

How To Paint Metal Patio Furniture

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Paint is the easiest and cheapest way to update your old furniture. Which is why I decided to spray paint my boring beige patio table and chairs as part of my deck makeover. Learning how to paint outdoor metal furniture has definitely had a big impact on my outdoor decor.

It's week 4 of the One Room Challenge and we're heading down the home stretch. Or at least, we should be...I still have a TON of work to do.

The one problem with doing outdoor projects is that you can't control the weather. And we've had a lot of rain.

Which has totally messed with my schedule.

So, while I didn't get the tiling completely done on my outdoor bar, I did get my outdoor dining table and chairs painted (okay, there may have been a little procrastination on the tiling...it's not my favorite thing to do).

But my metal patio table and chairs look so much better, it's hard to believe it's the same set. The white paint really makes them stand out.

In fact, it almost looks the same as this really expensive furniture set I ran across. But mine cost way less than that!

I bought my set from Sears many years ago, so for this makeover all it cost me was some paint.

So you might be wondering...

Looking for more spray painting tips? You'll love [Spray Painting Tips](#).

What Kind of Paint Works Best For Painting Metal Furniture?

Good question!

I have never had much luck using standard paint for painting outdoor furniture. It always seem to chip and needs to be re-painted often.

Which is why I chose to go with spray paint for this project.

It also gets the job done a lot faster, dries quicker and it doesn't seem to wear off as easily. Even if it does start to fade, it's really easy to do touch ups by getting out another can of spray paint.

My go-to spray paint for this kind of project is Rustoleum. It has a primer built in which makes the job go even faster. As long as your furniture isn't too rusty, you don't need anything else.

I also chose to go with a flat (or matte) paint (as opposed to satin or glossy). That's because it's easier to get the finish to look right. And if you do need to do some touch-ups in the future, they blend right in.

While metal furniture presents unique challenges with rust prevention and primer adhesion, I've found that wooden garden benches that stay outside all year require entirely different painting approaches. The best paint for outdoor wood furniture needs UV-resistant formulations and moisture-blocking properties that metal paints don't provide. When friends ask about year-round weather exposure for garden benches, I always direct them toward specialized wood exterior paints rather than the metal-specific products I use for patio furniture projects like this one.

How To Prepare Metal Patio Furniture For Painting

So now that we have the paint decided on, here's how to go about painting outdoor metal furniture:

1. Scrape off any loose paint and rust with a wire brush. This is just to remove any loose bits that could peel off later and wreck your paint job.
2. Wash the furniture with TSP to get rid of any grime (or algae in my case). Dry thoroughly.
3. If your furniture is really rusty, spray it with Rustoleum Rust Reformer paint. It will convert the rust into a paint-able surface ***without requiring sanding*** !

Now you're ready to paint!

Tips For Successful Spray Painting

Here are some of my spray painting tips to get the best finish for your outdoor furniture.

1 | Use A Paint Grip

Use one of these spray paint grips to keep your hands from getting tired.

It is so much easier than holding down that little button on the top of the can.

2 | Don't Spray Too Close

Hold the spray can about 6 inches away from the surface to prevent the paint from pooling and running.

3 | Have A Paint Plan

The best way to prevent missing spots is to have a plan of attack.

Start at the front of the chair and paint everything you can see from top to bottom.

Then move to the side of the chair and do the same.

Don't forget to look for easy-to-forget spots like the insides of the chair back rails.

Repeat for the back and the other side.

4 | Start With The Furthest Parts First

Do the same kind of rotation around the table but start painting at the middle of the table and work your way out to the edges. This will prevent you from accidentally rubbing up against wet paint.

5 | Do Two Thin Coats

Painting 2 (or more) thin coats (rather than one thick one) results in a better finish.

With spray paint, you need to do the second coat quickly, usually within 30 minutes of the first one, so I do the loop around each piece of furniture twice.

If you miss your 30 minute window, then you'll need to wait for a couple of days before applying the next coat. And that kind of defeats the quick job benefits of spray paint if you ask me

6 | Work In The Shade

If you are painting outdoors, work in the shade to keep the paint from drying too quickly which can cause it to crack. My new pink umbrella came in handy for this.

7 | Put Down Cardboard

Put your furniture on pieces of cardboard.

This will let you paint all the way down to the bottom without worrying about getting the paint everywhere. (Fortunately, I've been getting some deliveries for my deck makeover so I had some big pieces of cardboard to work with).

It also works better than plastic sheets because the cardboard doesn't get caught in the wind and stick to your wet paint.

8 | Wait 48 Hours Before Using

Once you have finished spray painting, let the paint dry for 48 hours (or more) before putting out your cushions and using your furniture.

Well, that's it for my outdoor furniture painting tips. And now I really have to get back to that tiling!

This makeover was done as part of the One Room Challenge. Here are the updates from all of the other weeks:

- Week 1: Backyard deck makeover 'Before'
- Week 2: Palm Beach chic outdoor decor inspiration
- Week 3: Palm Beach chic deck makeover sneak peek at progress
- Week 4: How to paint metal patio furniture
- Week 5: Tiling tips and tricks
- Week 6: The final deck makeover reveal

Before you go, don't forget to check out the progress that all of the other One Room Challenge participants have been making. Hopefully, some of them have stuck to their schedule better than I have

More painting tips

- How To Paint Wood Furniture Without Sanding, Priming Or Stripping
- How To Spray Paint Veneer Furniture With A Paint Gun

Have comments or questions about how to paint metal patio furniture? Tell us in the section below.

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