

Graffiti removal and maintenance

The following information is presented as a guide only.

There are a number of effective graffiti removal products available for purchase. These products are designed to work on a variety of surfaces. It is recommended you consult your local paint store or professional graffiti removal service prior to using these products, and always follow manufacturer's directions.

Most products work best on fresh graffiti and at a temperature of 10° or higher.

There are two categories of surfaces: Non-sensitive surfaces, such as painted wood siding and painted concrete, and sensitive surfaces, such as brick, stucco, cedar fencing, metal and glass.

Non-Sensitive Surfaces:

- Paint the surface with an appropriate colour.
- Some tags may require two or more coats.
- Let the paint dry before attempting a second coat.

Brick, Cement and Concrete

- If you do not want to paint the surface, consider contacting a contractor who can soda blast the surface.
- Be aware that soda blasting may leave a shadow.

Stucco

- Typically, it is most effective to paint over stucco using an appropriate colour.
- If you do not want the surface painted, pressure washing and soda blasting may be used.
- Be aware that soda blasting or pressure washing may chip the stucco or leave a shadow.

REMINDER: When painting, do not just cover the area of graffiti. Small patches look bad and are appealing to graffitiists. Choose a top line and cover the wall down to the ground. You do not necessarily have to paint the entire wall, but make sure that it looks professional.

Tips for preventing graffiti

Minimizing graffiti on your property begins with keeping the property clean and well maintained.

Graffiti is typically found on property adjacent to public spaces, including those areas that are easy to reach, highly visible, or there's limited security and few people. Light-coloured surfaces and large, plain surfaces often attract graffiti.

Other ways to prevent graffiti include:

- Fencing, increased lighting, and motion sensor lighting contribute to reducing graffiti.
- For vulnerable walls, use clinging vegetation, like ivy, to eliminate large writing surfaces.
- If your property has been tagged with graffiti, rapid removal, notably within 24 to 48 hours, reduces the chance of being tagged again.
- If your building has a sensitive surface, such as brick or stucco, consider applying a protective anti-graffiti coating. This is especially advantageous if your property is repeatedly targeted with graffiti.
- Adopt a street, park, school, church or business that is a target for graffiti.
- Have a neighbourhood meeting to discuss solutions.
- Form a neighbourhood graffiti removal crew.
- Involve young people in the cleanup.



Metal, Aluminum Siding and Fiberglass

- Graffiti wipes or sprays may remove the graffiti. These chemicals can be purchased at most paint stores.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- You may need to let chemicals sit and then go over the area again to remove all the graffiti.
- Make sure to test a small area first.

Glass and Plexiglass

- Do not use solvents such as acetone, silicone spray or lacquer thinner because they attack and damage the surface.
- Use graffiti wipes or spray.
- Make sure to test the surface on a hidden area if uncertain of the effect on the base material.

Stickers

- A growing trend in graffiti is the use of stickers.
- Remove as much of the sticker as possible.
- Nail polish remover, lighter fluid or wipes can be used to remove residue.

