



JAKE ROBINSON'S

DIY advice

EXPERT ADVICE

If your DIY projects tend to end in disaster, never fear – with TV's *Changing Rooms*, *House Doctor* and *Big Strong Boys* under his belt, Jake can help you

Dear Jake,

Is it okay to emulsion straight over peeling paint, or will it just peel off more when dry?

Geoff Dorking, via email

Jake says: Never paint over peeling walls. With any paint job you need to sand down the walls until they are smooth. If you have a wide area of peeling paint try using an orbital sander to save time. If you apply a base coat you'll be able to see whether there are any more areas that need sanding. Then paint away!



Jake's guide to...
wooden floors

Follow my guide to get your wooden floors back to their former glory!

- [1] Clear the area so all boards are exposed.
- [2] Knock in all protruding nails.
- [3] Screw down any loose boards, checking for cables or pipes underneath first.
- [4] Hire an industrial floor sander with sanding sheets, an edger and a small palm sander.
- [5] Turn the sander on and let it down slowly onto the boards. Sand evenly using a coarse sheet. Don't keep it in the same place for long.
- [6] It's always best to sand the wooden planks along the grain, to avoid marks on the wood.
- [7] You'll need to use the edger to sand round skirting boards, using a coarse disc. Use the palm sander to get into nooks and crannies.
- [8] Once you have sanded with a coarse sheet, go over again with a medium sheet. Empty the dust from the sanding bag and mix it with PVA glue, then fill in between boards where needed.
- [9] Finish the floor with a fine sanding sheet.
- [10] Vacuum all the dust. Paint, stain or varnish.



Dear Jake,

I have just moved into a new house and inherited a messy lawn. It's lush in small places, but is mostly muddy and trodden in. Will I need to lay a new lawn or will seeds do?

Mrs L Walker, Wimbledon

Jake says: It depends on how much of it is damaged and how quickly you want it to look green. Sprinkling grass seeds can be a tedious job, especially when birds eat them. The quickest way is to take up the damaged patches, level the soil off and lay a new roll of grass – you can buy them at B&Q for £3 to £5 per roll. I would do this job in the spring, and water your grass twice a day until the new rolls are properly attached to the soil.

Dear Jake,

A tree in our garden is growing out of hand. Can I hire a chainsaw and cut the branches myself or should I call in a professional to do the job?

Jody Bowman, via email

Jake says: It comes down to how tall the tree is – chainsaws and heights are a no-no! If the branches are within reach, get yourself a handsaw. If it's a tall tree, you'll need to hire an arborist. Get a few quotes before you commit.



SEND IN YOUR DIY DILEMMAS TO:

DIY Q&A, Real Homes, 64 North Row, London W1K 7LL or send Jake an email at realhomes@hf-uk.com