

Graffiti Removal Tips

If you are the victim of graffiti vandalism, if possible, remove it within in 24-48 hours. Studies show that the best graffiti prevention strategy is immediate removal. Lingered graffiti gives prospective graffiti vandals the wrong message: that graffiti is welcome on the property. The following are tips for removing graffiti from various types of surfaces.

Metal Surfaces:

- Try wiping graffiti with any common paint thinner (ie. mineral spirits such as WD40, lacquer thinner, acetone), or try graffiti removal products or wiping graffiti with a light penetrating oil.
- If graffiti remains, try to remove it by rubbing with steel or bronze wool or light sandpaper.
- If graffiti still remains, try power-washing it with a 3000psi pressure washer.
- If these methods do not work, paint over the graffiti.

Wood Surfaces:

- If the wood is not weathered and is sealed with paint, stain or sealer, try to remove it by wiping it with mineral spirits. If the wood is weathered, do not use this technique as the chemicals will be absorbed by the wood, driving the paint further down into the wood.
- Power-washing with a 3000psi pressure washer can be used but be careful not to drive the paint deeper into the wood.
- If these methods do not work, paint over the graffiti.

Plastic Surfaces:

- Try wiping graffiti with a light, penetrating oil. Do not use paint thinners as they can soften the plastic and can cause clouding or permanent tackiness of the surface.
- Use an ultra-fine steel or bronze wool and lightly rub the paint.
- If these methods do not work, paint over the graffiti.

Masonry Surfaces:

- The best option for removal of graffiti from brick and stone surfaces is to use a 3000psi pressure washer (do not use a narrow tip as it will etch the masonry surface leaving an outline of the graffiti).
- Sand-blasting is another option. Keep the tip moving over the graffiti-painted area to avoid permanently marking the surface.
- If these methods do not work, paint over the graffiti.

Glass Surfaces:

- A razor blade is 99% effective at scraping off graffiti. Use the razor blade in a holder and scrape at a 30-degree angle.
- Use an ultra-fine bronze wool with water to remove any lingering paint if the razor blade does not remove all of it.
- Use paint thinner to remove some graffiti from glass surfaces.

Other Surfaces:

Aluminum Siding/Fiberglass: Use paint remover (sparingly) and rinse with water.

Pavement: Use a chemical remover and power washing.

Street Signs: Use a chemical remover and make sure it does not remove the reflective coating.

Stucco: Use paint remover and/or a chemical remover and rinse with a pressure washer.

Utility Boxes: Use a chemical remover and a cloth or scrubber.

Vinyl Siding: Use chemical solvents sparingly as they may remove the vinyl coating. If repainting, use a primer first.

Adhesive Removal:

- Scrape away as much of the adhesive as possible.
- Use nail polish remover or an acetone-based cleaner to remove the remaining residue (acetone-based solvents can soften plastics).

Always read product labels and follow manufacturer instructions and recommendations. Most chemical products for graffiti removal are flammable. Use caution and always follow safety recommendations and always use proper safety clothing and equipment (goggles, gloves, etc.). Try a small "test" area before full application of any product.

Remember, remove the graffiti within 24-48 hours. Painting over the graffiti may be your best and most efficient option.

Letting graffiti linger will only invite more graffiti. Paint and supplies may be available to assist you in your neighborhood and community graffiti cleanup efforts.

If you are a victim of graffiti, it is recommended to try and remove the graffiti first by one of the above methods. If not, the markings may show through the new paint.

Valspar paint along with **Lowes** of Evansville (East and West side stores) has offered to:

Donate a quart/gallon of primer with the purchase of a quart/gallon of paint.

You will need to call an officer to complete a report. Once you have a case number

Email that case number to either Detectives Wilkerson or C. Thomas at

qwilkerson@evansvillepolice.com

cthomas@evansvillepolice.com