) - A Venetian-style finishing trowel or float used for fine decorative plaster work, including polished lime finishes. It has a smooth blade suited to burnishing the material.

Friable - Easily crumbled, powdered or broken under light pressure. A friable substrate may not support a sound coating without appropriate stabilisation or removal.

Full-surface filling - Applying filler or compound across the whole surface rather than only to local defects, usually to achieve a uniformly smooth finish.

Functional architectural coating - A building coating intended to provide a measurable function beyond colour or decoration, such as corrosion protection, thermal reflection or chemical resistance.

Functional coating - A coating designed primarily for a specific technical property, such as electrical conductivity, abrasion resistance or weather protection.

Functional interior coating - An interior coating designed for a performance requirement such as cleanability, chemical resistance, hygiene or static control, in addition to appearance.

Fungicidal wash - A cleaning or treatment product intended to kill or inhibit fungi on a surface. It must be used according to its label and does not resolve the moisture conditions that support growth.

Fungus - An organism such as mould or mildew that grows by absorbing nutrients from organic material or environmental sources. Fungal growth on a building surface is distinct from algae.

F☆☆☆☆ / F-Four Stars (Japan) - The highest formaldehyde-emission grade in Japan's F-star labelling scheme for specified building materials, indicating the lowest classified emissions under that scheme. It is a regulatory classification, not a blanket health or environmental certification.

G

Galvanic corrosion - Corrosion caused when dissimilar metals are electrically connected in the presence of an electrolyte, causing one metal to corrode preferentially. Coatings and isolation can reduce the risk.

Galvanising - Applying a zinc coating to iron or steel, commonly by hot-dip immersion or electroplating, to protect it from corrosion. Paint adhesion depends on the galvanising condition and preparation.

Gelling - Thickening of a liquid coating until it forms a gel or loses normal flow. It may result from age, heat, contamination or a chemical reaction and can indicate a product is unusable.

Gesso - A primer or ground used beneath paint, traditionally made from chalk or gypsum with a binder, and now available in acrylic formulations. It provides a prepared surface for art or decorative work.

Glaze - A transparent or translucent coating or medium that modifies the appearance of a base layer while allowing it to show through. Decorative glazes are used for colour effects; ceramic glaze has a different technical meaning.

Glaze-and-wipe - A decorative technique in which glaze is applied and then partly removed with a cloth, sponge or tool to create variation while leaving colour in texture or recesses.

Glazed Marmorino - A Marmorino decorative plaster finish that has been compressed or polished to produce a smoother, often higher-sheen surface. The result depends on material and finishing method.

Glazed-marble effect - A decorative surface designed to resemble the sheen, depth or veining of polished marble. It does not indicate that the surface contains marble.

Glazing - Applying a transparent or translucent material over a coloured or decorative surface; in building work it can also mean fitting glass into a frame. Context distinguishes decorative glazing from window glazing.

Glazing bar (UK) - A narrow bar or profile that divides or retains panes of glass in a window or door. It may be structural or applied decoratively.

Glazing compound - A material used to bed and seal glass in a frame. It may be traditional oil-based putty or a modern sealant, depending on the glazing system.

Glazing putty - A pliable putty used to bed and seal glass in traditional timber window frames. It hardens over time and must be compatible with the glass, frame and paint system.

Gloss - The degree to which a surface reflects light in a specular, mirror-like manner. It is measured at specified angles; perceived gloss also depends on colour and surface smoothness.

Gloss banding - Visible strips or bands of different sheen caused by uneven application, overlap, drying or surface conditions. It is often noticed after a coating dries.

Gloss level - The measured or described degree of sheen of a coating, from dead flat or matt to high gloss. Numerical values depend on measurement angle and standard.

Gloss meter - An instrument that measures the specular gloss of a surface at a defined angle, commonly 20, 60 or 85 degrees.

Gloss retention - A coating's ability to maintain its gloss during exposure and use. Weathering, cleaning, abrasion and binder degradation can reduce gloss.

Gloss unit - A numerical value from a gloss measurement made with a specified geometry and reference standard. Values from different measurement angles are not directly interchangeable.

Gold leaf - Extremely thin sheets of gold used for decorative gilding. Genuine gold leaf resists tarnish better than imitation leaf, while karat and alloy affect colour.

Gone off (trade slang) - A coating, adhesive or compound that has deteriorated, cured in the container or otherwise become unusable. The phrase is informal and does not identify the cause.

Gooseneck - A curved or angled pipe, nozzle or attachment that directs material flow or spray around an obstacle. In decorating equipment the exact part depends on the tool.

Gradient - A gradual change from one colour, tone or property to another across a surface or distance. In decorative painting it may be created by blending adjacent colours.

Grain - The visible direction, pattern or texture of wood fibres. In abrasives it may refer to particle size; context determines the meaning.

Grain filler - A filler used to fill the open pores of timber before a smooth or high-gloss finish. It creates a more level surface without concealing the timber's colour unless tinted.

Graining - Decorative painting that imitates the grain or appearance of timber. It may use combs, brushes, stipplers and layered colours.

Graining comb - A toothed tool drawn through wet glaze to create parallel or wavy lines resembling wood grain.

Graining tool - A brush, comb, rocker or other implement used to create a simulated wood-grain pattern in a decorative finish.

Grasscloth - A wallcovering woven from natural or synthetic grasses and fibres, usually laminated to a backing. Its visible seams and natural variation are characteristic; it is generally not washable like vinyl.

Grassello (Italian) - Lime putty, typically a matured paste made from slaked lime, used as a binder in traditional lime plaster and polished decorative finishes.

Grassello di calce (Italian) - Literally "lime putty"; a paste of slaked lime used in lime plasters and decorative finishes. Maturity and quality influence workability and finish.

Grazing light - Light directed across a surface at a low angle, emphasising texture and irregularities. It is also called raking light.

Greying stain - A timber treatment or finish intended to produce or preserve a grey weathered appearance. It may be pigmented or reactive and is not necessarily a wood preservative.

Grit - A measure or description of abrasive particle size, with higher grit numbers generally indicating finer abrasive in common grading systems. Standards differ, so numbers should be interpreted within the stated system.

Grit blasting - Surface preparation using propelled abrasive grit to remove corrosion, scale or coatings and create a surface profile. It is a form of abrasive blast cleaning.

Grit primer - A primer containing coarse particles or aggregate to provide a textured key for a later plaster, render or decorative coat. Its use is system-specific.

Grooved texture - A surface texture formed by parallel or patterned grooves, either in the substrate or in a decorative coating.

Ground coat - A preparatory coloured or neutral layer beneath a decorative finish, paint effect or gilding. It provides the background tone and may affect the final appearance.

Gypsum - A naturally occurring mineral, calcium sulphate dihydrate, used as the basis of plaster and plasterboard. Gypsum materials are sensitive to prolonged wetting.

Gypsum board (US/Canada; plasterboard in UK) - A board made with a gypsum core and paper or other facings, used to line walls and ceilings. The board type and edge condition affect jointing and decoration.

Gypsum-board finish level - A defined level of joint and surface finishing for gypsum board, ranging from basic joint treatment to a smooth finish suited to critical lighting or high-sheen decoration. Numbering and requirements depend on the applicable standard.

H

H-class extraction - Dust-extraction equipment rated for high-hazard dust under the applicable classification scheme. Its filtration and containment requirements are stricter than those for ordinary household vacuums.

Hair cracking - Very fine, shallow cracks in a coating or surface, resembling strands of hair. It may reflect shrinkage, movement, ageing or a brittle finish.

Half-drop match (wallcovering) - A pattern repeat in which each adjacent strip is offset vertically by half the repeat distance. This staggers the design and increases cutting waste.

Hand masker - A handheld dispenser that applies masking tape and protective film or paper together, speeding preparation of edges and adjacent surfaces.

Hard distemper (UK, traditional) - A water-based distemper containing a stronger binder than soft distemper, giving a more durable finish. It remains a traditional coating type and is not equivalent to modern washable emulsion.

Hard-rubber squeegee - A squeegee with a rigid rubber blade used to press, smooth or remove liquid from a surface. Blade hardness affects pressure and contact.

Hardener - A component that reacts with a resin or coating to produce a cured film. In two-component products it is mixed at a specified ratio; it is not simply a drying accelerator.

Hardness - Resistance of a material or coating to indentation, scratching or deformation, measured by a defined test. Different hardness tests assess different properties.

Hawk (UK plastering) - A flat board with a central handle, used to hold plaster or mortar while applying it with a trowel.

HDA - Abbreviation for **high-density aggregate** in some coating and flooring contexts. It can have other meanings, so the source document should be checked.

HEA - Abbreviation commonly used for **High Efficiency Airless** spray equipment or tips, especially in manufacturer terminology. It is not a universal standardised class.

Heat gun - A powered tool that directs hot air onto a surface, used in some coating-removal, forming or drying tasks. Temperature and airflow can damage substrates or create fire and fume hazards.

Heat resistance - Ability to withstand specified elevated temperature without unacceptable change in appearance or performance. It is defined by temperature, duration and test conditions.

Heat-ageing resistance - Ability to retain properties after exposure to heat over time. It is distinct from brief heat resistance and may involve changes in colour, flexibility or adhesion.

Heat-reflective coating - A coating formulated to reflect a proportion of radiant heat, often through reflective pigments or a specified surface finish. Performance depends on measured properties and the complete assembly.

Heavy coating application - Application of a coating at a high wet-film thickness or spreading rate. Excessive build can cause sagging, slow drying, solvent entrapment or other defects.

Hide - Trade verb meaning to obscure or cover the underlying surface or colour. It is related to opacity and hiding power.

Hiding power - A coating's ability to conceal the colour or pattern beneath it at a stated film thickness or application rate. Pigment, colour contrast and substrate affect the result.

High solids - Describes a coating containing a relatively high proportion of non-volatile material by volume or weight. The exact threshold depends on the context; high-solids products can achieve greater film build with less solvent loss.

High-build coating - A coating designed to form a relatively thick film per coat. It is used where extra protection or surface filling is needed, within the product's limits.

High-build filler - A filler or surfacing material intended to build thickness and level larger irregularities. Its maximum thickness, shrinkage and sanding properties are product-specific.

High-moisture filler - Filler designed for substrates or conditions with elevated moisture, within stated limits. The term does not mean it can be applied to saturated or actively leaking surfaces.

High-opacity paint - Paint formulated to hide the substrate or a previous colour effectively. Opacity is influenced by pigment, colour, film thickness and substrate contrast.

High-pressure airless - Spray application using an airless pump operating at elevated fluid pressure to atomise coating through a tip. Pressure must remain within the rated limits of the equipment and material.

High-pressure water cleaning - Cleaning with a pressurised water jet. Pressure, flow, nozzle and distance determine impact; excessive force can damage masonry, timber, coatings or joints.

High-pressure waterjetting - Surface preparation or cleaning using a high- or ultra-high-pressure water jet, sometimes to remove coatings or contamination. It differs from abrasive blasting because water is the primary jetting medium.

High-traffic wallcovering - Wallcovering selected for areas subject to frequent contact or wear, such as corridors and public interiors. Durability and cleanability must be verified from the product specification.

High-UV environment - Exposure with unusually strong ultraviolet radiation, such as intense sunlight or high-altitude conditions. UV can degrade binders and fade pigments.

Highlighting - Adding lighter tones or raised accents to emphasise edges, texture or detail in a decorative finish.

Holdout - A coating's ability to remain near the surface rather than being absorbed into a porous substrate, helping maintain an even appearance or sheen.

Holiday - An uncoated gap or discontinuity in a coating film. In protective coating inspection, a holiday can expose the substrate and compromise protection.

Holiday detector - An instrument used to locate holes or discontinuities in a coating over a conductive substrate, using a specified low- or high-voltage test method.

Hopper - A container that feeds coating, plaster, compound or abrasive into a tool or machine by gravity or controlled flow.

Hopper gun - A spray or texture gun supplied from a top-mounted hopper, commonly used to apply textured coatings, plaster or joint compound.

Hungry surface - Trade description for a porous or absorbent surface that rapidly takes liquid from a coating, making it difficult to spread or achieve even coverage.

HVLP - **High Volume Low Pressure** spray application, using a large volume of air at comparatively low pressure to atomise coating. It can improve transfer efficiency but requires compatible materials and settings.

Hybrid coating - A coating that combines more than one binder chemistry or performance approach, such as acrylic-alkyd. The term is broad and does not specify exact composition.

Hydrophilic coating - A coating whose surface attracts or interacts readily with water, often causing water to spread rather than bead. The specific function depends on formulation.

Hydrophobic coating - A coating whose surface repels water, often causing droplets to bead. Water repellency does not necessarily mean vapour impermeability or permanent waterproofing.

Hydrostatic pressure - Pressure exerted by water at rest, increasing with depth. It can force water through or against walls, floors and coatings.

Hygrometer - An instrument that measures humidity in air. Some models also measure temperature and calculate dew point.

Hygroscopic salts - Salts that absorb moisture from the air. They can cause persistent damp-looking patches or surface deterioration even when no active leak is present.

I

Imitation finish - A decorative coating or technique intended to resemble another material or finish, such as timber, stone, metal or aged plaster.

Immersion coating - A coating applied by dipping an object into liquid coating and withdrawing it, allowing the material to drain and form a film. It is common in factory finishing.

Immersion service - Exposure in which a coated surface remains continuously or frequently submerged in liquid. Coatings for immersion require specific product approval and preparation.

Impregnant - A liquid treatment that penetrates a porous substrate to modify or protect it, often without forming a substantial surface film. The term is used in specialist materials contexts.

Impregnating stain - A stain formulated to penetrate timber or another porous material, colouring it while leaving little or no continuous film on the surface.

Impregnation - The penetration of a liquid or resin into the pores of a material to change its properties, such as water absorption or strength.

In-can preservative - A biocidal ingredient added to a water-based product to prevent microbial spoilage while it is stored in its container. It is different from a dry-film preservative that protects the cured surface.

Incomplete atomisation - Spray condition in which the coating is not broken into droplets finely or evenly enough, producing coarse spray, streaks or poor finish.

Induction time - A waiting period after mixing reactive coating components and before application, allowing the reaction to begin. It is specified only for products that require it.

Industrial blast cleaning - Abrasive or other blasting used to prepare industrial surfaces by removing rust, scale or coatings to a defined standard. The required cleanliness grade and profile should be specified.

Industrial coating - A coating designed for industrial equipment, structures or manufacturing processes, often to provide corrosion, chemical, heat or abrasion resistance. It is distinct from ordinary decorative paint in performance and specification.

Inhibitive coating - A coating containing ingredients that slow corrosion or another specified degradation process. Its function depends on the active chemistry and system design.

Ink absorption - The uptake of printing ink into a paper, wallcovering or other substrate. It affects print sharpness, colour density and drying.

Ink-receptive coating - A surface layer formulated to accept and hold ink for printing, improving colour, adhesion or image definition.

Inorganic coating - A coating whose principal binder or structure is mineral or inorganic, such as silicate or cementitious material. Some products contain organic modifiers, so the term may be relative rather than absolute.

Inorganic pigment - A colour-producing pigment based on mineral or metal compounds rather than organic molecules. Many inorganic pigments offer strong light or heat stability, though properties vary.

Inspection lighting - Lighting arranged to reveal surface condition, coating defects or finish quality during inspection. Its angle and intensity should reflect the agreed inspection criteria.

Instant tintability - Product or marketing description for paint that can be tinted or used soon after manufacture or mixing without a specified waiting period. The exact claim is manufacturer-specific.

Interior wall putty - A filler or skim compound intended to smooth interior walls before decoration. It may be gypsum-, polymer- or cement-based and must suit the substrate and environment.

Intonachino (Italian) - A fine-grained lime or mineral plaster/render finish, often used as a decorative textured coat. Formulation and grain size vary by product and region.

Intonaco (Italian) - The plaster or render layer applied to a wall; in traditional fresco work it can mean the final smooth plaster layer receiving the paint.

Intumescent coating - A fire-protective coating that expands when heated to form an insulating char layer, slowing heat transfer to the substrate. Its fire rating applies only at specified thicknesses and tested conditions.

Iridescent coating - A coating that appears to change colour or show shifting highlights with viewing angle or illumination, often through interference pigments.

Isocyanate - A reactive chemical group used in many polyurethane coatings and foams. Some isocyanates are potent respiratory sensitizers and require strict exposure controls.

Isolating primer - A primer intended to seal or separate a substrate or stain from later coats, reducing bleed-through or interaction. It must be matched to the contaminant and finish system.

Isolation coat - A layer applied between materials to prevent direct contact or interaction, such as a barrier between an old finish and a new decorative layer.

Ivory knife - Trade name for a small, flexible filling or finishing knife, often with a pale handle. The term is informal and does not necessarily mean the blade is made from ivory.

J

Jobsite mock-up - A sample area made on site to demonstrate and agree colour, texture, finish or workmanship before full application. It records a visual reference, not necessarily every production condition.

Joint - A junction between two adjoining materials or components, such as boards, trim or building elements. Joints may be fixed, flexible or designed to accommodate movement.

Joint cement (US/Canada) - Joint compound used to fill and finish drywall joints. It may be ready-mixed or supplied as powder.

Joint compound - Material used to embed tape, fill joints and smooth drywall or other board surfaces. Types include drying compounds and setting compounds.

Joint filler - Filler formulated for gaps or joints between materials. Its flexibility and movement capacity must suit the joint.

Joint knife - A broad, flexible-bladed tool for applying or smoothing joint compound. Blade width varies with the stage of finishing.

Joint tape - Paper, fibreglass mesh or other reinforcing tape embedded in compound over board joints to reduce cracking and create a continuous surface.

Joint treatment - The materials and processes used to finish a joint, including filling, reinforcement and smoothing.

Jointing - The process of filling and finishing joints between boards or other components.

Jointing compound - A compound used to fill, embed tape in or finish board joints. In UK usage, it often refers to plasterboard jointing material.

Jointing knife - A hand tool with a flexible blade for applying jointing compound or filler.

Joints-recessed/tapered/butt - Board joints classified by edge shape: recessed or tapered edges form a shallow channel; butt joints meet at square ends. The edge type affects reinforcement and compound build.

Jute wallcovering - Wallcovering made with jute fibres or a jute textile face, often laminated to a backing. Natural fibres give a distinctive texture and can vary in colour.

K

Key - A surface texture or condition that allows a coating, filler or adhesive to grip. A key may be mechanical or chemical.

Key it (trade) - To abrade or otherwise prepare a surface to provide a suitable key for a following layer.

Keying - Preparing a surface to promote adhesion, usually by lightly abrading a smooth or glossy coating. Keying does not remove the need to clean contamination.

Knife filling - Applying filler with a filling knife or spatula to repair defects or smooth a surface.

Knock back - To reduce a raised texture, sheen, colour strength or surface imperfection by rubbing, sanding or applying a further layer. The exact operation depends on context.

Knot - The base of a branch embedded in timber, often darker and richer in resin than surrounding wood. Knots can stain or bleed through coatings.

Knot bleeding - Discolouration caused by resin or soluble compounds from a timber knot migrating through a coating.

Knotting (UK, traditional) - A preparatory treatment applied to knots in timber to reduce resin bleed. Traditional shellac knotting is a particular type; compatibility with later coatings must be checked.

Knotting brush - A small brush used to apply knotting solution to knots in timber.

Knotting solution (UK) - A knot-sealing product, commonly shellac-based, used to reduce staining from resinous knots before painting. It does not guarantee permanent isolation in every condition.

L

Lacquer - A coating that dries mainly by solvent evaporation or cures rapidly to form a hard film. The word covers several chemistries, so it does not identify one universal binder.

Laddering - A defect or pattern of repeated horizontal ridges or bands in a coating, often caused by application sequence, overlap or spray distribution. Context may also refer to a ladder-like crack pattern.

Laitance - A weak, fine layer of cement and water that rises to the surface of fresh concrete. It can interfere with adhesion and may need removal before coating.

Lamato (Italian) - Italian decorative-finish term associated with a finely textured or lightly scratched render/plaster surface; precise usage varies by product and region.

Lap - The area where one application pass or section overlaps another. A visible lap can result if the coating begins to dry before the overlap is made.

Lap mark - A visible line or difference in sheen or colour at an overlap between application areas. It is often caused by uneven film thickness or loss of a wet edge.

Latex paint (US/Canada) - General term for water-borne paint using a polymer dispersion binder, often acrylic or vinyl-acrylic. It does not necessarily contain natural rubber latex.

Lay off - To make final light brush strokes in one direction over freshly applied paint to even the surface. It can also mean reducing or smoothing a finish.

Lay on - To apply coating to a surface, often with a brush before spreading or laying it off.

Lay-off - Final smoothing strokes made with a brush or tool to minimise application marks in a wet coating.

Laying-off - The finishing pass used to even a freshly applied coating, usually with light strokes in a consistent direction.

Laying-on - The initial application of material to a surface before spreading, levelling or finishing it.

Lead paint - Paint containing lead compounds, historically used for pigmentation or drying. Existing lead paint can create toxic dust or fumes when disturbed and requires appropriate identification and controls.

Leaf - Extremely thin sheet metal used in decorative gilding, such as gold, silver or imitation metal leaf.

Leafing - The application of metal leaf to an adhesive-coated surface, or the behaviour of metallic pigment flakes aligning near a coating surface to create a bright metallic appearance.

Level 0 finish (drywall) - No taping, finishing or accessories applied to the board joints. It is a basic construction stage, not a finished decorative surface.

Level 1 finish (drywall) - Tape embedded in joint compound with excess compound removed, typically for concealed or low-visibility areas. Exact requirements depend on the governing standard.

Level 2 finish (drywall) - Tape embedded and covered with a thin coat of compound, commonly used where the surface receives a tile finish or is otherwise minimally exposed.

Level 3 finish (drywall) - Tape and joints receive additional compound coats, generally suited to medium or heavy textures rather than smooth paint finishes.

Level 4 finish (drywall) - Joints and fasteners are finished with multiple coats and smoothed for flat paint or light texture. It may be unsuitable for critical lighting or high-sheen finishes.

Level 5 finish (drywall) - A Level 4 surface with a thin skim coat over the entire board face, used to reduce differences in texture and porosity under critical light or smooth, glossy decoration.

Levelling - Spreading and smoothing material so a surface becomes even or a wet coating reduces tool marks. It can refer to self-levelling floor compounds or coating flow.

Levelling compound - A flowable material used to create an even floor surface before a finish is installed. It may be cementitious or gypsum-based and has specified thickness and substrate limits.

Levelling filler - A filler or surfacing compound designed to smooth a broader area or reduce shallow irregularities.

Lid - Informal term for the top surface of a horizontal trim or board, such as a door frame or skirting. It can also mean a container cover.

Lifting - Softening, wrinkling or detachment of an underlying coating when a new coating attacks or re-wets it. It may indicate incompatibility, insufficient drying or unsuitable preparation.

Light-duty wallcovering - A wallcovering intended for light-use areas with limited wear. It generally has less impact or scrub resistance than contract-grade products.

Lightfast pigment - A pigment that resists fading or colour change under light exposure. Lightfastness depends on the pigment and test conditions.

Lightness - The perceived amount of light reflected by a colour, from dark to light. In colour science it is distinct from hue and chroma.

Lightweight all-purpose joint compound (US/Canada) - A lower-density drywall compound designed for several joint-finishing stages and easier handling. Exact sanding, strength and drying characteristics vary by product.

Lime façade paint - A lime-based coating intended for exterior façades, usually on compatible mineral substrates. It is vapour-permeable but may require more frequent maintenance than some polymer coatings.

Lime filler - A lime-based filler or repair material used on compatible mineral surfaces. Its setting, flexibility and finish differ from gypsum or polymer fillers.

Lime interior paint - Interior coating using lime as a principal binder, producing a mineral finish on suitable breathable substrates. Colour and appearance may vary with application and curing.

Lime paint - A coating made primarily with lime binder and mineral pigments. It bonds through carbonation and is used on compatible mineral backgrounds; it is not the same as ordinary emulsion paint.

Lime slurry - A fluid mixture of lime and water, sometimes with aggregate or pigment, used as a coating, wash or component in lime work. The recipe determines its use.

Lime-casein paint - A mineral paint combining lime with casein, a milk protein binder. It produces a matt, breathable finish on suitable substrates.

Limewash - A thin coating of lime putty or slaked lime dispersed in water, usually applied to porous mineral surfaces. It bonds as it carbonates and may show a soft, varied appearance.

Lining paper (UK) - Plain paper hung beneath decorative wallpaper or paint to provide a more even base, bridge minor surface imperfections or reduce suction. It does not repair structural defects.

Linseed oil - A drying oil pressed from flaxseed that hardens by oxidation. It is used in traditional paints, putty and timber finishes.

Linseed-oil paint - Paint in which linseed oil is a principal binder or vehicle, usually with pigment. It cures by oxidation and has different drying and maintenance characteristics from modern water-borne paint.

Llana (Spanish) - A plasterer's trowel or float used to spread and smooth plaster or render. The exact tool shape varies regionally.

Load up - To place or hold a sufficient amount of paint or material on a brush, roller or tool for application.

Loose scale - Rust, mill scale or old coating that is detached or poorly bonded and can be removed readily. It is generally unsuitable to leave beneath a protective coating.

Low dirt collection - A coating property or product claim describing reduced attraction or retention of dirt. It is not a standardised rating unless a test method is stated.

Low sheen - A finish with limited light reflection, between matt and higher-sheen finishes in many product ranges. The category boundaries vary by manufacturer.

Low-emission coating - A coating that releases relatively low amounts of specified substances, usually volatile organic compounds, under a defined test or scheme. "Low emission" is incomplete without the standard or measured value.

Low-film-forming coating - A coating that leaves little or no continuous surface film, often because it penetrates the substrate or has low binder content. Examples include some stains and mineral treatments.

Low-pressure airless - Airless spray equipment or application operated at comparatively reduced fluid pressure, usually to lower overspray or improve control while still using a hydraulic spray tip.

Low-pressure atomisation - Atomising a liquid using lower air or fluid pressure than a conventional process. Exact meaning depends on the spray technology.

Low-VOC - Describes a product with a relatively low volatile organic compound content under a stated regulatory definition or test. Thresholds vary by jurisdiction and product category.

LP tip - Abbreviation for a low-pressure spray tip in some manufacturer ranges. Tip codes and performance are brand-specific.

LRV - **Light Reflectance Value**, a scale from 0 (theoretically absorbs all visible light) to 100 (theoretically reflects all visible light), used to describe how much visible light a colour reflects.

LVLP - **Low Volume Low Pressure** spray application, using a lower volume of air at low pressure than HVLP systems. It is a spray-gun category; actual performance depends on equipment and setup.

M

M1 emissions classification (Finland) - Voluntary Finnish classification assessing specified indoor-air emissions from building materials, including VOCs, formaldehyde and ammonia, plus odour acceptability. It is an emissions classification, not a general environmental or health certification. [6]

Machine direction - The direction in which paper, board or another sheet material travels through its manufacturing machine. It is perpendicular to the cross-machine direction and can affect strength and movement.

Machine-applied surfacer - A surfacing compound formulated to be applied by machine, commonly spray equipment, before smoothing or sanding. Its viscosity and tip requirements are product-specific.

Maintenance coating - A coating applied during upkeep to renew or protect an existing surface, often as part of a planned maintenance programme.

Maintenance interval - The planned period between inspections, cleaning, repair or recoating. It depends on exposure, condition and coating system.

Maintenance painting - Painting carried out to preserve or restore a surface already in service, rather than coating a new substrate for the first time.

Making good (UK) - Repairing or reinstating a surface after damage or alteration, such as filling holes and smoothing the area before decoration.

Manufacturer's specification - The product or system requirements published by its manufacturer, including preparation, application, environmental limits and cure. These instructions define product-specific conditions.

Marble effect - Decorative finish designed to imitate marble's colour variation, veining and depth.

Marbleising - Creating an imitation marble appearance with layered colours, veins and translucent effects.

Marbleizing (US spelling) - US spelling of marbleising: the decorative technique of imitating marble.

Marbling - Decorative painting that imitates marble or creates a mottled, veined colour effect.

Marine coating - A coating formulated for vessels or marine structures exposed to water, salt, weather or immersion. Requirements differ between above-water and immersed service.

Masilla (Spanish) - Putty or filler used to fill, smooth or repair a surface. The material may be gypsum-, cement-, acrylic- or oil-based depending on region and use.

Masilla acrílica (Spanish-speaking regions) - Acrylic-based filler or putty, commonly used to smooth wall surfaces or fill minor defects. Formulation and depth limits vary.

Masilla plástica (Latin America) - Regional term for a plastic or polymer-modified putty/filler. It does not necessarily mean a synthetic plastic sheet or one standard composition.

Masking - Covering or protecting areas that should not receive paint, spray or another treatment, usually with tape, paper or film.

Masking film - Thin plastic film used to protect adjacent surfaces from dust, paint or overspray, often dispensed with masking tape.

Masking paper - Paper used with masking tape to protect surfaces during painting or finishing.

Masking tape - Pressure-sensitive tape used to define edges or hold protective coverings. Adhesion and removal limits vary by tape and surface.

Masonry paint - Paint formulated for masonry or other mineral surfaces. Interior and exterior products differ in permeability, weather resistance and intended substrates.

Massa acrílica (Brazil) - Acrylic wall filler or surfacing paste used to smooth walls before painting. It is generally intended for compatible substrates and specified interior or exterior exposure.

Massa corrida (Brazil) - Fine wall-smoothing compound, often gypsum- or polymer-based, used on interior surfaces before painting. Regional formulation varies; it is not a universal equivalent to joint compound.

Mastic - A thick, paste-like sealing or bedding material. In building work it may refer to sealant, glazing compound or adhesive depending on context.

Materico (Italian) - Decorative finish terminology describing a material-rich, textured or tactile surface effect. It denotes an aesthetic approach rather than a single coating chemistry.

Matt (UK spelling) - A low-sheen coating finish with limited reflected light. Gloss limits and cleanability vary by product.

Matte (US spelling) - US spelling of matt: a low-sheen surface finish.

Mechanised filling - Applying filler or joint compound with powered or mechanical equipment rather than solely by hand.

Mechanised sanding - Abrading a surface with powered sanding equipment, often connected to dust extraction.

Mechanised wallcovering pasting - Applying paste to wallcovering with a powered or mechanical pasting machine, which meters and spreads adhesive across the strip.

Medium/heavy-duty wallcovering - Wallcovering designed for moderate or higher wear than lightweight domestic paper. Its cleaning, impact and fire performance remain product-specific.

MEKP - **Methyl ethyl ketone peroxide**, a reactive catalyst used to cure certain unsaturated polyester resins. It is hazardous and must be handled only under the product's safety instructions.

Melamine-faced board - Wood-based board with a decorative melamine-impregnated paper surface. The smooth face can be difficult to coat without suitable cleaning and adhesion preparation.

Mesh abrasive - Abrasive material formed on an open mesh backing that allows dust extraction through the sheet.

Mesh tape - Open-weave tape, commonly fibreglass, used to reinforce joints or cracks when embedded in compatible compound.

Metal leaf - Very thin metal sheet used for decorative gilding, including genuine precious-metal leaf and imitation leaf.

Metal roof - A roof covering made from metal sheets, panels or tiles. The metal type, coating and joint design determine preparation and maintenance needs.

Metallic coating - A coating containing metallic pigments or particles to produce a metallic appearance or specified reflective property.

Metallic effect - An appearance resembling metal, created by metallic pigments, leaf, foil or a decorative coating.

Metallic flake orientation - The alignment of flat metallic pigment particles in a coating film. Their orientation affects brightness, flop and colour consistency.

Metallic-effect decorative coating - Decorative coating formulated to create a metallic-looking finish. It may contain metallic flakes or interference pigments.

Metallising - Applying a metallic layer to a surface, commonly by thermal spraying or vacuum deposition. It is distinct from painting with metallic-effect paint.

Metameric match - A colour match that appears the same under one light source but different under another because the samples reflect light differently.

Metamerism - The phenomenon in which two colours match under one illuminant or viewing condition but not another.

Microcement - A thin cementitious or polymer-modified decorative surfacing system applied over a prepared substrate. It is a finish layer, not structural concrete, and usually relies on a specified sealer system.

Microfibre roller - A roller sleeve made with fine synthetic fibres, often designed to hold and release paint evenly with reduced spatter.

Microporous coating - A coating with microscopic pores or a structure that allows water vapour to pass while limiting liquid water penetration. Performance varies and should be quantified.

Migration - Movement of a substance through or between materials, such as stain, plasticiser, moisture or colourant moving into a coating.

Mil (US) - Unit of coating thickness equal to one thousandth of an inch (0.001 in), approximately 25.4 micrometres. It is not the same as a millimetre.

Mildewcide (US) - An ingredient or product intended to prevent or control mildew, commonly fungi on surfaces. Claims and permitted uses depend on the active substance and regulation.

Milkiness - A cloudy or milky appearance in a clear or translucent coating, often associated with moisture, incomplete film formation or incompatibility.

Mill scale - The hard oxide layer formed on hot-rolled steel during manufacture. It can detach or corrode and usually must be addressed in protective coating preparation.

Mineral binder - An inorganic binder, such as lime, cement or silicate, that binds pigments or aggregates in a coating or plaster.

Mineral filler - Inert mineral particles added to a coating, filler or plaster to provide bulk, texture or other physical properties.

Mineral ground - A mineral-based base layer or priming surface beneath a decorative finish or paint. Its absorbency and compatibility affect the finish.

Mineral paint - Broad category of paint using mineral or inorganic binders, such as lime or silicate. It is not one uniform formulation.

Mineral pigment - An inorganic pigment derived from mineral or metal compounds, used to provide colour or opacity.

Mineral primer - Primer based on mineral binders or formulated for mineral substrates. It is selected for a compatible masonry or plaster system.

Mineral render - Render based mainly on mineral binders and aggregates, such as lime or cement. It differs from organic resin-based render.

Mineral spirits (US) - Petroleum-derived solvent used in some paint and cleaning products; broadly comparable to white spirit in UK usage, though specifications can differ.

Mineral substrate - A surface made from inorganic materials such as masonry, concrete, plaster or cement render.

Mini roller - A small-diameter or short-width paint roller used for narrow surfaces, trim or confined areas.

Mist coat (UK) - A thinned first coat of water-borne paint applied to absorbent new plaster to reduce suction and provide a base. The correct product and dilution depend on the paint manufacturer's instructions.

Mixed substrate - A surface made up of different materials or areas with different porosity or properties, such as plaster repairs beside old paint. It may require preparation to create uniform absorption.

Moisture content - The quantity of water in a material, commonly expressed as a percentage by mass or relative to dry weight. Measurement method and material type matter.

Moisture meter - An instrument used to estimate moisture in building materials, typically by electrical resistance or capacitance. Readings are comparative and may be affected by salts and material density.

Moisture-blocking coating - A coating formulated to resist moisture passage from or through a substrate. It is not necessarily a waterproof membrane and may trap moisture if used incorrectly.

Moisture-curing coating - A coating that reacts with moisture in the air or substrate to cure. Some polyurethane and silane-terminated systems use this mechanism.

Mottler - A brush or tool used to blend, soften or create mottled texture in decorative finishes.

Mottling - Irregular patches or variations in colour or tone across a surface, either intentionally decorative or an unwanted coating defect.

Mould - Fungal growth on a surface, often encouraged by persistent moisture and organic material. It is distinct from algae and salts.

Mould-resistant coating - A coating formulated to resist mould growth on its surface under stated conditions. It does not remove the need to control moisture and ventilation.

Mud (US/Canada, informal) - Trade slang for drywall joint compound. It can also mean mortar or plaster in other construction contexts.

Mud cracking - A network of cracks resembling dried mud, often caused by excessive coating or filler thickness, rapid drying or shrinkage.

Mud pan (US/Canada) - A shallow metal tray used to hold joint compound while finishing drywall joints.

Multi-colour paint - Paint or coating that produces more than one colour in a single application, often through separate pigments or decorative particles.

Multi-layer art coating - A creative or decorative coating made by applying several layers to create depth, texture or visual effects. It is a broad description, not a standard product class.

Multiple-drop match (wallcovering) - A pattern arrangement in which a design repeat spans more than two strips or alternates among several vertical offsets. It may require careful sequencing and create additional waste.

Mural - A large image or decorative design applied directly to a wall or supplied as a wall-sized printed wallcovering.

N

Nap - The raised fibres or pile of a roller sleeve. Nap length influences how much paint it holds and the texture it leaves.

Natural colour coating - A coating designed to retain or enhance the natural colour and appearance of the substrate, commonly timber or stone. It may be clear or lightly pigmented.

Natural greying - The gradual grey weathered appearance timber develops outdoors as sunlight and weather alter its surface. It does not necessarily indicate decay.

Natural sponge - A porous sea sponge used to apply, dab or texture decorative coatings. Its irregular structure produces varied marks.

NCS colour system - The Natural Colour System, a colour notation system based on how people perceive colours in relation to elementary hues and blackness/whiteness.

Near-white metal blast cleaning - A stringent blast-cleaning grade that removes nearly all visible rust, mill scale and old coating, allowing only limited staining. In standards-based work the exact standard and grade should be specified.

Negative water pressure - Water pressure acting from the side opposite the coating or waterproofing layer, tending to push it away from the substrate. It is also called negative-side pressure.

Negative-side waterproofing - Waterproofing applied to the side of a structure opposite the side from which water enters. The system must resist water pressure pushing it away from the substrate.

Nib - A small raised particle, fibre or speck in a coating film, often caused by dust, dried paint or contamination.

Nip roller - A roller used to press two surfaces together or squeeze out excess liquid between them. It is common in laminating and some specialist coating processes.

Nitrile gloves - Disposable or reusable gloves made from nitrile rubber, selected for resistance to certain oils, solvents or chemicals. No glove protects against every substance; compatibility charts and task conditions matter.

Non-ferrous - Describes a metal that does not contain iron as its principal component, such as aluminium, copper or zinc. Preparation and primers differ from those for steel.

Non-film-forming wood stain - A timber stain that penetrates the wood and leaves little or no continuous surface film. It allows the grain to remain visible but may need more frequent maintenance.

Non-load-bearing coating - A coating that is not intended to carry structural load. The term distinguishes surface finishes from structural materials and is not usually a paint performance class.

Non-volatile content - The proportion of a coating that remains after volatile components evaporate, often expressed by weight or volume. It relates to solids content and potential film build.

Non-woven wallcovering - Wallcovering made from bonded fibres rather than woven yarns or traditional paper. It is dimensionally stable and many types are installed by pasting the wall.

Nordic Swan (Nordic countries) - The official Nordic ecolabel, a voluntary environmental certification scheme with criteria for specified product categories. The label applies only to products meeting the relevant criteria.

Normal viewing position - The typical distance, angle and lighting from which a finished surface is expected to be viewed during ordinary use. It is relevant when assessing appearance and defects.

O

Oak graining - Decorative painting that imitates the characteristic grain and colour of oak timber.

Obliterating power - A coating's ability to hide the surface beneath it; another term for hiding or covering power.

Odour-absorbing coating - A coating intended to capture or reduce specified odours through adsorption or chemical reaction. Effectiveness is product- and exposure-specific.

Oil gilding - A gilding method using an oil-based size or adhesive that remains tacky long enough to receive metal leaf.

Oil paint - Paint whose principal binder or vehicle is an oil, traditionally linseed oil. It dries mainly through oxidation and differs from water-borne paint.

Oil scumble - A slow-drying, oil-based translucent glaze used in decorative painting to create graining, marbling or other effects.

Oleoresinous coating - Coating based on a mixture of oil and resin, combining properties of both. The term is most common in older or industrial coating descriptions.

Opacity - The degree to which a coating prevents the substrate or previous colour from showing through.

Opaque wood coating - A pigmented coating that hides the timber grain rather than leaving it visible, such as paint.

Open time - The period during which a coating, adhesive or paste remains workable after application. It may mean time available for spreading, joining or repositioning.

Orange peel - A bumpy coating texture resembling the skin of an orange, often caused by poor atomisation, unsuitable viscosity or insufficient flow and levelling.

Orbital sander - Powered sander whose pad moves in a circular or orbital path to abrade a surface. Some models combine orbital and rotary motion.

Organic coating - A coating whose principal binder is carbon-based, such as acrylic, alkyd or epoxy resin. It contrasts with mineral or inorganic coatings.

Organic content - The portion of a material made from carbon-based substances. In coatings it may refer to binders, solvents or other ingredients.

Organic pigment - A carbon-based pigment used to provide colour. Organic pigments often offer strong colours but their light and weather stability varies.

Orifice - An opening through which liquid, air or another material flows, such as the opening in a spray tip or nozzle.

Orifice size - The measured diameter or designated size of a nozzle opening. It affects flow rate and, in spraying, material delivery.

Ossidato (Italian) - Literally "oxidised"; decorative-finish language for an oxidised or aged-metal appearance. It describes an effect and not necessarily actual metal oxidation.

Overcoating - Applying a new coat over an existing coating or a previous coat in a system. Compatibility and timing affect adhesion and appearance.

Overcoating window - The permitted time range for applying a subsequent coat without additional preparation. Outside that window, the surface may require abrasion or cleaning.

Overgraining - Applying additional graining marks or layers to strengthen or alter a simulated wood-grain effect.

Overspray - Spray material that misses the intended surface and travels beyond it, settling on nearby objects or becoming airborne.

Oxidation - A chemical reaction involving loss of electrons or combination with oxygen. In coatings, oxidative curing occurs as some binders react with oxygen from the air.

Oxidative drying - Curing process in which a coating hardens through reaction with oxygen, common in many oil- and alkyd-based paints.

Oxidised-metal effect - A decorative finish that imitates the colours and textures of oxidised metal, such as patinated copper or weathered steel.

P

PAA - Abbreviation with several possible meanings. In coating and surface-preparation records it may refer to a specified product, process or organisation; expand it only from its document context.

Paint - A liquid or paste coating that forms a decorative or protective film after application and drying or curing. It typically contains binder, pigment and other ingredients.

Paint conditioner - An additive or preparation used to modify paint flow, open time or application behaviour. Use is product-specific and should follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Paint kettle (UK) - A small container used to hold paint while working, often with a handle and shaped rim for brush loading.

Paint pad - A flat or shaped applicator with a fibre or foam face, used to apply paint to broad areas, edges or trim.

Paint scraper - A hand tool with a blade used to remove loose paint or coating from a surface. Blade shape and technique depend on the substrate.

Paint scuttle (UK) - A deep, rectangular paint container designed to hold paint for roller use, often with a removable grid or roller tray.

Paint shield - A flat guard held against a surface to protect it from paint while brushing or spraying an adjacent area.

Paint system - The specified preparation and sequence of coating layers for a substrate, including primer and finish coats where required.

Painter's caulk (US/Canada) - A paintable sealant used to fill small, non-structural gaps at trim and joints. It is not intended for joints requiring significant movement unless rated for that purpose.

Painter's filler - Filler used by decorators for holes, cracks and surface imperfections before painting. Types vary in depth capability, flexibility and drying time.

Painter's tape (US/Canada) - Masking tape designed for painting tasks. Adhesion level and removal window vary; colour is not a universal performance code.

Paper tiger - A spiked roller tool used to perforate wallpaper so stripper or steam can penetrate. It must be used carefully to avoid damaging the substrate.

Paperhanging brush (UK) - A broad, soft brush used to smooth wallpaper onto a wall and remove trapped air or wrinkles.

Pasta muro (Italian) - Literally "wall paste"; regional term for a wall filler or smoothing compound. Exact composition depends on the product and locality.

Paste - An adhesive mixture used to hang wallcoverings or bind materials. Wallpaper pastes vary for paper, vinyl and non-woven coverings.

Paste brush - A broad brush used to spread wallpaper paste over a wallcovering or directly onto a wall.

Paste filler - A ready-mixed filler with a paste-like consistency, generally used for shallow repairs or smoothing.

Paste-the-paper - Wallcovering installation method in which paste is applied to the back of the paper, which is then booked before hanging.

Paste-the-wall - Installation method in which paste is applied directly to the wall rather than to the wallcovering. It is commonly used with dimensionally stable non-woven coverings.

Pasting machine - Device that applies a controlled layer of adhesive to wallcovering as it is fed through rollers.

Pasting table - A long table used to measure, cut and paste wallpaper or wallcovering strips.

Patch - A local repair or replacement area in a surface or coating. A patch may differ visibly from the surrounding finish.

Patina - A surface layer or colour change developed through age, exposure or treatment, especially on metal. Decorative finishes may imitate a patina.

Patination - Creating or developing a patina, naturally through exposure or artificially through chemical or decorative treatment.

Pattern air - A non-standard or context-dependent term, sometimes referring to the clear space or unprinted area within a wallcovering pattern. Confirm its meaning from the product documentation.

Pattern match - Alignment relationship required between adjacent lengths of patterned wallcovering, such as straight match or drop match.

Pattern repeat - The distance between successive repetitions of a wallcovering design, measured along the roll.

Pebbledash (UK) - Exterior render finish in which small stones or pebbles are thrown onto a wet mortar base. It creates a coarse, durable texture.

Peel-and-stick wallcovering - Self-adhesive wallcovering with a removable release liner, applied without separate paste. Surface condition and product instructions determine removability.

Peelable wallcovering - Wallcovering designed so its decorative face can be peeled away from the backing, which may remain on the wall for removal or as a lining layer.

Peeling - Detachment of a coating in sheets or strips, typically from loss of adhesion to the substrate or a previous layer.

Pencil-hardness test - Coating hardness assessment using pencils of graded hardness drawn across the film under defined conditions. It is a comparative test, not a measure of all forms of durability.

Penetrating primer - Primer formulated to enter a porous substrate and bind or stabilise its surface, rather than merely form a film on top.

Pennello (Italian) - Brush; in decorating, the term may specify a particular brush by type or use.

Perlescente (Italian) - Pearlescent; describing a finish with a soft, pearl-like lustre created by reflective pigments.

Permeability - The capacity of a material to allow a substance, such as water vapour or liquid, to pass through it. Permeability must be specified for the substance and test conditions.

Photocatalytic coating - Coating containing a light-activated catalyst, often titanium dioxide, intended to break down certain organic pollutants or maintain surface cleanliness under suitable conditions.

Picture framing - Visible rectangular bands or sheen differences around a painted area, often caused by cutting in edges separately from rolling the centre.

Pigment - Finely divided solid material dispersed in paint to provide colour, opacity or another property. Unlike a dye, it remains as particles rather than dissolving in the vehicle.

Pigment-binder ratio - Proportion of pigment to binder in a coating. It affects opacity, porosity, sheen and film strength.

Pile - The projecting fibres on a roller sleeve or textile surface. In paint rollers, pile depth affects paint capacity and the texture left.

Pinhole - A tiny hole through a coating film, often exposing the substrate or underlying layer.

Pinholing - Formation of small holes in a coating, often from trapped air, substrate porosity, application or drying conditions.

Pink primer (UK, traditional) - Trade name for a pink-coloured primer historically used on timber before gloss paint. Modern products sold under similar names vary in composition and function.

Pitting - Formation of small cavities or pits in a surface, caused by corrosion, impact, chemical attack or coating defects.

Plaster - A workable material applied to walls or ceilings to form a smooth or textured surface. It may be gypsum-, lime- or cement-based.

Plasterboard (UK; drywall in US/Canada) - Gypsum-core board faced with paper or another material, used to line walls and ceilings.

Plasticiser - Additive that increases flexibility or workability by reducing stiffness in a polymer or compound. Migration of some plasticisers can affect adjacent coatings.

Pliolite-type coating - Coating based on or resembling styrene-acrylic resin chemistry associated with Pliolite products, often used on masonry. Product formulation and suitability vary.

Plumb line - Weighted line used to establish a true vertical reference, especially for hanging the first strip of wallpaper.

Pock-marking - Formation of small pits or cavities in a coating or substrate, resembling pockmarks. Causes may include air release, contamination or substrate defects.

Pole sander - Sanding head attached to a long pole for smoothing walls or ceilings from floor level.

Polished cement - Cementitious surface mechanically or manually finished to a smooth, often reflective appearance. It may be a floor finish or a decorative effect.

Polished concrete effect - A finish that imitates the smooth, reflective appearance of polished concrete without necessarily being concrete.

Polymer-coated wallcovering - Wallcovering with a polymer layer on its face or backing, often improving durability or cleanability. Polymer type and performance differ by product.

Polymer-modified putty - Putty or filler containing polymer additives to improve adhesion, flexibility or water resistance compared with an unmodified mineral material.

Polymerisation - Chemical process in which small molecules join to form polymer chains or networks. It can occur during coating cure.

Polyolefin-coated wallcovering - Wallcovering with a face layer made from a polyolefin polymer such as polyethylene or polypropylene. Performance depends on construction and backing.

Polyurethane - Polymer containing urethane linkages, used in coatings, adhesives, foams and sealants. Coatings may be one- or two-component and vary in chemistry and hazards.

Popping - Formation of small craters or burst bubbles in a coating as trapped air or solvent escapes through the film. It can occur with thick application or rapid surface drying.

Pore-filling primer - Primer intended to fill or seal pores in a substrate to provide a more even surface for later coats.

Pore-free filling - Filling and smoothing a surface until visible pores are eliminated, often before a high-gloss or fine finish.

Porosity - The presence and connectivity of pores in a material, affecting absorption, moisture movement and coating adhesion.

Positive water pressure - Water pressure acting toward a waterproofing layer from the same side as the water source, pressing the layer against the substrate.

Positive-side waterproofing - Waterproofing applied to the side from which water approaches, so water pressure presses the system toward the substrate.

Pot life - Period after mixing reactive components during which a coating remains usable. It may shorten as temperature rises.

Potassium silicate - Inorganic silicate binder used in mineral paints and coatings, especially for compatible masonry. It can bond by silicification with mineral substrates.

Powder coating - Dry powdered coating applied electrostatically or by another process and then heated to form a continuous film. It is usually factory-applied.

Powder filler - Dry filler supplied as a powder and mixed with water or another liquid before use. Setting time and properties depend on composition.

Power-tool cleaning - Surface preparation using powered tools such as grinders, needle guns or rotary wire brushes to remove rust or coating.

Precast concrete - Concrete cast and cured in a factory or mould before being transported to its final position. Surface release agents or curing residues may affect coating adhesion.

Prepasted activator - Liquid applied to the adhesive backing of prepasted wallcovering to activate or re-wet the paste before hanging.

Pressure roller - Roller designed to press material firmly onto a surface or consolidate a layer, rather than primarily spread paint.

Pressure-fed roller - Roller supplied with paint through a pressurised hose from a pump or container, reducing the need to reload manually.

Pressure-sensitive adhesive - Adhesive that bonds when pressure is applied, without requiring heat, water or solvent activation. It is used on tapes and self-adhesive coverings.

Pretrimmed wallcovering - Wallcovering supplied with its edges already trimmed for hanging, rather than requiring trimming from an untrimmed selvedge.

Primer - First coating applied to a prepared substrate to promote adhesion, seal suction, inhibit corrosion or provide another specified function beneath later coats.

Primer-sealer - Product combining priming and sealing functions, intended to improve adhesion and reduce absorption or staining on specified surfaces.

Print substrate - The base material onto which ink or a printed wallcovering design is applied.

Production run - A manufacturing batch or continuous period in which a product is made under defined production conditions.

Profile - The shape or roughness of a surface. In protective coating work it often means the peak-to-valley texture left by preparation.

Projection-screen paint - Coating formulated to provide a suitable reflective surface for projected images. Gain, colour and viewing angle vary by product.

Prominent texture - A clearly visible or pronounced surface texture, whether formed by substrate, coating or finish technique.

Properly painted surface - A surface coated in accordance with an agreed specification and product requirements, including preparation, application and curing. It is not a universal independent rating.

Protective coating - Coating applied mainly to protect a substrate from corrosion, moisture, chemicals, abrasion or weathering, though it may also provide colour.

Protective-decorative preservative - Timber treatment that combines preservative ingredients with colour or decorative finish. Protection claims depend on approved use and product specification.

PU coating - Abbreviation for polyurethane coating. It may be one- or two-component and can be water-borne or solvent-borne.

PU floor coating - Polyurethane coating system designed for floors, providing specified abrasion, chemical or flexibility properties. Preparation and cure requirements are product-specific.

Punch list (US/Canada) - List of incomplete, defective or outstanding items identified near project completion for correction before handover. In UK usage, similar lists may be called snagging lists.

Pure silicate paint - Mineral paint whose binder is principally potassium or another alkali silicate, without significant organic polymer binder. It requires compatible mineral substrates.

Putty - Pliable material used to fill, seal or bed components, such as glazing putty for glass. Composition varies widely.

Putty coat - A thin layer of putty or putty-like filler used to smooth or prepare a surface. The term is system- and region-dependent.

Putty-primer-putty system - Sequence in which a surface is filled, primed and then given a further skim or filler layer to refine the finish. It is used in some regional wall-finishing practices.

PVA - Polyvinyl acetate, a polymer used in adhesives, primers and some coatings. In trade language PVA may refer to adhesive, sealer or a paint type, so context matters.

PVA paint - Paint or coating using a polyvinyl acetate-based binder or dispersion. Its washability and suitability differ from acrylic or vinyl-acrylic paints.

PVC - Polyvinyl chloride, a plastic used in pipes, profiles, wallcoverings and other building products. Coating adhesion depends on the PVC formulation and surface condition.

Q

Q1 surface quality - Basic drywall finishing level in which joints are taped but not finished smooth. It is intended for concealed construction or areas receiving no decorative finish.

Q2 surface quality - Drywall finish level where joints receive a first smoothing coat, suitable for tile or similar coverings under the applicable standard.

Q3 surface quality - Finish level with additional treatment of joints and fasteners, intended for medium or coarse textures rather than critical smooth paint.

Q4 surface quality - High-quality smooth drywall finish for paint or thin wallcovering, typically requiring a full surface skim under European classifications.

Quality assurance - Planned processes used to ensure materials and work meet specified requirements, including procedures, records and checks.

Quality control - Inspection and testing performed to verify that materials or completed work meet acceptance criteria.

Quarter-sawn graining - Decorative graining intended to imitate the straight, flecked appearance of quarter-sawn timber.

Quartz primer - Primer containing quartz or other mineral grains to create a textured key for render, plaster or decorative finishes.

Quick-dry coating - Coating formulated to dry faster than conventional products under stated conditions. Touch-dry time does not necessarily equal recoat or full cure time.

Quotation - A priced offer for specified work or materials, setting out scope and conditions. It is distinct from an estimate, though usage varies by jurisdiction.

R

RAC - Abbreviation with multiple meanings; in wallcovering contexts it may refer to a regional or product classification. The intended expansion should be taken from the source specification.

Rad roller - Trade term for a small radiator roller, used to coat behind or around radiators and other confined spaces.

Rafter coating - Coating applied to roof rafters or related structural timber, commonly for protection or decoration. The required system depends on exposure and fire or preservation requirements.

Rag rolling - Decorative technique in which a crumpled rag is rolled over wet glaze to create a mottled texture.

Ragging - Dabbing, twisting or rolling a rag over wet glaze to create a decorative pattern.

Ragging-off - Removing or softening part of a wet glaze with a rag to reveal the underlying colour and produce texture.

Railroading (wallcovering) - Hanging wallcovering horizontally rather than vertically, often to reduce seams or suit a wide pattern. The product must be appropriate for this orientation.

Rake out - To remove loose material from a joint, crack or defect, often to create a sound profile before filling or repointing.

Raking light - Light directed across a surface at a shallow angle to reveal texture, ridges or defects; also called grazing light.

RAL - A colour-matching and identification system originating in Germany, used widely in coatings and manufacturing. A RAL code identifies a standard colour reference, not a guaranteed visual match across products.

Random match (wallcovering) - Pattern-matching instruction indicating that strips can be hung without aligning a repeating motif. It usually creates less pattern waste.

Random orbital sander - Powered sander combining orbital and rotary pad motion to reduce visible scratch patterns and improve sanding uniformity.

Rasante (Italian) - Decorative-finish term for a smooth or fine-textured coating, often used for skim or levelling materials. Meaning varies by product and region.

Raw stock - Unfinished material before coating or fabrication, such as bare timber or metal.

Reactive coating - Coating that cures through a chemical reaction rather than solely by evaporation. Two-component epoxy and polyurethane coatings are examples.

Ready-mixed filler - Filler supplied in a prepared paste form that can be used without adding water or mixing a powder. It may still require stirring.

Ready-to-use cellulose - Cellulose-based wallcovering adhesive supplied in a prepared form for direct use, rather than as a powder to mix.

Reboco (Portuguese) - Render or plaster finish applied to a wall, commonly used in Brazil and Portugal. Material composition and finish vary.

Recoat time - Minimum or specified interval before another coat can be applied under stated conditions. It differs from full cure time.

Recoat window - Period during which a subsequent coat may be applied for reliable bonding without additional surface preparation.

Reducer - Solvent or liquid added to a coating to lower viscosity or adjust application properties. It must be the type specified for that product.

Reedcloth - Wallcovering woven from reed or reed-like natural fibres, usually mounted on a backing. Its texture and natural variation are part of its appearance.

Reflective roof coating - Roof coating with high solar reflectance, intended to reduce solar heat absorption. Reflectance and durability should be supported by product test data.

Reinforcing mesh coat - Layer of base material into which reinforcing mesh is embedded, commonly in an external wall insulation or render system.

Release liner - Removable backing sheet that protects the adhesive face of self-adhesive tape, film or wallcovering until application.

Release-agent residue - Residue from a mould-release product remaining on a precast or moulded surface. It can impair adhesion if not properly removed.

Relief coating - A coating or surfacing material that creates raised texture or dimensional pattern on a surface.

Relief texture - Raised or recessed surface pattern that can be felt as well as seen.

Relief wallcovering - Wallcovering with a raised or embossed face pattern, adding visible and tactile texture.

Removable wallpaper - Wallpaper designed to be removed from a wall with less damage than conventional coverings. Removability depends on installation, substrate and product.

Render - A coating of mortar or plaster applied to a wall, typically for protection, levelling or appearance. It may be cement-, lime- or polymer-based.

Renovation filler - Filler formulated for repairs in refurbishment work, often to address uneven or previously decorated surfaces. Product limits determine suitable depth and substrate.

Repair filler - Material used to fill or rebuild damaged areas before finishing. The formulation should suit the substrate, repair depth and expected movement.

Resin - A polymeric or natural material that forms the binder in coatings, adhesives and other products. Resin type influences film properties.

Resin flooring - Seamless floor finish made from reactive resin such as epoxy or polyurethane, often applied in multiple layers. Preparation and thickness determine performance.

Retarder - Additive or solvent that slows drying or extends open time. It must be compatible with the coating and used at the specified amount.

Retention - Ability of a coating, pigment or surface to retain a property such as colour, gloss or dirt under service exposure. Context specifies what is retained.

Reverse hanging (wallcovering) - Hanging alternate strips in opposite directions to reduce visible shade differences, as directed for certain plain or textured coverings.

Rheology - The study or description of how a material flows and deforms under force. Paint rheology affects brushability, sagging, levelling and spray behaviour.

Rheology modifier - Additive used to adjust a liquid's flow and deformation behaviour, such as thickening at rest while allowing easier movement during application.

Rigid vinyl acrylic wallcovering - Wallcovering with a relatively stiff vinyl face and acrylic or related polymer composition. The exact construction and cleanability are product-specific.

Rising-damp resistance - Resistance of a material or coating system to moisture rising through porous masonry from the ground. A surface coating alone may not remedy the underlying moisture path.

Roll fill - Applying filler or surfacing material by roller before smoothing it with a blade or another tool.

Roll filler - Filler formulated to be applied by roller, often to cover broad surfaces quickly before levelling.

Roll out - To distribute material over a surface using a roller, or to spread and smooth a wet coating.

Roll-on filler - Ready-mixed or prepared filler designed for application with a roller, then typically smoothed or sanded.

Roller - Cylindrical paint applicator covered with fabric, foam or another material and mounted on a frame. Sleeve type and pile determine paint capacity and texture.

Roller cage - The rotating spindle or internal frame that holds a roller sleeve onto its frame.

Roller floor coating - Floor coating formulated to be applied by roller, often in one or more coats to achieve a specified film thickness.

Roller frame - Handle and rotating axle assembly that supports a roller sleeve.

Roller loading - Loading a roller sleeve with paint and distributing material evenly before application.

Roller sleeve - Replaceable cylindrical cover fitted over a roller frame, made from woven fabric, microfibre, foam or another material.

Roller stipple - Small textured marks left by roller application. The degree of stipple depends on sleeve, paint and technique.

Roller-applied filler - Filler formulated for spreading with a roller, commonly followed by smoothing with a blade.

Roller-applied surfacer - Surfacing compound applied by roller to build or even a broad area before final smoothing.

Roof coating - Coating system formulated for roof surfaces, providing weather resistance or heat reflection on specified substrates.

Roof coating delamination - Separation of a roof coating from the substrate or between coating layers, often associated with poor adhesion, moisture or incompatible materials.

Roof membrane - Flexible sheet or liquid-applied waterproofing layer that forms a continuous barrier over a roof.

Roof paint - Paint or coating intended for a particular roof material, such as metal, tile or fibre cement. The name alone does not establish waterproofing or structural repair capability.

Roof preparation - Cleaning, repair and surface preparation required before a roof coating is applied. It may include removal of loose coating, biological growth or contamination.

Roof primer - Primer selected for a roof substrate and compatible roof-coating system, used to promote adhesion or seal the surface.

Roof repainting - Recoating an existing roof surface after condition assessment and suitable preparation.

Roof-paint chalking - Powdering or pigment release from a weathered roof coating, often caused by binder degradation under sunlight and weather.

Roof-truss coating - Coating applied to timber or metal roof trusses for protection or decoration. Fire-protective coatings require approved system design and thickness.

Rotary wallpaper cutter - Hand tool with a rotating circular blade used to trim wallpaper or wallcovering cleanly.

Rotating polishing machine - Powered machine with a rotating pad or disc used to polish, abrade or refine a surface.

Roughcast (UK) - Coarse exterior render finish made by throwing or projecting mortar containing aggregate onto a wall.

RPE - **Respiratory Protective Equipment**, such as a filtering facepiece or respirator, worn to reduce inhalation of hazardous dust, mist or vapour. Selection and fit must match the hazard.

Rub down - To smooth or prepare a surface by rubbing with abrasive material.

Rub-down - The act or result of abrading a surface to remove nibs, reduce sheen or prepare it for another coat.

Rubbing compound - Fine abrasive paste used to polish or remove minor surface defects from a coating, commonly in automotive or furniture finishing.

Rubbing down - Trade term for abrading a dried coating or substrate to smooth it, reduce gloss or prepare it for another coat.

Rullo (Italian) - Roller; in decorating contexts it may refer to a paint roller or a particular textured roller.

Run - A downward flow or streak of wet coating caused by excess material or insufficient control of flow.

Run number - Manufacturer's identifier for a particular production run of wallpaper or another material, used to help match rolls from the same batch.

Runs - Visible downward streaks or curtains in a coating caused by material flowing before it dries.

Rust effect - Decorative appearance that imitates the colour and texture of rusted metal. It may be produced with pigments, layered coatings or reactive products.

Rust-effect decorative finish - Multi-layer decorative system formulated to reproduce a rusted or oxidised-metal surface; the effect does not necessarily involve actual corrosion.

S

Sabbiato (Italian) - Sand-textured decorative finish or surface worked with abrasive or sand-like material; exact usage varies by Italian finisher and product.

Sacrificial coating - Coating intended to be consumed, worn away or removed while protecting the underlying surface, after which it is renewed.

Sacrificial pigment - Pigment or reactive ingredient designed to provide temporary protection by dissolving or reacting preferentially. Meaning is specialised and product-specific.

Sacrificial timber coating - Temporary or renewable timber coating that weathers or wears preferentially while helping protect the wood beneath it.

Sag - Local downward movement of wet coating that creates a thickened area or run.

Sagging - Flow of wet coating down a vertical surface before it dries, leaving curtains, runs or an uneven film.

Salt resistance - Ability of a coating or material to withstand specified salt exposure, such as salt spray or salt-laden moisture. The test and exposure conditions must be stated.

Salt-and-pepper effect - Decorative appearance with contrasting light and dark particles or marks distributed across a surface.

Salt-and-pepper Marmorino - Marmorino decorative plaster finish with contrasting light and dark mineral particles, producing a speckled appearance.

Salt-laden substrate - Porous material containing soluble salts, which may migrate with moisture and crystallise at or beneath a coating.

Sample board - Portable board coated with a specified colour or finish for review, comparison or approval.

Sample panel - Test area or panel used to assess colour, adhesion, application or final appearance before full production.

Sand dressing - Fine sand broadcast or applied to a wet coating or plaster to create a textured surface or key.

Sand effect - Decorative finish designed to resemble the texture or appearance of sand.

Sand-lime brick - Building brick made by binding sand and lime under pressure and steam curing. It is a mineral substrate with different absorption from fired clay brick.

Sand-textured decorative finish - Coating or plaster containing fine aggregate to create a granular, sand-like surface texture.

Sand/dust exposure - Abrasive environmental exposure from windblown sand or dust, which can erode or soil exterior coatings.

Sanding - Abrading a surface with abrasive material to smooth it, remove material or create a key.

Sanding block - Hand-held block that supports abrasive paper or mesh to provide a flatter, more controlled sanding surface.

Sanding disc - Circular abrasive attached to a powered sander or grinder for surface preparation.

Sanding mesh - Open-weave abrasive sheet or disc that allows dust to pass through, often used with extraction.

Sanding sponge - Flexible foam block coated with abrasive, used to sand profiles, corners or contoured surfaces.

Saponification - Chemical reaction in which alkali reacts with fats or oils to form soap. In coatings, it can break down susceptible oil-based binders on alkaline substrates.

Sash brush - Brush designed for precise painting of sash windows, glazing bars and narrow trim; often angled or tapered.

Satin - Mid-sheen coating finish between matt and gloss in many product ranges. Exact gloss and cleanability vary by manufacturer.

Satinato (Italian) - Satin-finish or satin-sheen appearance; in decorative plastering it can describe a softly polished surface.

Satinwood (UK) - Smooth, durable satin-sheen paint traditionally used on interior woodwork. Modern products with this name vary in chemistry.

Sauna finish - Coating or treatment intended for timber in sauna conditions of heat and humidity. It must be specifically suited to the relevant surface and exposure.

Sauna protector - Product intended to protect sauna timber while withstanding heat and humidity. It may be a wax or specialised treatment rather than ordinary varnish.

Sauna wax - A protective wax treatment intended for timber surfaces in saunas, where heat and moisture place special demands on the finish.

Scagliola (Italian) - Decorative plasterwork made to imitate polished marble, traditionally using gypsum, glue and pigments. It is moulded or applied and polished to resemble stone.

Scour - To clean or abrade a surface by rubbing with an abrasive pad, powder or brush. The method can remove deposits but may scratch a finish.

Scrape - To remove loose material or a surface layer with a blade or scraper.

Scraper - Hand or powered tool with a blade used to remove paint, filler, residue or other surface material.

Scratched texture - Surface pattern formed by deliberate scratches or scoring in a wet or soft finish.

Scrim - Open-weave fabric used to reinforce joints, cracks or plaster/render layers.

Scrim tape - Reinforcing mesh or fabric tape embedded over joints or cracks to reduce movement-related cracking.

Scrubbability - Ability of a coating to withstand repeated rubbing or scrubbing during cleaning without unacceptable damage or appearance change.

Scumble - A thin, translucent glaze or coating used in decorative painting to create layered colour effects. It can also describe the technique of applying it.

Scumble glaze - Translucent decorative glaze used over a base coat for graining, marbling or other effects.

Seal coat - A coating layer used to seal a porous or absorbent surface before subsequent coats. It may also isolate stains, depending on formulation.

Sealer - Product that reduces absorption, binds a surface or forms a barrier before finishing. A sealer's intended function depends on its chemistry and substrate.

Seam - The junction where two lengths or pieces of wallcovering or material meet.

Seam adhesive - Adhesive used to secure the edges of wallcovering at a seam, often to correct lifting edges.

Seam roller - Small roller used to press wallcovering seams into contact with the wall. It should be used only where appropriate, since pressure can mark some coverings.

Seediness - Defect in which dried coating contains small lumps or particles resembling seeds, often from contamination, poor dispersion or dried material.

Self-adhesive wallcovering - Wallcovering with adhesive already applied to its reverse and protected by a removable liner.

Self-cleaning coating - Coating designed to reduce dirt accumulation or help remove surface dirt through rainwater, photocatalysis or another mechanism. Its performance is exposure-dependent.

Self-levelling coating - Coating that flows after application to reduce surface irregularities and form a smooth layer. It does not level every substrate defect.

Self-levelling resin mortar - Flowable resin-based mortar used to create or repair a level surface, commonly on floors. The term may refer to specialist industrial systems.

Selvage (US spelling) - The finished or unprinted edge of a roll material, including wallpaper; UK spelling is **selvedge**.

Selvedge (UK spelling) - The edge of a roll material, such as wallpaper, that may carry a margin or require trimming before hanging.

Semi-gloss - Sheen category between satin and full gloss in many North American product ranges. Exact gloss values vary by manufacturer.

Semi-stable timber component - Timber component expected to undergo some dimensional movement in service, but less than an unstable component. Classification depends on the coating system or standard.

Semi-transparent wood finish - Timber coating that adds colour while allowing the grain and some substrate appearance to remain visible.

Separating substance - Material that prevents two surfaces or layers from bonding, such as release agent, wax or contamination. It can cause coating failure if not removed.

Set - To become firm or lose workability through drying or chemical reaction. Setting is not necessarily the same as full cure.

Setting coat - Coat or layer that firms or binds a surface before further finishing. In plastering it may refer to a finishing layer; in coatings the meaning is system-specific.

Settlement crack - Crack caused by movement or settlement of a building or substrate. A coating may conceal it temporarily but does not correct structural movement.

Settling - Separation of solid particles from a liquid coating under gravity during storage, forming sediment at the bottom of a container.

Shade - A colour made darker by adding black in traditional colour theory; also used informally for a particular variation of a colour.

Shading - Variation in tone or colour across a surface, whether intended as a decorative effect or caused by uneven application or lighting.

Sharp coat - Trade term for a thin, tightly applied coat, sometimes used in plastering or decorative work. Exact meaning varies by region and context.

Sheariness - Irregularity in the shear or cutting behaviour of a coating during application, which can produce uneven spray or texture. Specialist term; use depends on process.

Sheary - Describes a material or spray pattern that breaks up unevenly under shear, producing streaks or coarse texture. It is not a broadly standardised coating defect term.

Sheen - The degree of light reflection from a surface, from low-sheen matt to high gloss.

Shelf life - Period a product can be stored in its original sealed container while remaining usable under stated conditions.

Shellac - Natural resin secreted by the lac insect, refined and dissolved in alcohol for use in varnishes, sealers and knotting solutions.

Sherardising - Zinc diffusion coating process used to protect small steel components from corrosion. It is an industrial metal treatment, not a paint application.

Shop primer - Temporary primer applied to steel during fabrication or storage to protect it before final coating. It may need removal or compatibility checks before overcoating.

Shop priming - Applying a temporary protective primer to metalwork in a workshop before fabrication, transport or site installation.

Short-oil medium - Oil/resin medium with a relatively low oil proportion, generally producing a harder, less flexible film than long-oil types.

Short-oil varnish - Varnish made with a relatively low oil-to-resin ratio, tending toward a harder film and shorter flexibility.

Shot blasting - Blast cleaning using spherical metallic shot as the abrasive, often to clean or peen metal surfaces. It differs from angular grit blasting in the profile produced.

Shrinkage crack - Crack formed as a material loses volume while drying or curing. It can occur in filler, plaster, render or coating applied too thickly.

Sidewall - The vertical wall surface of a room or other structure; in wallcovering it may refer to the wall face being covered.

Silica sol - Stable colloidal dispersion of silica particles in liquid, used in some mineral paints, binders and surface treatments.

Silicate paint - Mineral coating based on potassium silicate or related binders, designed for compatible mineral substrates. It is not the same as siloxane or silicone-resin paint.

Silicification - Chemical bonding process in which silicate binder reacts with a mineral substrate to form a durable mineral connection.

Silicone contamination - Presence of silicone oil or residue on a surface, often causing poor wetting, fisheyes or adhesion defects in paint.

Silicone render - Render containing silicone resin or silicone additives, often selected for water repellency and vapour permeability. Formulation differs from silicate render.

Silicone-resin façade paint - Exterior paint using silicone resin as a binder or key component, combining water repellency with water-vapour transmission to a product-specific degree.

Silk effect (UK trade) - Paint finish with a noticeable sheen between matt and gloss, often marketed as silk. Sheen and cleanability are product-specific.

Siloxane façade coating - Exterior coating containing siloxane chemistry, intended to repel liquid water while allowing some vapour transmission. It is distinct from pure silicate paint.

Siloxane render - Render incorporating siloxane or silicone-based ingredients to improve water repellency while retaining vapour permeability.

Silver leaf - Extremely thin sheets of silver or silver alloy used in decorative gilding. It can tarnish and may require a protective clear coat.

Single roll - One roll unit of wallcovering; roll dimensions and area differ among countries and products.

Sintered skin - Dense, hard surface layer formed when particles fuse or compact during manufacture or finishing. It can reduce porosity and affect adhesion.

Size (wallcovering/preparation) - Dilute adhesive or proprietary preparation applied to a porous surface to reduce suction and improve subsequent adhesion.

Skim coat - Thin layer of plaster or compound applied over a surface to create a smooth, even finish.

Skim filler - Fine filler intended for a thin skim or surface smoothing rather than deep repairs.

Skim out - To apply and smooth a thin layer of compound over a surface or joint.

Skimming blade - Wide flexible blade used to spread and smooth skim filler or compound over a broad area.

Skinning - Formation of a dry or cured surface skin over material that remains wet or soft beneath, commonly in an opened paint container.

Skirting board (UK; baseboard in US/Canada) - Board or moulding fitted along the base of an internal wall to cover the wall-floor junction.

Slurry coat - Fluid mixture of binder, water and fine aggregate applied as a thin coat to fill pores or provide a key.

Slurry effect - Decorative appearance resembling a thin, cloudy or mineral slurry layer. It describes appearance, not one fixed material.

Smoke development - Amount of smoke produced by a material during a specified fire test. It is distinct from flame spread.

Smooth to zero - To feather a repair or filler until it tapers to an imperceptible edge.

Smoothing blade - Broad blade used to level filler, plaster or wallcovering and remove ridges or bubbles.

Smoothing brush - Soft brush used to smooth wallcovering onto a surface and remove trapped air.

Smoothing disc - Abrasive or polishing disc used to smooth a surface with a powered tool.

Smoothing tool - General term for a blade, brush or other implement used to flatten or refine a surface.

Snag (UK construction) - Minor defect, omission or incomplete item requiring correction before handover.

Snagging (UK construction) - Identifying and correcting minor defects, omissions or unfinished work before project completion.

Soft distemper (UK, traditional) - Traditional water-based wall coating with a weak glue binder, generally not washable and easily softened by water.

Sol-silicate paint - Mineral paint using a combination of silica sol and silicate binder, designed for suitable mineral backgrounds and sometimes older coatings.

Solar exposure - Exposure to sunlight, including ultraviolet, visible and infrared radiation, affecting colour and coating durability.

Solar-reflective coating - Coating designed to reflect a high proportion of solar radiation, reducing heat absorption by the substrate.

Solids by volume - Percentage of a coating's wet volume that remains as dry film after volatile components leave. It is used to estimate dry-film thickness.

Solids content - Proportion of non-volatile material in a coating, expressed by weight or volume.

Soluble salts - Salts that dissolve in water and may migrate through masonry or concrete, later crystallising at the surface or beneath a coating.

Solvent - Liquid that dissolves or disperses other substances and may evaporate during coating drying. Solvents may be organic or water-based.

Solvent cleaning - Cleaning with a compatible solvent to remove oils, grease or other contaminants. It must be controlled to avoid spreading residue or damaging the substrate.

Solvent pop - Small craters or blisters caused when solvent vapour becomes trapped beneath a coating surface and escapes during drying.

Solvent-borne - Describes a coating in which organic solvent is the main liquid carrier. It contrasts with water-borne formulations.

Solventless coating - Coating formulated with no or very little volatile solvent, typically achieving high film build. "Solventless" does not necessarily mean hazard-free.

Spalling - Breaking or flaking away of surface material, often from masonry or concrete, due to moisture, freeze-thaw, corrosion or impact.

Spatola (Italian) - Spatula or flexible-bladed tool used to apply or smooth plaster, filler or decorative finishes.

Spatola veneziana (Italy) - Venetian finishing spatula used to apply and polish decorative plaster, particularly Venetian plaster.

Spatolato (Italian) - Decorative finish worked with a spatula, often showing smooth, layered or polished marks. It describes the technique or appearance.

Specialist coating - Coating intended for a particular substrate, exposure or technical function beyond ordinary decorative paint.

Specular gloss - Mirror-like reflection from a surface, measured at a defined angle with a gloss meter.

SpeedSkim® - Proprietary name for a wide skimming blade system used to smooth plaster or filler. It is a brand term, not a generic material name.

Spiked roller - Roller fitted with spikes, used to release trapped air or consolidate certain self-levelling compounds before they set.

Splice - A joint joining two lengths or pieces of material, such as a wallcovering or sheet. In wallcovering, it may refer to a join made within a run.

Sponge finish - Decorative texture or mottled effect produced by dabbing a sponge into wet glaze or coating.

Sponge roller - Roller sleeve made from foam or sponge material, used for selected paints or textured effects.

Sponging - Decorative technique of dabbing or lifting glaze with a sponge to create a mottled pattern.

Spotting - Local application of primer or stain blocker to isolated marks or defects rather than coating the whole surface.

Spray booth - Enclosed or controlled area for spray application, designed to manage overspray, ventilation and contamination.

Spray filler - Filler formulated for application through spray equipment to build or smooth a surface before finishing.

Spray fingers - Streaks of material extending from the ends of a spray fan, usually indicating an uneven spray pattern or tip condition.

Spray gun - Hand-held device that controls and atomises coating for spray application, using air, fluid pressure or both.

Spray mist - Fine airborne droplets created during spray application, including overspray that may travel beyond the target.

Spray pattern - Shape and distribution of atomised coating produced by a spray gun or tip.

Spray pressure - Pressure used to move and atomise coating through spray equipment. It should match the material and tip requirements.

Spray surfacer - Surfacing compound applied by spray to fill minor irregularities and provide a level base for later finishing.

Spray tails - Heavy streaks at the ends of a spray fan, often caused by insufficient atomisation, worn tip or unsuitable pressure.

Spray tip - Calibrated nozzle that controls material flow and fan shape in spray equipment.

Spray tip extension - Extension tube fitted to a spray gun to reach ceilings, floors or other surfaces without holding the gun close to the work.

Spray-pattern defect - Any irregularity in a spray fan, such as tails, split pattern or uneven edges, affecting coating distribution.

Sprayable filler - Filler specifically formulated for application through spray equipment.

Spreading rate - Area that a stated quantity of coating covers at the specified film thickness, commonly expressed in square metres per litre.

Spugna (Italian) - Sponge; in decorative finishing it may refer to a sponge used for texturing or applying glaze.

Stain - Discolouration or mark in a substrate or coating, or a coloured finish that penetrates or colours a surface without fully hiding it.

Stain bleed - Migration of soluble staining material through a new coating, causing discolouration.

Stain blocker - Primer or sealer formulated to prevent specified stains from showing through a finish coat.

Stain blocking - Function of preventing stains from migrating through a coating system.

Stain isolation - Sealing a stain with a suitable barrier layer before applying the finish coat.

Starlight effect - Decorative finish containing reflective particles that create a sparkling or star-like appearance under light.

Stencil - Cut-out pattern used to apply a repeated design to a surface.

Stencilling - Applying paint or another material through a stencil to create a pattern or image.

Stipple - Dotted or textured surface effect made by dabbing or by a textured brush or roller.

Stippler - Brush or tool with short bristles used to create or soften a stippled texture.

Stippling - Creating a dotted, textured finish by repeatedly dabbing a brush or tool into wet coating.

Stone effect - Decorative finish intended to resemble the appearance or texture of natural stone.

Stone-effect coating - Coating containing texture or colour effects that imitate stone; it does not necessarily contain stone aggregate.

Stopping (UK, traditional) - Filling holes, cracks or joints with stopping material before painting. It can also mean the material used for this purpose.

Straight-across match (wallcovering) - Pattern arrangement where motifs align at the same height on adjacent strips; also called straight match.

Straightedge - Rigid straight tool used as a guide for cutting, alignment or checking surface flatness.

Strike off - To remove excess material or level it with a straight blade or edge.

String wallcovering - Wallcovering with a face made from fine threads or yarns bonded to a backing, creating a linear textile texture.

Stripe coat - Stripe application of a protective coating to edges, welds, corners or difficult details before full coats, ensuring adequate film build in those areas.

Strippable wallcovering - Wallcovering designed to be removed in dry strips, often leaving its backing on the wall.

Strié (French) - Decorative finish with fine linear brush marks, resembling brushed fabric or silk.

Stucco - Broad term for plaster or render, with meanings that differ between regions. It may refer to exterior cement render in North America or decorative plaster in other contexts; it is not automatically equivalent to Spanish **estuco**.

Stucco Veneziano (Italian) - Venetian plaster finish, typically a polished lime-based decorative coating that can resemble marble.

Substrate - Underlying material or surface to which coating, filler, adhesive or wallcovering is applied.

Suction - Tendency of a porous surface to draw liquid from paint, plaster or adhesive. Uneven suction can cause patchy drying and appearance.

Sugar soap (UK) - Alkaline cleaner used to remove grease and surface dirt from suitable surfaces before decorating. Residue may need rinsing as directed.

Surface acceptance - Agreed condition a substrate must meet before coating, including cleanliness, dryness, soundness and profile.

Surface cleanliness - Degree to which a surface is free from dust, oil, salts, rust or other contaminants before coating.

Surface contamination - Unwanted material present on a substrate that can affect wetting, adhesion, cure or appearance.

Surface preparation - Cleaning, repair and conditioning of a substrate before applying coating or wallcovering.

Surface printing - Printing a design onto the exposed face of paper, wallcovering or another substrate, rather than printing through the material.

Surface profile - Texture or roughness of a prepared surface, often measured as peak-to-valley height.

Surface quality - Condition and smoothness of a surface, judged against a defined finish level or visual standard.

Surface squeegee - Flat-bladed tool used to press film, wallcovering or coating onto a surface and remove trapped air or liquid.

Surface temperature - Temperature of the actual substrate, relevant to condensation risk and application limits.

Surface-active agent - Substance that reduces surface or interfacial tension, often improving wetting or dispersion. A surfactant is a common type.

Surface-profile density - Number or concentration of surface peaks in a given area, relevant to the mechanical key of blast-cleaned surfaces.

Surface-profile depth - Measured height difference between surface peaks and valleys after preparation.

Surfactant - Surface-active ingredient used in coatings and cleaners to improve wetting, dispersion or cleaning. Surfactants can migrate and cause leaching marks.

Surfactant leaching - Sticky, glossy or brownish streaks caused when water-soluble surfactants migrate to the surface of some water-borne paints, often under cool or damp conditions.

Swatch - Small sample of colour, wallpaper or finish used to assess appearance before selection.

T

Tack - Stickiness of a wet or partly dried coating, or the force needed to separate contacting surfaces.

Tack cloth - Slightly tacky cloth used to pick up fine dust before finishing. It must be compatible with the coating because some cloths can leave residue.

Tack coat - Thin adhesive or coating layer applied to promote bonding of a subsequent layer or material.

Tack-free - Condition in which a coating no longer feels sticky to a light touch. It does not mean the coating is fully cured.

Tacky - Sticky or adhesive to the touch, usually before a coating has dried or cured fully.

Tadelakt (Morocco) - Traditional lime plaster finish polished with a stone and treated with soap to create a smooth, water-resistant surface. It requires specialist materials and workmanship.

Tails - Streaks extending from the ends of a spray fan, often caused by poor atomisation or a worn tip.

Tannin - Naturally occurring water-soluble plant compound in timber that can discolour paint when it migrates to the surface.

Tannin bleed - Brown or yellow staining caused by tannins moving from timber through a coating.

Tape test - Adhesion assessment in which tape is pressed onto a coating and removed to see whether the film detaches. The method and rating standard affect interpretation.

Tapered edge - Board edge shaped thinner than the centre, allowing joint compound and tape to sit in a recessed joint.

Taping - Applying reinforcing tape and compound to board joints, typically drywall or plasterboard.

Taping compound - Compound used to embed tape and fill board joints. It may be a setting or drying type.

Taping knife - Wide flexible-bladed tool used to embed joint tape and smooth compound.

Tear strength - Force required to continue a tear in a material under a specified test, relevant to wallcoverings, films and fabrics.

Tearing strength - Another term for tear strength: resistance to a tear propagating through a material.

Technical Data Sheet / TDS - Manufacturer document describing a product's properties, permitted uses, preparation and application requirements. It complements but does not replace the safety data sheet.

Textile effect - Decorative finish designed to resemble woven fabric or textile texture.

Textile wallcovering - Wallcovering with a woven or non-woven textile face, often bonded to a paper or non-woven backing.

Texture coating - Coating formulated to create a textured surface or conceal minor irregularities.

Texture topcoat - Final textured layer in a coating or render system, providing the visible finish and specified protection.

Textured roller - Roller sleeve or tool shaped to imprint a pattern or texture into wet material.

Thermal coating - Coating designed for a thermal function, such as heat resistance, insulation or heat reflection. Performance must be defined by the product data.

Thermal movement - Expansion or contraction of a material caused by temperature change.

Thermal spray - Industrial process that heats and propels coating material onto a surface to form a protective layer. It is distinct from ordinary paint spraying.

Thermal-barrier coating - Coating system designed to reduce heat transfer to a substrate under specified exposure. Its performance depends on tested thickness and assembly.

Thermoplastic coating - Coating that softens when heated and hardens again when cooled without a new chemical cure reaction.

Thinner - Liquid added to reduce coating viscosity or clean equipment, usually a specified solvent. It is not interchangeable with every reducer.

Thinning ratio - Proportion of thinner or water to coating permitted for a specified application. The manufacturer's limit should be followed.

Third-party inspection - Inspection carried out by a person or organisation independent of the applicator or supplier, often to verify specification compliance.

Thirsty surface - Informal term for an absorbent substrate that rapidly takes in coating or adhesive.

Thirsty wall - Trade phrase for a wall with high or uneven suction, often porous plaster or masonry.

Thixotropy - Property of a material that becomes less viscous when stirred or sheared and thickens again when left at rest. It helps paint resist sagging while remaining workable.

Three-digit tip code - Spray-tip code whose digits indicate fan width and orifice size according to a manufacturer's system. Coding conventions should be checked for the brand.

Throwing power - Ability of a coating process, especially electrostatic or electrodeposition coating, to reach recessed or shielded areas.

Tie-coat - Intermediate coating used to improve adhesion between layers that would otherwise be incompatible.

Timber impregnation - Penetration of preservative, resin or other treatment into timber to modify or protect it.

Tint - Colour made lighter by adding white in traditional colour theory; also a small amount of colourant added to paint.

Tint base - Paint base formulated to receive specified colourants to produce a range of colours. It may be white, pastel, medium or deep base.

Tinted primer - Primer coloured to approximate the finish coat, which can improve hiding or reduce contrast. It must still perform its priming function.

Tip code - Number or marking identifying spray-tip fan width and orifice size under a manufacturer's coding convention.

Tip colour code - Colour used by some manufacturers to identify a spray tip series or size. It is not universal between brands.

Tip wear - Enlargement or distortion of a spray-tip orifice through use, causing excess flow or an irregular fan.

Titanium dioxide / TiO2 - White inorganic pigment with high refractive index, widely used to provide opacity and whiteness in paint.

Toner - Colourant or tinting material used to adjust the shade of paint or a decorative finish.

Tool marks - Visible lines, ridges or textures left by brushes, rollers, blades or other applicators.

Tooth - Slight surface roughness that allows a coating, adhesive or art medium to grip. A surface with no tooth may be too smooth for reliable adhesion.

Topping compound (US/Canada) - Fine drywall compound used for final coats over joints and fasteners, often chosen for smooth finish and sanding.

Torching-off - Heating and scraping old paint to remove it, a traditional method that can create fire, fume and lead exposure hazards. It is unsuitable for many modern coatings and substrates.

Touch dry - Stage at which a coating feels dry to light contact. It may still be soft underneath and not ready for handling or recoating.

Touch in - To repair a small missed or damaged area by applying coating locally.

Touch-up - Local correction of a painted or coated surface after the main application.

Touching-in - Applying paint to small areas that need correction, often to cover a missed spot or minor damage.

Transfer efficiency - Proportion of sprayed coating that reaches and remains on the target surface rather than becoming overspray or waste.

Translucent wood coating - Timber coating that adds colour or protection while allowing some grain and underlying appearance to remain visible.

Translucent wood finish - Finish that colours timber without fully hiding the grain; it may be penetrating or film-forming.

Travertine effect - Decorative finish imitating the layered, porous appearance of travertine stone.

Travertino (Italian) - Travertine-style decorative plaster or finish, often textured to imitate natural travertine.

Treated joint - Joint that has received specified filling, tape, sealant or other treatment before decoration.

Trompe-l'œil (French) - Literally "deceive the eye"; realistic illusionistic painting that makes a flat surface appear three-dimensional or resemble another object.

Trowel-applied filler - Filler designed to be applied and spread with a trowel rather than a brush or roller.

Two-pack / 2K - Coating supplied in two components that are mixed before use and cure by chemical reaction. The mixed material has a limited pot life.

Two-part filler - Filler supplied as a base and hardener or catalyst, which react after mixing to form a cured repair.

Type I wallcovering (North America) - Wallcovering classification generally indicating light-duty contract use under the applicable standard. The classification must be read with the specified standard and product data.

Type II wallcovering (North America) - Wallcovering classification generally indicating medium-duty contract use under the applicable standard.

Type III wallcovering (North America) - Wallcovering classification generally indicating heavy-duty contract use under the applicable standard.

U

Ultrahigh-pressure waterjetting - Surface preparation using water at very high pressure to remove coatings, corrosion or contamination. Equipment and pressure require specialist control.

Undercoat - Intermediate coating applied between primer and finish coat to build opacity, improve finish or provide a suitable base. It is not always interchangeable with primer.

Underfilm corrosion - Corrosion that develops beneath a coating, often spreading from a defect or exposed edge and causing blistering or loss of adhesion.

Undertone - Subtle secondary hue visible within a colour, such as a grey with a blue or green undertone.

Universal primer - Primer marketed for several substrates or coating types. Its actual approved uses are limited to the product data; "universal" is not literal.

Unpasted wallcovering - Wallcovering supplied without adhesive on its reverse, requiring separate paste or adhesive during installation.

Untreated joint - Joint that has not yet received the specified filler, tape, sealant or other joint treatment.

Urethane - Chemical group and common name associated with polyurethane materials. In coatings, "urethane" may refer to a specific polyurethane resin or product family.

Useful life - Period during which a coating or product is expected to perform its intended function under stated service conditions. It differs from shelf life.

UV resistance - Ability to resist degradation or colour change caused by ultraviolet radiation.

UV-cured coating - Coating cured rapidly by exposure to ultraviolet light, commonly used in factory finishing.

UV-drying coating - Coating that dries or cures through ultraviolet exposure; often synonymous with UV-cured coating, though wording varies.

UV-reactive decorative finish - Finish that changes appearance or cures when exposed to ultraviolet light, according to its formulation.

UV-stable pigment - Pigment selected to resist colour change under ultraviolet exposure. Stability depends on the pigment and coating system.

V

Vacumat - Proprietary or regional name for a mechanised coating application system; meaning depends on the equipment or product context.

Vacuum coating - Applying a coating in a vacuum chamber, commonly to deposit a thin metallic or functional layer on a component.

Value - In colour theory, the relative lightness or darkness of a colour. It is separate from hue and saturation/chroma.

Vapour permeability - Ability of a material to allow water vapour to pass through it. It is measured under a stated test and does not mean liquid-water permeability.

Varnish - Clear or translucent film-forming coating, traditionally based on resin and drying oil or solvent, used to protect or enhance a surface. Modern varnishes use varied chemistries.

Vehicle - Liquid portion of a coating that carries binder and pigment during application. It may include water, solvent or reactive components.

Velato (Italian) - Decorative finish term meaning veiled or softly shaded, often describing a translucent layered effect.

Velatura (Italian) - Translucent glaze or veil of colour applied over a base to soften or modify its appearance.

Vellutato (Italian) - Velvety; describes a soft, low-sheen or subtly textured decorative finish.

Venetian plaster - Polished decorative plaster, commonly lime-based, applied in thin layers to create a smooth, marble-like finish.

Venetian trowel - Smooth stainless or flexible trowel used to apply and polish Venetian plaster and similar decorative finishes.

Vinyl - Polymer family based on vinyl compounds; in decorating the term commonly refers to polyvinyl chloride or vinyl-based coatings and wallcoverings.

Vinyl acrylic - Coating binder combining vinyl and acrylic polymers, commonly used in water-borne paints. Properties vary with the blend.

Vinyl matt (UK) - Low-sheen water-borne wall paint using a vinyl-based binder. Washability and durability vary by product.

Vinyl silk (UK) - Water-borne wall paint with a noticeable sheen and vinyl-based binder. It is generally more reflective than vinyl matt.

Vinyl wallcovering - Wallcovering with a vinyl face layer, often selected for durability and cleanability. Construction and performance differ by type.

Viscosity - Resistance of a liquid to flow. It affects brushing, rolling, spraying and levelling.

VOC - Volatile organic compound: organic chemical that readily evaporates into air. Regulations define VOC content differently by product category and jurisdiction.

Volatile matter - Components of a coating that evaporate during drying, including water or organic solvents.

Volume solids - Percentage of a wet coating's volume that remains as dry film after volatile components leave.

W

Wall levelling putty - Filler or surfacing compound used to smooth uneven wall areas before decoration. Composition and build limits vary regionally.

Wall putty (India/Asia) - Regional term for wall-smoothing filler, often cement-based or polymer-modified. It is not automatically equivalent to drywall joint compound.

Wallboard (US/Canada) - General term for board used to line walls, commonly gypsum board or drywall.

Wallcovering - Material applied to walls for decoration or protection, including paper, vinyl, textile and non-woven products.

Wallcovering adhesive - Adhesive or paste formulated to attach a specified wallcovering to a prepared substrate.

Wallcovering primer - Primer applied to a wall before hanging wallcovering to seal suction, improve adhesion or aid later removal.

Wallcovering stock - Roll material from which wallcovering is manufactured, before printing, coating or finishing.

Wallpaper - Decorative paper or similar sheet material hung on walls, printed or embossed with a pattern. Usage sometimes includes broader wallcoverings.

Wallpaper adhesive - Paste or adhesive used to hang wallpaper, selected for the covering's weight and backing.

Wallpaper smoother - Broad plastic or flexible tool used to press wallpaper flat and remove trapped air without damaging it.

Wallpaper steamer - Appliance that directs steam behind wallpaper to soften its paste for removal.

Wallpaper stripper - Chemical product or tool used to soften or remove wallpaper and its adhesive.

Wash primer - Thin reactive primer, often acidic, used on metal to improve adhesion and corrosion protection in a specified system.

Washability - Ability of a coating to withstand cleaning with water or specified cleaners without unacceptable damage or appearance change.

Washcoat - Thin coating or stain layer used to seal or colour a surface before further finishing. Meaning varies in wood and decorative-finishing trades.

Water gilding - Traditional gilding method using water-activated gesso and bole beneath metal leaf, allowing the leaf to be burnished to a high polish.

Water spotting - Marks or rings left when water dries on a coating or surface, often due to soluble deposits or differences in sheen.

Water-activated wallcovering - Wallcovering with dry adhesive on its reverse that is activated by wetting before hanging.

Water-dispersible paint - Paint in which binder or other components are dispersed in water. It is broader than water-soluble paint; the dried film may resist water.

Water-repellent coating - Coating that reduces wetting or water absorption while not necessarily being fully waterproof.

Water-repellent wall coating - Exterior wall coating designed to resist liquid rainwater while allowing some water vapour transmission, depending on formulation.

Waterblasting - Cleaning or preparation using pressurised water jets. Pressure and nozzle type determine the effect on the surface.

Waterborne coating - Coating in which water is the principal liquid carrier. It may still contain co-solvents and other volatile ingredients.

Waterglass - Common name for soluble alkali silicate, usually sodium or potassium silicate, used in mineral coatings, binders and treatments.

Waterjetting - Cleaning or preparation using a high-pressure water jet, with or without abrasive.

Waterproof decorative finish - Decorative finish designed to resist water penetration under specified conditions. The term alone does not define immersion or hydrostatic-pressure capability.

Waterproof façade coating - Exterior wall coating intended to resist liquid-water ingress while accommodating specified vapour movement and exposure.

Waterproof wall putty - Putty or surfacing compound formulated for improved water resistance on specified wall substrates. It is not necessarily a waterproof membrane.

Waterproofing coating - Coating or membrane intended to prevent water passing through a surface under specified conditions.

Waterproofing paint - Paint marketed for water resistance or waterproofing. Its actual capability depends on tested system, substrate and water pressure.

Weathering - Changes caused by exposure to sunlight, moisture, temperature and atmosphere, including colour loss, chalking and erosion.

Webbing - Fine string-like strands formed by spray material that partially dries in flight and lands as threads, similar to cobwebbing.

Weld-through sealer - Protective material applied to metal before welding that is intended to tolerate welding at the joint while protecting adjacent areas.

Wet abrasion resistance - Ability of a coating to resist wear when rubbed or scrubbed while wet, assessed by a specified test.

Wet abrasive blast cleaning - Blast cleaning using water with abrasive media to remove coating or corrosion and prepare a surface.

Wet edge - Boundary of freshly applied coating that remains wet enough to blend into the next section without a visible lap.

Wet felting - Applying or working material while wet with a felt-faced tool to create a smooth or textured surface.

Wet-feltable filler - Filler that can be smoothed or worked with a damp felt pad before it dries, subject to product instructions.

Wet-film gauge - Notched or comb-shaped instrument used to measure coating thickness immediately after application.

Wet-film thickness / WFT - Thickness of a coating while wet, before water or solvent evaporates. It is used to estimate the resulting dry-film thickness.

Wet-on-wet - Applying a second coat or material while the previous layer is still wet, allowing them to merge or bond without full drying between layers.

Whip hose - Short, flexible hose connecting a spray gun to a larger spray hose, improving handling and reducing stiffness at the gun.

White point - Reference white used in colour measurement or display systems, affecting how colours are represented and compared.

White spirit (UK) - Petroleum-derived solvent used in some paints and cleaning products; similar to mineral spirits in North America, though specifications can differ.

White-cement wall putty (India/Asia) - Wall filler based on white cement, used to smooth compatible masonry before painting. It differs from gypsum joint compound.

White-metal blast cleaning - Blast-cleaning grade that removes visible rust, mill scale and coatings to bare metal with a uniformly clean appearance, as defined by the selected standard.

Whites - In decorating, white or near-white paints; in colour mixing it can also mean white pigments or tint bases.

Whiting - Finely ground chalk, chiefly calcium carbonate, used as a filler or pigment in traditional paints, putties and distempers.

Wide-width wallcovering - Wallcovering supplied in rolls wider than standard domestic widths, often for commercial interiors and fewer seams.

Wood dye - Colourant that penetrates timber and colours the fibres without forming a substantial film by itself. It may require a compatible protective finish.

Wood filler - Filler used to repair holes, cracks or defects in timber. It may be solvent-, water- or resin-based and may not match the grain exactly after staining.

Wood graining - Decorative technique that imitates timber grain on another surface or enhances existing wood grain.

Wood oil - Oil-based treatment for timber that penetrates or forms a thin protective finish. Indoor and outdoor products differ in composition and maintenance.

Wood preservative stain - Pigmented timber finish containing preservative ingredients for specified uses. The preservative claim and approved exposure must be checked.

Wood stain - Coloured product used to change timber's colour while usually leaving the grain visible. Stains may penetrate or form a film.

Wood's-light effect - Fluorescent appearance observed under ultraviolet or near-ultraviolet Wood's light, used to reveal certain materials or effects.

Wood-based panel - Manufactured sheet material made from wood fibres, particles, strands or veneers, such as MDF, chipboard or plywood.

Workability - Ease with which a material can be mixed, spread, shaped or finished. It depends on consistency, open time, tools and conditions.

Working time - Period during which a material remains workable after mixing or application. It differs from pot life in some product systems.

Workmanship deficiency - Shortcoming in completed work attributable to application or execution rather than the product alone. Assessment depends on specification and agreed tolerances.

WR - Abbreviation that may mean water-resistant, weather-resistant or another term depending on context. It should not be expanded without checking the specification.

Wrinkling - Formation of folds or ridges in a coating film during drying or curing, often when the surface skins over while the underlying layer remains soft.

WRLP - Manufacturer-specific abbreviation for a low-pressure spray-tip or application range. The exact expansion should be confirmed from the relevant equipment documentation.

X

XHD - Abbreviation that can mean extra heavy duty in product classifications, but its precise meaning depends on the applicable system.

Xylene - Aromatic hydrocarbon solvent used in some coatings and cleaners. It is volatile and flammable and presents health risks requiring appropriate controls.

Xylol - Alternative or historical name for xylene; the term may refer to a commercial mixture of xylene isomers.

Y

Yellowing - Development of a yellow colour in a coating or substrate over time, often due to ageing, heat, light or binder chemistry.

Yield - Amount of surface area covered or material produced from a given quantity under stated conditions. Practical yield differs with substrate and application.

Yield point - Stress or force at which a material begins to deform permanently or flow. In coatings, it can describe the threshold needed to make a structured liquid move.

Z

Zero-edge smoothing - Smoothing a filler or coating repair to a feathered edge with no noticeable step at the perimeter.

Zero-VOC claim - Product claim that VOC content is zero or below a defined detection or regulatory threshold. Meaning depends on the jurisdiction and test method; it does not mean the product has no emissions or hazards.

Zinc phosphate primer - Anti-corrosive primer using zinc phosphate pigment to help inhibit corrosion on compatible metal substrates.

Zinc silicate - Inorganic zinc-rich coating based on silicate binder and zinc dust, used for corrosion protection of prepared steel.

Zinc spray - Metal-spraying process or aerosol coating depositing zinc onto a surface for corrosion protection. The phrase may describe distinct products and methods.

Zinc-rich coating - Coating containing a high proportion of metallic zinc pigment, designed to protect steel by barrier and, in some systems, sacrificial action.

Zinc-rich primer - Primer with high zinc-dust content, used as part of protective coating systems on steel. Surface preparation and specified film thickness are critical.

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