

FREE HOMEOWNER DOWNLOAD

Sherwin-Williams Dry Times Explained

House Painters Near Me: a regional guide to touch, recoat, rain, dew, and cure windows

The same product can dry differently on a damp shaded wall in Seattle, a stucco wall in Phoenix, and a coastal home in Florida. Use this guide to understand the planning window - then contact a local painting professional for the exact timing on your home.

Updated June 2026 | Independent guide based on publicly available product data sheets and application guidance



This is a planning guide, not a paint warranty

Dry-time charts are useful, but they are not a crystal ball. Sherwin-Williams product data sheets give baseline dry and recoat times under specific conditions. A local painter still needs to check your actual surface, product, color, humidity, dew point, shade, wind, and forecast.

The number most homeowners miss

Quick takeaway: for common Sherwin-Williams exterior acrylic products, the planning baseline is often about 1 hour to touch and 4 hours to recoat when temperatures are above 45 F and humidity is around 50%. In the 35-45 F range, the same PDS examples show 2 hours to touch and 24-48 hours before recoat. That is the difference between a same-day second coat and a next-day-or-later second coat. [1][2]

Why local conditions matter

Factor	Why it changes dry time	What a pro checks
Air temperature	Paint forms a proper film only within the product's application range. Cold weather slows water evaporation and film formation.	Not just the high for the day - also overnight lows and the next 48 hours.
Surface temperature	Siding, stucco, metal, and shaded walls can be colder or hotter than the air.	Surface thermometer readings, especially north walls, shaded sides, masonry, and metal.
Humidity and dew point	Moisture slows evaporation. Dew can form after sunset even when the afternoon felt dry.	Whether the surface is at least 5 F above dew point and likely to stay safe. [3]
Film thickness	Heavy coats stay wet longer and can wrinkle, sag, or trap moisture.	Wet mil thickness, sprayer setup, back-brushing/back-rolling, and product coverage rate.
Substrate	Raw wood, masonry, stucco, chalky paint, and metal each hold or shed moisture differently.	Moisture, pH, chalking, previous coating condition, and primer requirements.

Use this sentence with any local contractor

I am trying to understand safe dry and recoat windows for a Sherwin-Williams project on my home. Can you base your answer on the exact product, current surface temperature, dew point, humidity, forecast, substrate, and shade exposure?

The five milestones homeowners confuse

A paint job can feel dry and still be vulnerable. The safer question is not only 'Is it dry?' but 'Dry enough for what?' Here is the homeowner translation.

Milestone	Plain-English meaning	Typical homeowner mistake	What to ask
1. Surface ready	The wall is clean, dry, sound, and within the product's temperature and dew point range.	Painting after washing because the surface 'looks dry.'	Did you verify surface moisture and surface temperature?
2. Dry to touch	The surface may not transfer paint when lightly touched.	Assuming furniture, storms, tape, dust, or kids are now harmless. Cute, but no.	Dry to touch is not the same as cured, right?
3. Recoat ready	The prior coat is far enough along to receive another coat without lifting, wrinkling, or trapping moisture.	Putting the second coat on too soon because the first coat feels dry.	What is the PDS recoat time today?
4. Moisture/dew/rain safe	The coating has enough early moisture resistance to handle dew or a light weather event.	Painting late in the day when dew will form shortly after.	How many dry hours do we have before dew or rain?
5. Cure/performance	The paint has reached its harder, more durable service condition.	Washing, scrubbing, sticking shutters back, or closing tight doors too early.	When can I wash, tape, close, or place items against the paint?

Dry, recoat, rain-safe, and cured are not synonyms



*Common Sherwin-Williams exterior acrylic PDS baseline: above 45 F and about 50% RH. Conditions can change this fast.

Sherwin-Williams explains that dry time and cure time are different. Its homeowner guidance says acrylic and latex paints typically need two to three weeks to cure, while oil-based paints may cure in as little as five days. [5] In other words: don't use the word 'dry' as a permission slip for every next step.

Sherwin-Williams exterior dry-time planning chart

The chart below translates common Sherwin-Williams exterior acrylic product data sheet numbers into homeowner planning language. Always follow the current label and product data sheet for the exact product being used.

Condition	Dry to touch	Recoat	Moisture/rain/dew guidance	Planning meaning
Above 45 F, about 50% relative humidity, normal film thickness	About 1 hour	About 4 hours	Standard exterior latex coatings commonly need about 4 hours before moisture exposure; some products are formulated for faster early moisture resistance. [4]	Same-day second coat may be possible when the wall, product, weather, and schedule cooperate.
35-45 F, about 50% relative humidity	About 2 hours	24-48 hours	Product examples require air, surface, and material temperatures above 35 F, at least 5 F above dew point, with no rain/snow expected within 2-3 hours and no drop below 35 F within 48 hours. [1][2]	Expect next-day or later recoating. This is where amateur schedules go to die.
High humidity or dew point close to surface temperature	Slower than label baseline	Often delayed	Coatings should not be applied unless surface temperature is at least 5 F above dew point. [3]	Ask the painter to measure surface temperature, not just read the phone weather app.
Hot wall, direct sun, or very dry wind	May feel dry fast	Still follow label/PDS	Fast skinning can cause lap marks, poor flow, or uneven appearance even if 'dry' seems fast.	Pros often chase shade and adjust technique, start times, and wall order.
Heavy coat or rough/masonry surface	Slower	Slower	Film thickness affects drying and recoat times. [1][2]	Thick coats are not a shortcut; they are a moisture trap with better marketing.

Rule of thumb

The label/PDS is the rulebook. The local painter's jobsite readings are the reality check. When those two disagree, wait, adjust the plan, or choose a different product/system.

The 5-F dew point rule and the stop-painting clock

The most dangerous exterior-painting hour is often not the hottest hour. It is late afternoon, when the wall starts cooling toward dew point and there may not be enough dry time before moisture settles.

Professional checkpoint	Why it matters	Homeowner translation
Surface at least 5 F above dew point	Sherwin-Williams technical guidance says coatings should not be applied unless the surface temperature is at least 5 F above dew point. [3]	The wall can be wet even when it does not look wet yet. Dew is sneaky. That is its whole personality.
Suggested temperature range for 48 hours	Sherwin-Williams exterior FAQ says the temperature should ideally remain in range and above dew point for at least 48 hours after application. [6]	A warm afternoon does not rescue a cold night.
Moisture before sunset	Sherwin-Williams says most products require at least 4 hours of dry time before moisture settles on the surface. [4][6]	If dew forms at 7:30 p.m., a 5:30 p.m. coat may be a bad plan.
Rain/snow forecast	PDS examples warn against application if rain or snow is expected within 2-3 hours. [1][2]	Pop-up storms are not character-building for fresh paint.

Dry-time risk scale used in this guide



Risk	What it usually means	Typical move
Low	Surface is dry, forecast is stable, temps are in range, dew point spread is healthy.	Proceed according to label/PDS.
Moderate	Humidity, shade, or overnight lows may stretch the schedule.	Start later, stop earlier, or extend recoat time.
High	Dew, rain, cold substrate, or heavy film may compromise film formation.	Delay, change wall order, use suitable product, or wait for better weather.
Stop	Surface is wet, temp/dew point is unsafe, rain/snow is too close, or product limits cannot be met.	Do not paint until conditions are corrected.

Major U.S. regions: how climate changes the dry-time plan

These are planning patterns, not guarantees. NOAA manages Regional Climate Centers covering the United States, and the state groupings below are simplified for homeowner use. [7]

Region	Example areas	Dry-time personality	Best scheduling window	Ask a local painter
Pacific Northwest	WA, OR, coastal northern CA	Cool mornings, high humidity, frequent dew, shaded north walls that stay damp. Risk: MOD-HIGH.	Late morning through midafternoon after surfaces warm and dry. Stop early when evening dew returns.	How will you verify the siding is dry after fog, rain, or overnight dew?
Coastal California	Bay Area, Central Coast, coastal SoCal	Marine layer can delay morning starts; afternoon sun can dry fast. Risk: MOD.	After marine layer lifts; avoid hot direct sun on exposed walls.	Will you adjust wall order for shade, coastal moisture, and afternoon wind?
Desert Southwest	AZ, NV, NM, inland CA, desert UT	Low humidity can make paint feel dry quickly, but hot surfaces can cause fast set, lap marks, and application trouble. Risk: MOD-HIGH in heat.	Early morning on shaded sides; avoid overheated surfaces and strong wind.	What surface temperature is too hot for this product and color?
Mountain West / Rockies	CO, UT, ID, MT, WY, high-elevation NM/AZ	Big day-night swings, cool substrates, strong sun, wind, sudden weather. Risk: MOD-HIGH.	Midday window once surface temperature is safely above minimum and dew point.	How early must work stop before cold evening temperatures or dew?

West Coast and mountain note

In the West, dry time is not always about 'more sun = better.' Dry desert air can create fast surface set, while coastal moisture can delay true readiness. A good painter schedules wall order like a chess game - except the opponent is weather and it cheats.

Major U.S. regions: cold nights, lake air, and humid summers

In these areas, the day may look paintable while the evening tells a different story. Dew, fog, lake moisture, and cool substrates can stretch recoat windows.

Region	Example areas	Dry-time personality	Best scheduling window	Ask a local painter
Northern Plains / Upper Midwest	ND, SD, NE, MN, IA, WI	Short exterior season, wind, cool mornings, spring/fall cold snaps, overnight dew/frost. Risk: MOD-HIGH.	Warm, stable multi-day stretches. Low-temp products may help, but still require product limits.	Will the temperature stay in range and above dew point after application?
Great Lakes	MI, IL, IN, OH, western NY, lake-adjacent WI/MN	Lake humidity, fog, wind-driven moisture, cooler surfaces near water. Risk: MOD-HIGH.	Later morning starts; avoid lake-fog windows and damp shaded sides.	How does lake humidity or fog change the recoat plan?
Northeast / New England	ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY, PA, NJ	Humid summers, cool nights, coastal fog, heavy shade, older wood surfaces. Risk: MOD-HIGH.	Stable dry days with enough pre-dew drying time; avoid late-day second coats.	Will you test moisture on older wood and shaded sides?
Mid-Atlantic / Ohio Valley	MD, DE, DC, WV, VA, KY, TN, OH Valley	Variable humidity, thunderstorms, morning dew, spring pollen, summer heat. Risk: MOD.	Dry forecast with low storm probability; stop early before evening moisture.	What is the plan if afternoon storms move in early?

North and East note

Cold-weather projects are schedule traps. Sherwin-Williams notes that colder temperatures and moisture can prevent a paint film from forming properly and shorten service life. [6] This is why a painter may delay a job even when the afternoon high looks fine.

Major U.S. regions: humidity, storms, salt air, and heat

Southern projects often have more calendar days that feel warm enough, but humidity, daily storms, mildew, and salt exposure can make timing more technical.

Region	Example areas	Dry-time personality	Best scheduling window	Ask a local painter
Southeast	AL, GA, SC, NC, inland FL, VA	High humidity, afternoon storms, mildew pressure, warm nights. Risk: MOD-HIGH.	Morning only after surfaces are dry; stop before storm/dew risk.	How will mildew cleaning, humidity, and afternoon storms affect timing?
Gulf Coast / Lower South	LA, MS, coastal AL, east TX	Very high humidity, salt air, storm cycles, heavy dew, wind-driven rain. Risk: HIGH.	Stable dry stretch; avoid late-day coats and check forecast closely.	How many dry hours do we have before dew, fog, or rain?
Florida / South Texas / Coastal Tropics	FL peninsula, TX coast, keys, barrier islands	Humidity, UV, salt, daily storms, hot surfaces, frequent mildew. Risk: HIGH.	Shorter work windows; shaded wall order; product/system selection matters.	What product/system do you recommend for salt, UV, and mildew exposure?
South Central / Plains heat belt	TX, OK, AR, KS, MO	Heat, wind, storms, spring pollen, sudden cold fronts in shoulder seasons. Risk: MOD-HIGH.	Avoid extreme heat/wind; use stable forecast windows.	Will wind or surface heat cause fast set or overspray/dust issues?
Alaska, Hawaii, and islands	AK, HI, coastal islands, microclimates	Local microclimates dominate: cold coastal dampness, tropical humidity, salt, volcanic/coastal exposure. Risk: site-specific.	Follow local pro guidance and the exact product system.	What local coating system performs best in this microclimate?

South and coastal note

Southern humidity can make paint feel like it is drying in a sauna wearing a raincoat. Warm air helps, but moisture still decides the schedule. That is why 'house painters near me' is the right search: local crews know the dew cycle in your neighborhood.

Dry-time changes by what you are painting

The product matters. The weather matters. The surface matters too. A local painter should consider all three before promising start, stop, and recoat times.

Surface / situation	Why dry time changes	Dry-time caution	Local pro question
Wood siding and trim	Wood can hold moisture, move with temperature, and bleed tannins in some species.	Do not paint damp wood. Bare wood, knots, tannin-rich woods, and previous peeling need the right prep/primer.	Did you moisture-test wood and choose the right primer where needed?
Stucco and masonry	Porous surfaces hold moisture and new masonry/stucco may need cure time and pH checks.	Trapped moisture can cause adhesion failure, efflorescence, or surfactant issues.	Is the surface dry, cured, sound, and pH-appropriate for the system?
Fiber cement / cement board	Edges, joints, and previously wet areas can hold moisture.	Back-priming/edge sealing and caulk timing may affect schedule.	How are edges, joints, and old paint failures being handled?
Vinyl and aluminum siding	Surface heat, color selection, and metal temperature matter. Some PDS examples require higher temperatures on large metal surfaces. [1][2]	Dark colors on vinyl need approved color guidance; hot metal can overheat quickly.	Is this color safe for vinyl, and what surface temperature is acceptable?
Doors, shutters, railings, and trim	Edges stick, block, and collect handling damage before full cure.	Do not close tight doors/windows or reinstall hardware too early without pro guidance.	When can this be closed, handled, or put back into service?
Caulk, patch, primer, or stain blockers	Every layer has its own dry/recoat window.	Topcoating uncured caulk, primer, patch, or filler can ruin a good paint job.	What are the dry times for each layer, not just the finish paint?

Important homeowner mindset

The wall is not one surface. It is a collection of sunny sides, shaded sides, repaired areas, raw edges, caulk lines, old paint, and problem spots. The chart gets you oriented; the jobsite inspection gets you accurate.

Best-season thinking by region

The best exterior painting season is not the same everywhere. The goal is a stable dry window, not just a warm afternoon.

Season	Usually helpful	Usually risky	What your painter should decide
Spring	Moderate temperatures; good for many regions after pollen/rain cycles pass.	Wet surfaces, pollen, cold nights, sudden storms.	Has the substrate dried after rain/washing, and will nights stay safely above product limits?
Summer	Longer days and warmer temperatures.	High heat, direct sun, humidity, thunderstorms, fast surface set.	Should the crew chase shade, adjust wall order, and avoid midday heat?
Fall	Great temperatures in many areas; lower sun intensity.	Shorter days, cold nights, heavy dew, leaf debris.	Is there enough dry time before dew, and can the recoat happen before cold evening temperatures?
Winter	Possible in mild climates or with suitable products/systems.	Cold substrate, dew/frost, rain, short work windows.	Does the exact product allow application and curing under these conditions?

Regional season notes

- Pacific Northwest and Northeast: the dry window often depends on morning dew and the next 48 hours, not only today's high.
- Desert Southwest and Texas heat belts: high temperatures can create application problems even when the paint feels dry fast.
- Southeast, Gulf Coast, Florida, and islands: humidity, storms, mildew, salt, and UV exposure often matter as much as temperature.
- Mountain and northern states: shoulder-season jobs need especially careful overnight-low and dew point planning.

Tell-it-like-it-is hiring tip

If a contractor says, 'It will dry in a couple hours' without asking what product, what surface, what side of the house, what temperature, what humidity, and what dew point - keep asking. A confident guess is still a guess.

STOP SIGNS

When not to paint yet

A delay is cheaper than a failure. Fresh paint is not the place to test your luck, your weather app, or your neighbor's uncle's painting theory.

- Surface is wet, damp, chalky, dirty, greasy, mildewed, or not fully dry after washing.
- Surface temperature is not at least 5 F above dew point.
- Air, surface, or material temperature is outside the product's application range.
- Rain, snow, heavy fog, or dew is expected before the coating has adequate dry time.
- Temperatures may drop below the product limit within the next 48 hours.
- The first coat feels dry, but the PDS recoat window has not been met.
- The job involves dark vinyl, bare metal, masonry/stucco, severe peeling, lead paint, or old oil-based coatings.
- The paint film was applied too thick, or there are sags, sticky areas, surfactant leaching, or uneven sheen.

What can happen if dry time is rushed

Problem	What it can look like	Common cause
Surfactant leaching	Brownish, tan, or shiny streaks on the new paint film	Moisture hits uncured latex paint, especially with cool/humid weather or dew.
Poor adhesion	Peeling, lifting, or coating failure	Damp, dirty, chalky, glossy, or improperly prepared surface; painting outside product limits.
Wrinkling or soft film	Paint stays tacky, wrinkles, or marks easily	Recoat too soon, heavy film, poor ventilation, cold/humid conditions.
Lap marks / flashing	Uneven sheen or visible overlap lines	Hot wall, fast set, poor wall order, direct sun, or inconsistent wet edge.
Mildew return	Dark specks or staining through new paint	Mildew not removed before painting; high humidity; shaded damp surfaces.

Questions to ask a local painting professional

This section helps homeowners turn 'house painters near me' into a better conversation. The goal is not to micromanage your painter. The goal is to verify that timing is based on conditions, not optimism.

Question	Why it matters	A strong answer should include
Which Sherwin-Williams product and sheen will you use?	Dry/recoat times vary by product, sheen, primer, and coating system.	Exact product name, current PDS/label reference, and why it fits the surface.
What is the recoat window for today's conditions?	The PDS baseline changes with temperature, humidity, and film thickness.	Specific recoat timing and whether second coat is same-day or next-day.
How do you check dew point and surface temperature?	Air temperature alone is not enough.	Dew point margin, surface thermometer, shaded-side checks, and stop time.
What time will you stop painting?	Late-day work can be vulnerable to dew and cooling surfaces.	A cutoff based on dew/rain forecast, wall orientation, and product dry window.
What happens if the weather changes?	The plan should adapt before the paint is at risk.	Delay policy, wall sequencing, rain plan, and communication process.
When can I close doors/windows or put items back?	Touch-dry does not mean block-resistant or cured.	Specific guidance for doors, shutters, furniture, tape, washing, and pets/kids.
What is included in surface prep?	Prep often determines whether dry time matters at all.	Cleaning, scraping, sanding, mildew treatment, caulk/patch dry times, primer plan.

Green flag

A professional answer should sound specific. 'We use the PDS, measure the wall, watch dew point, and schedule the second coat after the safe recoat window' is a better answer than 'Don't worry, it dries quick.'

Dry-time worksheet for your estimate call

Use this page during a phone call or estimate. It gives the local pro enough detail to avoid a generic answer.

Item	Your notes
Project type	Exterior / interior / trim / doors / shutters / deck or porch / other
Surface	Wood / fiber cement / vinyl / aluminum / stucco / masonry / previously painted / bare
Product being considered	Sherwin-Williams product name, sheen, primer, and color
Home exposure	North / south / east / west walls; shaded trees; coastal or lake exposure; high elevation
Recent moisture	Rain, pressure washing, fog, sprinklers, dew, leaks, mildew, or damp areas
Local weather window	Expected highs/lows, humidity, rain risk, dew point, wind, direct sun
Recoat question	Same-day possible? Next-day safer? Longer for cool/humid weather?
Use-after-painting question	When can doors/windows close, hardware reinstall, furniture return, washing happen?

Copy-and-paste message

Hi, I found your company while searching for house painters near me. I am planning a Sherwin-Williams paint project at my home in [city/neighborhood]. Can you help me estimate safe dry, recoat, and moisture windows based on the exact product, my surface type, surface temperature, humidity, dew point, shade, and local forecast?

Pro tip: send photos of the shaded side of the house, peeling areas, trim/doors, and any mildew or chalking. The best dry-time answer often starts with the surface, not the paint can.

INTERIOR NOTE

Interior dry times are more controllable - but not automatic

Regional climate affects exteriors the most, but interior projects still depend on ventilation, humidity, temperature, film thickness, and product choice.

Interior situation	Dry-time issue	Best move
Bathrooms, laundry rooms, kitchens	Higher humidity slows drying and curing.	Use ventilation, manage humidity, and follow product recoat/cure guidance.
Deep colors and higher sheens	May show marks, tack, or uneven sheen if rushed.	Allow the recommended recoat time and avoid overworking the paint.
Cabinets, doors, shelves, trim	Blocking and sticking can happen before full cure.	Ask when the surface can be handled, stacked, closed, or put back into service.
Cold rooms, basements, garages	Cool surfaces slow dry time and film formation.	Warm the space and verify conditions before coating.
Heavy patching or primer	Primer, patch, and compound each have separate dry windows.	Do not topcoat repairs until they are ready.

Interior homeowner reminder

Sherwin-Williams notes that ventilation and humidity management help paint dry, and that cure time is different from dry time. [5] For rooms that must go back into service quickly, ask your painter for room-specific recoat, tape, furniture, cleaning, and cure guidance.

SUMMARY

The homeowner version in one page

Use this as the quick reference before hiring or scheduling.

If you remember one thing	Remember this
Touch dry is not recoat ready	Paint can feel dry and still be too soft for the next coat, moisture, tape, washing, or heavy use.
Temperature is not just the afternoon high	Air, surface, material, dew point, and overnight lows all matter.
Humidity and dew point are schedule makers	A wall should be safely above dew point, and the coating needs time before dew/rain.
Regional patterns are useful	Local microclimate, wall orientation, product, substrate, color, and prep are the final answer.
A good painter explains the plan	Ask for the exact product, PDS timing, measured conditions, start/stop time, and recoat plan.

Next step

Want exact dry-time guidance for your home? Contact a trusted local painting professional. Search house painters near me and ask them to calculate the safe dry, recoat, rain/dew, and cure windows for your exact product, siding, and forecast.

This guide is independent educational content. Sherwin-Williams and named product lines are trademarks of their respective owner. Always follow current product labels, product data sheets, and professional jobsite guidance.

SOURCES

Source notes and methodology

This asset summarizes publicly available guidance and product data. It is not a substitute for the current label, current product data sheet, or professional inspection.

[1] Sherwin-Williams Product Data Sheet, Emerald Exterior Acrylic Flat, K47-Series, 03/2026. Baseline drying table: at 50% RH, 35-45 F = 2 hours touch and 24-48 hours recoat; 45 F+ = 1 hour touch and 4 hours recoat; drying/recoat times depend on temperature, humidity, and film thickness. Also includes application notes about 35 F minimum, dew point, rain/snow, and 48-hour temperature limits.

[2] Sherwin-Williams Product Data Sheet, Duration Exterior Acrylic Satin, K33-Series, 03/2026. Similar drying table and application limits used as a cross-check for common exterior acrylic planning language.

[3] Sherwin-Williams Industrial, 'Using the Dew Point Calculator.' States that no coatings should be applied unless surface temperature is at least 5 F above dew point.

[4] Sherwin-Williams, 'Late-Season Exterior Painting | Extend Your Season.' Notes that standard exterior latex coatings commonly require a four-hour minimum before moisture, while Resilience Exterior Acrylic Latex is described as developing moisture resistance in two hours.

[5] Sherwin-Williams, 'How to Make Paint Dry Faster.' Explains dry time versus cure time and says acrylic/latex paints typically take two to three weeks to cure while oil-based paints can cure in as little as five days.

[6] Sherwin-Williams, 'Exterior: Product Application Frequently Asked Questions.' Discusses dew formation, paint coalescing, moisture exposure, and the recommendation that temperatures ideally stay in range and above dew point for at least 48 hours after application.

[7] NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, Regional Climate Centers. Used for broad U.S. regional framing. The guide simplifies state groupings into homeowner-friendly painting regions, so local microclimate should always override the chart.

Methodology: regional dry-time notes are qualitative planning guidance based on common climate patterns, the official Sherwin-Williams dry/recoat guidance cited above, and practical painting risk factors such as humidity, dew point, surface temperature, substrate moisture, heat, wind, shade, and forecast stability. The regional chart intentionally does not promise exact hours because exact hours require local measurement.