

# The Finishing Touch

## paint by the numbers

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**In the number seven issue** of Edifice Old Home Magazine the draft stopping qualities of caulking were well documented with respects to energy savings. Another reason to caulk with paintable caulking is for aesthetics.

Look around your house and look at how the architraves (moulding) around your doors and windows have an area at the meeting of the trim to the wall, which is usually over painted and looking rather ratty. Gaps can also happen on the exterior of the house where the window or door trims meet at angles or sills (see image 1). On the exterior this can be very detrimental to your wooden trim or even to brick, stone or wood cladding because water can enter behind the trim and rot wood or spall masonry during freeze and thaw cycles.

Recently the hall at Edifice House Two was restored and the original faux finished trim work was looking a bit rough (see images 2). The area was first cleaned with a 50/50 mix of warm water and household ammonia. After it was dry, a bead of paintable caulking was applied (see image 3) and smoothed out with a wet finger wiped off periodically on a damp rag.

After the caulk had dried (usually overnight, both interior and exterior) a straight edge is used to draw a pencil line on the wall as a guide to cut into (see image 4). A mixture of artist's acrylic paint was used to paint the edge of the interior trim cutting into the finished wall (or to the line of the pencil mark, see image 5). The use of a good quality artist brush is advisable or a round sash brush. The finished moulding looks finished and elegant (see image 6).

On the exterior, gaps can simply be caulked, primed and top coated the same colour as the surrounding trim work. This little painter's tip is what separates a mediocre job from a professional job. ➤





#### A Side Note:

Remember, never caulk the bottom of your window sills. They are to be kept open to allow moisture to find its way to the exterior. If the bottoms of the sills are caulked, the window frames or the windows themselves can rot. [e](#)