

The Best Outdoor Furniture Paint for a Paint Finish that Lasts

After personally testing the most popular options on the market, I'm sharing the best outdoor furniture paints for painting wood and metal outdoor furniture. Outdoor furniture paint is a bit of a conundrum. There are plenty of options for outdoor paints and there are dozens of furniture paints. But where are the outdoor furniture paints?

Over the last few years, I've gotten a lot of questions about what paint is best for painting outdoor furniture.

In the past I have typically used exterior latex paint for painting outdoor furniture, but before I gave any recommendations, I wanted to make sure that I had personal experience with all the best options available.

So I started researching and landed on seven options that seemed like serious contenders for the best outdoor furniture paint including a variety of exterior paints, spray paints, and indoor/outdoor furniture paints.

Some I had already used on past projects, but I got to work testing those I hadn't used before.

Today I'm sharing my picks for the best outdoor furniture paints based on the results of all my research combined with my personal experience with each of these paints.

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What makes a great outdoor furniture paint?

A really great outdoor furniture paint needs to do a lot of things well.

In order to hold up well outdoors, it needs to be able to withstand moisture and a wide range of temperatures. It also needs to resist fading caused by UV rays.

To be a good paint for furniture, it needs to go on smoothly with nice, even coverage. It needs to give a tough, durable finish that can hold up to lots of use.

And it needs to be affordable, come in a range of colors, and be easy to find to purchase.

My Top Picks

Best overall paint for outdoor furniture: Exterior Latex Paint

Best indoor/outdoor furniture paint: General Finishes Milk Paint

Best paint for metal outdoor furniture: Rustoleum Painter's touch or Krylon Colormaxx

Outdoor Furniture Paint Reviews

I'm going to start with furniture paints that work well for wood outdoor furniture and then talk about spray paints separately. With a few exceptions, spray paint isn't a great choice for wood furniture.

These paints include paints specifically for exterior projects as well as indoor/outdoor furniture paints.

General Purpose Latex Exterior Paint

For years, regular latex exterior paint has been my go-to for painting outdoor furniture. You can find exterior latex paint at any home improvement store and it can be tinted any of the hundreds of paint colors available.

I typically use Valspar exterior paint because it is what is available at my nearest home improvement store. Behr, Sherwin Williams, Benjamin Moore, and other major paint brands also carry their own lines of exterior paint and all have similar weather-resisting properties. Some, of course, are more affordable than others.

daybed painted with Valspar exterior paint

These exterior paints aren't made specifically to be used on furniture, but rather a variety of outdoor projects including trim, shutters, and siding. This paint is specially formulated to be used outdoors so it holds up well to moisture and temperature fluctuations and resists fading.

I've used this paint to paint many outdoor furniture projects including my wooden front porch bench, the daybed on my back porch, and a kids table and chair set. All of these projects have held up very well over the last few years. The paint hasn't chipped or faded and wipes clean easily.

bench painted with Valspar exterior paint

I am not going to recommend a specific brand and line of exterior paint because I haven't used them all and can't say exactly what differences exist between the different paint lines. You can decide which specific brand you would like to try based on your budget and what is available in your area.

General Purpose Latex Exterior Paint

The Good:

- formulated to withstand harsh outdoor conditions and do not need a separate sealer

- easily accessible wherever paint is sold

- available in a huge range of colors

- available in a variety of sheens including flat, satin, and semi-gloss

The Bad:

- requires a separate primer

Americana Decor Outdoor Living Paint

Americana Decor has several lines of paint specifically created for DIYers who paint furniture and decor. Their Outdoor Living paint is an acrylic paint that is specifically designed to give a durable weather-resistant finish to outdoor projects.

Americana Decor Outdoor Living paint comes in small 8 oz jars. This is really helpful when you are painting a smaller piece of furniture because you can buy a very small amount, but it does add up quickly when painting a large piece that requires multiple jars of paint.

You don't need to use a separate primer or sealer with this paint which is typically a timesaver. However, I found that I needed several coats to get good coverage with this paint.

paint coverage after one coat of Outdoor Living paint

I used their Frosted Glass shade which is a light blue to paint an outdoor bench. Even though I was painting over a fairly similar color, it took three coats of paint to get good coverage.

The paint did go on smoothly and the finish was very nice. This paint has an eggshell sheen, which has a very slight, subtle shine.

bench painted with Americana Decor Outdoor Living Paint

Americana Decor Outdoor Living Paint

The Good:

- specifically formulated to be used outside and resists UV damage and moisture issues
- doesn't require a separate primer or sealer
- water-based and nontoxic

The Bad:

- typically needs to be ordered online
- available in 25 colors, but several of the colors are hard to find even online
- comes in small 8 oz jars
- requires several coats of paint to get good coverage

Americana Decor Outdoor Living Paint is difficult to find in stores but it is available to order online. I found there tends to be a pretty wide range of prices for this paint, so I would recommend comparing prices before ordering.

Note – when ordering paint online, always double check what size you are ordering!

A pint is enough for most small furniture projects, medium to large projects usually need a quart.

Half pint = 8 oz

Pint = 16 oz

Quart = 32 oz

Gallon = 128 oz

Rustoleum Painter's Touch Ultra Cover

Rustoleum Painter's Touch Ultra Cover is a premium latex paint for furniture and home decor. It can be used for both indoor and outdoor projects.

Rustoleum Painter's Touch is available in half pints for very small projects as well as quarts. It is available in flat, semi-gloss, and gloss. It comes in ten different colors though I've found that you can usually only find a few colors in stores and the rest need to be ordered online.

I've seen this paint recommended by others for painting outdoor wood furniture so I was excited to try it out, but in the end I found it extremely similar to other latex paints I have used. You do need to use a separate primer most of the time, but a separate sealer isn't required.

The paint went on smoothly, but it took a few coats of paint to get good coverage even though I was just painting a fresh coat of white paint over something that was already white.

planter painted with Rustoleum Painter's Touch Ultra Cover paint

As an outdoor furniture paint, this paint worked fine. It is readily available and fairly inexpensive. But I didn't see anything particularly special about it and probably won't go out of my way to use it in the future.

Rustoleum Painter's Touch Ultra Cover

The Good:

- readily available in stores for when you can't wait for delivery
- one of the more affordable options
- available in a variety of sheens

The Bad:

- usually requires a separate primer
- only available in a few colors

Rustoleum Painter's Touch Ultra Cover is available in stores with limited color selection at Ace Hardware and Home Depot. There are also several options for ordering online listed below. At the time of this writing, Amazon actually has the best color selection by far as well as the best price, but this could always change.

Beyond Paint

Beyond paint is an all-in-one paint that works on furniture, cabinets, and even countertops.

Beyond paint isn't specifically formulated to be used outdoors, but it is safe to use on both indoor and outdoor projects.

You do not need to use a separate primer with Beyond Paint. I painted an old wooden tool box with Beyond Paint in the color Licorice and I was very impressed with the paint coverage.

With two coats of paint I was able to get perfectly even color and with a lighter color, I think one coat would have been enough.

toolbox painted with Beyond Paint

When using Beyond paint for outdoor projects, it is recommended that you also use their multi-purpose sealer to protect the paint finish. Adding the sealer does add a bit of extra time and money to the process, but it is easy to apply and a little goes a very long way. I applied two coats of the sealer to my large toolbox and the jar is still almost completely full.

While the paint itself has a great matte finish, the sealer does give it more of a satin sheen.

Beyond Paint comes in 20 colors and is available in pints and quarts.

Beyond Paint

The Good:

- no primer needed
- paint goes on smoothly and has amazing coverage

The Bad:

- the color range is fairly limited at 20 colors and since you have to order online, it can be harder to choose the perfect shade
- have to use a separate sealer for outdoor furniture
- one of the more expensive options, especially when you include the cost of sealer

Both Beyond Paint and the Beyond Paint Multi-purpose Sealer can be ordered online from the below stores:

General finishes milk paint

General Finishes milk paint is another all-in-one furniture paint that is made for both indoor and outdoor projects.

The name milk paint is a bit confusing, because this is actually an acrylic paint and is not specifically used to create vintage finishes like most true milk paints. General Finishes milk paint is actually an all-in-one furniture and cabinet paint.

You do not have to use a separate primer or sealer with this paint, though I do recommend using General Finishes High Performance Top Coat on high-use furniture or cabinets.

I'm a huge fan of General Finishes products and have used their milk paint on many projects including painting my antique dresser vanity, my master bathroom vanity, and my dining room table, but this is my first time using this paint on an outdoor furniture project.

stool painted with General Finishes milk paint

I painted a small wooden stool for my porch and as always, the paint went on very smoothly without brush strokes. This paint has a very pretty matte finish that works well for all styles of furniture.

In disappointing news, General Finishes recently discontinued more than half of their milk paint colors. But there are still 12 great paint colors available including the Persian blue I used on my stool.

General Finishes Milk Paint

The Good:

- no primer needed
- can be used outdoors without a separate topcoat
- goes on smoothly and gives a durable finish
- very easy to apply
- available in three different sizes

The Bad:

- one of the more expensive options
- not specifically formulated to be used outdoors
- very limited color selection with only 12 colors

General Finishes Milk Paint can be purchased in select woodworking stores like Woodcraft and Rockler as well as online. You can also still find many of the discontinued colors, but they won't be available forever.

The Best Paints for Outdoor Wood Furniture

Before we get to spray paints, let's talk about the best paints for outdoor wood furniture.

After testing each of these paints, my top choice continues to be **general purpose exterior latex paint**. I was a bit surprised by this conclusion, because I don't really ever use latex paint to paint indoor furniture. There are many other furniture paints that are easier to work with and give a better finish on indoor furniture.

However, there aren't nearly as many good options for outdoor furniture. I still believe that general purpose exterior latex paint is a great choice because of how well it holds up in harsh outdoor environments over time.

As far as indoor/outdoor furniture paints, my top choice is **General Finishes Milk Paint**. I was also very impressed with **Beyond Paint**, but General Finishes gets an edge because you don't have to apply a separate sealer.

Spray Paints for Outdoor Furniture

I can't truly share the best paints for outdoor furniture without including spray paint. Spray paint is the best paint to use when painting metal outdoor furniture, wicker outdoor furniture, rocking chairs, and any other furniture made of lots of tiny slats and spindles.

Rustoleum Painter's Touch spray paint

Rustoleum Painter's Touch spray paint is the spray version of the Rustoleum Painter's Touch paint I discussed earlier. This is a premium spray paint that can be used for both indoor and outdoor projects.

I recently used this paint to spray paint a set of rocking chairs on our front porch. This paint sprays evenly and gives good paint coverage.

Even though the paint says it is Paint+Primer, you still need to use a separate primer first for most projects. You may also want to use their spray sealer as well for added durability.

rocking chairs painted with Rustoleum Painter's Touch spray paint

Rustleum Painter's Touch spray paint is available in a six different sheens from ultra matte all the way up to high gloss. There are close to 50 different colors available, though not every color is available in every sheen.

Rustoleum Painter's Touch Spray Paint

The Good:

- easy to use
- super fast for painting metal furniture, chairs and other furniture with lots of spindles and slats
- readily available in stores
- wide range of colors and sheens available

The Bad:

- requires a separate primer for most surfaces
- while cans of spray paint are inexpensive, you often need to buy several which adds up. It took me two cans of primer and four cans of spray paint to fully paint two rocking chairs.

You can find some colors on the shelves at Home Depot, Lowes, and Target. You can also order online from the stores linked below. I do recommend buying spray paint in person whenever possible to avoid problems with temperature and air pressure fluctuations during shipping.

Krylon Colormaxx Spray paint

Krylon Colormaxx is another popular line of spray paint that can be used for both indoor and outdoor projects.

A few years ago I painted the metal parts of an outdoor table and chairs with Krylon Colormaxx in the color blue ocean breeze and I've also used this spray paint on various indoor projects.

table and chairs painted with Krylon Colormaxx spray paint

The paint on the outdoor table and chairs has held up very well so far and the paint hasn't faded or chipped at all.

Just like the Rustoleum spray paint, you do need to use a separate primer first for most projects. You may also choose to use a separate clear coat for added protection.

Krylon Colormaxx spray paint is available in more than sixty colors in flat, satin, semi-gloss, and gloss sheens.

Krylon Colormaxx Spray Paint

The Good:

- easy to use
- super fast for painting metal furniture, chairs, and other furniture with lots of spindles and slats
- readily available in stores
- wide range of colors and sheens available

The Bad:

- requires a separate primer for most surfaces
- while cans of spray paint are inexpensive, you often need to buy several which adds up

You can find Krylon Colormaxx on the shelves at Michaels and Lowes. You can also order online from the stores linked below. I do recommend buying spray paint in person whenever possible to avoid problems with temperature and air pressure fluctuations during shipping.

Which spray paint is best for outdoor furniture?

You may have noticed that unlike the other paints reviewed, the pros and cons of Rustoleum and Krylon spray paints were the same.

I know it's nice to have a clear cut answer of which is best, but honestly, I don't know that one really is better than the other.

Krylon and Rustoleum both make high-quality spray paints in a variety of colors and sheens. I have seen some claims that Rustoleum may give a more durable finish, which is always a big plus when you are painting outdoor furniture. But I haven't personally experienced any real difference between the two. I think either are great choices and which one you buy may just come down to what is more readily available where you are and which has the color you want.

Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to some of the questions I am often asked about outdoor furniture paint.

Which paint is better for outdoor furniture: spray paint or brush on paint?

It really depends on what kind of furniture you are painting. I don't usually recommend using spray paint to paint wooden furniture with large flat surfaces like tabletops and dressers.

On the other hand, spray paint is great for painting metal furniture, wicker furniture, and furniture made up of individual wooden slats like rocking chairs. Spray paint makes painting those types of furniture much faster and easier.

Do you need to seal outdoor furniture paint?

Whether or not you need to seal painted outdoor furniture depends on what type of paint you use.

Some paints like exterior latex paints and Americana Decor outdoor living paint are specially formulated to hold up outdoors and don't require a separate sealer. Other paints like Beyond Paint do require a separate sealer when used on outdoor projects.

How much paint do you need to paint a piece of furniture?

Coverage varies a bit from paint to paint, but in general a quart of most paints will cover 100 square feet of area. Of course, you have to keep in mind that most furniture projects require two coats of paint, which cuts this in half.

Typically, a pint of paint (16 oz.) will cover 2-3 small chairs, a bench, or a coffee table. A quart of paint (32 oz.) will cover a dining table or an outdoor sofa frame. When there's a choice between buying a quart of paint or a pint, I almost always go for the quart. A quart is usually much less expensive per ounce and then you don't have to worry about running out of paint mid-project.

When it comes to spray paint, each can typically covers 15-25 square feet. It will take two cans of spray paint to paint a rocking chair or a bench.

How long will painted furniture last outside?

Even if you use the absolute best paints and are a professional painter, no paint job will look perfect forever. Over time, the paint will become worn or faded or chipped or dinged. Using the right paint for the job and prepping your furniture well first will help your paint job last as long as possible.

I would expect painted outdoor furniture that is well taken care of to look good for at least five years and possibly much longer.

How can I make my painted furniture last longer?

The sun's rays, harsh storms, and extreme temperature fluctuations can all take a toll on painted furniture. The more you are able to protect your furniture from these extremes, the longer it will last.

If your furniture is fully exposed on a patio (as opposed to on a covered porch), it's a good idea to protect it with furniture covers during the most extreme weather. Depending on where you live, that may mean protecting your furniture throughout freezing winters or scorching summers.

If you have more questions about outdoor furniture paint or have a favorite paint that I didn't cover, feel free to leave them in the comments!

Check out these other outdoor painting posts next:

- How to Paint Outdoor Furniture Like a Pro
- How to Spray Paint Furniture with a Flawless Finish
- How to Repurpose Indoor Furniture for Outdoor Use

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