



Satin vs. eggshell paint: How to choose the right finish for every room

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[Repainting your home](#) can be the ultimate game-changer and one of the easiest and most inexpensive ways to transform your space. However, before you start pouring over paint swatches and heading to your local Home Depot or Sherwin Williams to purchase gallons upon gallons, there is one major decision you need to make in addition to color: Finish.

Paint finish isn't a one-size-fits-all situation. In fact, there are numerous types of paint finishes available, the most common being eggshell and satin. Which one is right for you and, more specifically, the space it is being used in?

“Choosing the right finish is completely aligned with what you would like to accomplish in a particular space,” Luciana Fragali, owner of Miami-based high-end interior and architectural design firm [Design Solutions](#), explains to 21Oak.

First, it is important to understand the difference between satin and eggshell finishes.

What is satin finish?

Satin finish is a paint finish that leans more toward the glossy spectrum, explains Fragali. “Satin is slightly less shimmery than semi-gloss, and

depending on the lighting in the room, it can appear to be both flat and glossy,” she explains.

Satin has a number of other qualities you should take into consideration. For example, Fragali points out that it is more reflective and more durable than eggshell. And while it is less shimmery, it also has a slightly higher polish than eggshell.

It is also one of the easiest finishes to clean, which makes it a popular choice for homeowners with pets and children.

What is eggshell?

Eggshell earns its name due to its texture and finish, similar to that of your average eggshell. “Eggshell has slightly more luster than a flat finish, but you won’t be left with shiny walls,” explains Fragali.

It is a great alternative to flat paint, as it resists stains better and can be wiped with a wet cloth.

What should you consider when choosing between them?

Eggshell and satin paint both serve their purposes in the home setting, and neither is better than the other. However, there is generally one that is a better option for you and the specific space in your home you are painting.

While eggshell paint is easier to clean than flat paint, it is harder to clean than satin. Therefore, Fragali suggests using it in areas where it isn’t going to be on the receiving end of dirty hands or feet. Eggshell is commonly used in living rooms and dining rooms — it is durable and does not pick up dirt easily.

“Eggshell paint is best suited for areas such as ceilings, bedrooms, dining rooms, and living areas where there is not a lot of dirt buildup or traffic,” she points out. However, people still do use it in bathrooms, kitchens, kids’ rooms, and other high-traffic areas, especially as an alternative to flat paint.

Satin paint, on the other hand, is a more ideal option for high-traffic areas and is easy to clean with just a damp cloth.

Imperfections on the walls

Satin paint has one major downfall — especially if you aren't relying on a professional painter. "Satin paint will show any flaws in its application (i.e., brush strokes), so if you are a first-time DIY painter, you might consider hiring a professional for this or selecting another finish like eggshell," she points out.

Overall, if your walls have bumps or imperfections, an extra coat of eggshell can disguise them more easily than satin or high-gloss finishes.

Whether you want to add depth to a tight space

Another thing to consider is the size of the space. Fragali points out that satin is often a better choice in small spaces, as the slight gloss can offer depth that a flat finish cannot.

The last deciding factor should always be which of the finishes you like the most. Some people tend to gravitate toward eggshell, as they prefer a flatter finish, while others appreciate a glossier look.

Bottom line

When it comes down to choosing your paint finish, the decision should be made on a case-by-case basis. Before making a choice, you need to consider your personal preference, the type of space you are working with, your desired outcome, and even who will be applying the paint. If you still can't decide between a satin and eggshell finish, you can always call your local paint store or ask your painter for their opinion.