

Painting top & bottom of interior & exterior timber & MDF doors



Master Painters NZ Association is regularly asked about the correct procedure for painting doors, especially whether the top and bottom edges of the doors should be painted.

Our usual go to for answers to questions such as this is AS/NZS2311:2017. In this case the question is not answered in the Standard. Referring to the literature published by NZ Government agencies in search of an answer <https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/projects-and-consents/guide-to-tolerances/guide-to-tolerances.pdf> also remains mute on this point.

However, the http://www.vba.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/29063/Guide-to-Standards-and-Tolerances-2015.pdf from Australia clearly advises the sealing of doors to be completed on all edges.

Many older tradesman painters in NZ will advise that the doors should be sealed on all faces and edges to prevent the uptake of moisture especially in “wet area” rooms such as bathrooms and laundrys.

So what does the door manufacturers say about this issue? Upon contacting many door manufacturers in NZ, we are advised that generally all timber and MDF doors should be sealed on all faces and edges, regardless of whether the door is interior or exterior rated. This is to prevent the uptake of moisture. (Seems the old painters were right!). The warranty provided by the door manufacturer could be voided if the doors are not completely sealed.

The advice of Master Painters NZ Association in answer to this is, if in doubt:



Fig 1 Unpainted top door edge

- Follow the advice and recommendations of the door manufacturer in regards to the painting of both interior and exterior doors. This would include the type of paint product & number of paint coats to be used along with any colour limitations the door may have around Light Reflectance Value.
- Ensure the building contractor provides the painting instructions to the painter that are provided with the door, or have these instructions clearly stated in the Scope of Works for the job.
- If the door is not a new door, has been painted before, and the top and bottom edges never sealed, tell the painter of your expectations as to what you want them to do **before** the work starts.
- Doors that have had the bottom edge shaved after painting will require resealing in cases such as after new carpet being laid.
- Failing to seal the top and bottom edges of the door is likely to void the door manufacturer's warranty.

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