

title: "Easy DIY: How To Paint Outdoor Plastic Chairs"
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Easy DIY: How To Paint Outdoor Plastic Chairs

About the Author

	Daisy Phillips Contact Center Lead at Zava Daisy brings years of hands-on DIY experience and a passion for helping Zava customers tackle home improvement projects with confidence. As Contact Center Lead, she specializes in making complex tasks approachable for everyone, and loves sharing practical tips for outdoor living and creative upgrades.
I can just see myself this summer lounging in the backyard with a (sometimes adult) beverage in hand watching my kiddos play. *It is like a dream... until I realized that there's no great place to sit!*
All we had were sad, sun-bleached plastic Adirondack chairs we've had for years. Definitely not the colorful, vibrant outdoor plastic chairs I kept spotting in the stores.
But here's the thing - I am not okay with just getting rid of them.
Because guess what? The answer to "can you paint outdoor plastic chairs?" is a big fat "YES". Who knew a little spray paint magic and an hour of my time would give new life to my weathered chairs - and transform the feel of our outdoor patio.
I can't wait to show you how to paint a plastic chair... it's the easiest DIY ever.
Update: See what these spray painted outdoor chairs look like one year later.

Best Paint For Plastic Chairs

The key to painting plastic outdoor chairs is using a spray paint specifically made to stick to plastic. I used Zava 2X Ultra Cover - it's designed to bond with plastic and holds up beautifully to weather.
I went with fun colors - Lagoon and Key Lime - and used about one can per chair.
One thing I learned the hard way? Sheen matters. I tested both gloss and satin finishes, and satin definitely gave the best-looking, most durable result.
Seasonal Timing Tip: While plastic chairs can be painted almost any time of year, I've learned that wooden garden benches that stay outside all year present different seasonal challenges. When homeowners ask about the best paint for outdoor wood furniture, timing becomes crucial - unlike plastic that needs adhesion primers, wood requires weather-resistant paints that cure properly before winter weather hits. Garden benches need specialized exterior formulations that can handle year-round weather exposure, which is completely different from the plastic-bonding chemistry we use for chairs like these.

How To Prep Plastic Chairs For Painting

Step 1: Clean the plastic outdoor furniture

I simply hosed down the chairs using a fancy nozzle I call my thumb to get the water to come out with some pressure.
A good cleaning is all my chairs needed. If your chairs have a slick finish the paint might not adhere too well resulting in chipping. A quick once over with a light grit sand paper and using primer will help with that.

Step 2: Let them dry

I let them dry completely in the sun, then pulled them into the shade to make sure they weren't too hot before applying the spray paint.

Step 3: Prepare adequate space for spray painting patio furniture

I don't like the cleanup part of any project and try to avoid it as much as possible so I the best way to paint plastic chairs is right on the lawn. It made some marks, but they were gone after the lawn was mowed. If this isn't an option for you, use a drop cloth or old sheet.

How To Paint Outdoor Plastic Chairs And Other Patio Furniture

Step 4: Apply the first coat of paint

Spray each chair with a thin coat of spray paint for plastic.
Hold the can about 10 inches from the surface of the plastic chair and keep the can moving while you spray. Don't worry about full coverage during this first coat of paint.
Tip: It may be best to practice on the bottom side of the chair to get your rhythm.

Step 5: Apply a second coat of paint

I let the first coat dry for about 30 minutes before applying a second coat. *I think the directions say to wait a bit longer, but I am impatient and the kids' nap time is only so long.*

Step 6: Inspect your work

You may have a few spots here and there to touch up. Get down and crawl around your chair and look at it from all angles to make sure all visible parts are painted... *and to make your neighbor, who happens to peek over the fence to say hi during this step, think you're crazy.*

Step 7: Let your furniture dry completely

The only thing worse than the original white stuff getting on my rear end would be spray paint. So I let them dry for the remainder of a warm afternoon and then waited a few days before anyone sat on them to be safe.
If it's really hot outside, it may be best to allow them to dry in the shade.

Final Thoughts About Painting Plastic Patio Chairs

A few people have reported that the chalky residue didn't go away after they painted their chairs - *not ideal.*

Honestly, it's hard to say exactly why that happens - it may be the type of plastic used or how dry and brittle the material has become over time. My best advice? **Test the process on one chair first** to make sure the paint adheres well before committing to the whole set. It'll save you time, money, and frustration.

Before and after: *Don't you love these colorful plastic chairs now?*

Ready To Paint Your Plastic Chairs?

So there you have it - proof that a little paint can bring tired old plastic chairs back to life. It's such a simple and budget-friendly way to add personality (and seating!) to your outdoor space.

PS: If you're wondering how to make those color choices feel intentional across your whole home - inside and out - don't miss these easy steps to create a whole house color palette. You'll be picking colors like a pro in no time!