

Just one thing...

a perfect front door

By **Pattie Barron**



Monochrome magic: a freshly painted white door makes a cool contrast to a black house façade



In the pink: the daring colour choice of this front door brings out the cool lavender-blue of the wisteria

PAINTING a jaded front door is the single most important thing you can do to improve your property's façade. A stylish entrance sends a big message and offers a feel-good factor to you and all who approach your home. And the really good news is that it's a job you can do yourself over a single weekend.

The toughest part is choosing the colour. You'll be facing your front door countless times, so above all, make it a personal choice, advises Farrow & Ball's director and colour expert, Sarah Cole. "Pick what feels right for you – but also consider the period of your property, the style and colour of neighbouring buildings, and whether you want to create a complementary or contrasting theme."

The dominant features around the door, such as the brickwork, paved areas and even plant colours already on your window sills, will affect your choice. "Your chosen front door colour should work with the house walls," says Cole. "Try stronger, deeper colours with brick and stone, such as Farrow & Ball's Green Smoke, or lighter colours with painted masonry, such as paler green Lichen. Earthy blues and greens will help create a sense of flow with nature."

CLEVER WITH SHADES

Go a shade or two darker than you would on the house interior, she adds. "You mostly see exterior colours in daylight, so they will generally appear a little lighter than they would indoors. If you are considering almost white Slipper Satin, for instance, go for deeper Off-White, or if you fancy French Gray, choose the slightly darker Pigeon."

Consider carefully, too, the paint finish. "For a classic, elegant look, use full gloss, which is especially effective in stronger colours such as deep reds, dark blues and black," says Cole. "Interestingly, exterior eggshell creates a relaxed feel in softer colours such as pale smoky greens and blues, but results in a more contemporary look with stronger colours." Painting the front door and frame different shades can result in a bitty effect, says Cole; keeping them in the same identical colour will make the most of the entrance.

GET GLOSSY WITH RAILINGS

If you have railings either side of your door use paint to lift them. Instead of the ubiquitous black railings for your front garden boundary, try a dark purple gloss paint such as Farrow & Ball's Pelt and, if your front garden gets sun for even part of the day, plant a tall, hardy lavender such as Grosso so it pushes through the dark purple railings. Hide the rubbish in an inexpensive wooden bin store and paint it the same colour as the front door and it becomes a smart, finished unit that doesn't stand out, but co-ordinates with front-of-house; alternatively, hide bins within a screen of heavy-duty trellis, cut to size, and painted to key with the front door.

You can also create visual interest by using different paint finishes of the identical colour. Cole suggests, for example, painting front door and window boxes the same shade, but using full gloss on the door, and



Banish black: paint railings a more adventurous colour such as Farrow & Ball's dark purple full gloss, Pelt