

PAINTING YOUR OWN FENCE.

Do it Yourself Instructions for a quality Job.

Introduction:

Congratulations! Your decision to **Do it Yourself** is a wise one for two reasons, **Firstly**, the money you will save! The average street frontage to paint professionally, in the manner required, can often cost upwards of \$1000 - \$1500. Inevitably, there will be moments ahead when it will be necessary to remind yourself of this saving.

Secondly, commercial constraints often means that the job you are about to do will be far superior to the one that you would pay someone else to do. The best painting jobs have been done by those owners who have shown the patience, attention to detail and persistence to reap the rewards of a quality job by doing it themselves.

What's so important about the painting?

In South Australia we refer to our environment with an often repeated phrase: **"We live in the driest state in the driest continent in the world"**. The dry character of a summer heat wave can be devastatingly cruel on "organic timber product", particularly when the sources of supply come from cooler or more tropical areas. Quality painting goes along way in addressing post splitting & shrinkage, surface checking, water traps creating "dry rot" and warping timbers.

A good foundation job will save many hours of labour down the track by protecting and binding together the fences individual elements. Finally, a sensitively chosen colour scheme will enhance the all important streetscape of the home. Any Adelaide Real Estate agent will tell you the unique streetscape character of our cities homes is the single greatest factor in a good resale price.

What colours should I use?

Naturally, all jobs are different and specific advice on your home is freely available on request. After over 20 years and thousands of streetscapes it is, however, possible to establish a few basic principles. When we did the quote we spent a lot of time ensuring the form and line of the fence was architecturally sympathetic to the house. The colours selected is a simple extension of this same enquiry.

The essential bit of advice is **not to over do it!** A lot of fences often benefit from the restrained choice of a single colour only, allowing their form and structure to not have to compete with an overwrought colour scheme. Virtually, all fences rarely require more than two colours, occasionally a third colour can be used to highlight a certain minor point [ie: A routed collar, casted capital or a piece of moulding: just to "tip your hat" at that roof or gutter colour]. Another tip is when using two colours is not to have them contrasting but to have them as two versions of the same colour. This again often results in a more subtle, restrained and tasteful solution.

At the end of the day it is a matter of personal taste but there is perhaps **one golden rule**. If using two colours ensure that the darker of the two is used on the feature posts and at least the front face of the base plinth. The rest, the rails, rear support posts & pickets should be done in the lighter colour. This way the dominant colour or tone frames the lesser colour. [Just like the gable on your house].

So what does Heritage Fencing do?

Since 1983, **Heritage Fencing** has been purchasing **hardwoods** on the basis of **Stability, Durability and Reliability**. Your fence consists of timber that falls in the first two classifications of Durability. [CSIRO] namely Highly Durable and Durable. All posts are **Jarrah** or equivalent hardwood [known for its in ground stability and strength.] As an additional assurance all posts bases & holes are treated with a creosote based formula before being concreted in place. Above ground we ensure that all minor splits or blemishes are filled & sanded. We immediately apply a full brush coat of oil base pink primer to seal the post. This is done because the Jarrah post is “green” or “fresh timber”.

All other timbers in your fence namely capping, rails, plinths, mouldings and pickets are **kiln dried** to remove excess moisture. During construction we oil base pink prime the rail housings in all posts, the rail butts that go into those housings, the front face of the rails [Before the pickets go on] and the very base of the pickets themselves. [Suspended 5mm above the base plinth to eliminate end grain rot] When the job is completed we will give you a **Privileged Discount Voucher from Solver Paints**. This will save you **20 per cent** on all paint purchases and in addition, is not confined to the fence; you may use it for many years to come. Now it's over to you!

PAINTING INSTRUCTIONS: [assumes a two colour approach]

During the summer months it is important not to delay in starting the paint job. You should aim to commence one initial coat within a week of completion. There is no further need to use oil base pink primer from here on in use **Solver Duraguard** mixed in the colours you require. Solver like all leading paint companies produces this formula as a primer based paint. Furthermore, if you wish to match a colour from another paint company you only need name it and it can be matched exactly. Small tester cans are available.

Quantities: The picket, rail and rear support colour should be bought as a **10 litre** quantity. The feature post and plinth colour should be purchased as a **4 litre** quantity. **Heritage Fencing** recommends a **Satin** finish as it is not chalky and flat like Low Sheen but not too reflective to highlight imperfections like High Gloss. However, with careful sanding High Gloss can look very nice on the Feature posts.

1. If you want a good Job give everything a light sanding. This is particularly beneficial on the feature posts. After sanding ensure fence is clean of dust & dirt. Apply one brush coat on all pickets, rails and rear support posts. Apply heavily using a lighter touch to lay off the paint and control drips.

Tip: If you intend to paint the plinth in a darker colour it is easier to paint the top edge of the plinth with the lighter colour, and then cut the darker colour in later to the top of its minor edge champher leaving the top in the lighter colour. When painting the pickets you can slide a drop sheet between the picket & plinth [5mm gap] so as not to paint the plinth below inadvertently. **NB:** Ensure that you flood paint the back of the pickets at the top edge of the top & bottom rail. This is done to create a seal between picket and rail to avoid water running down the back face of the picket. As you paint the pickets do repeated coats on the profile itself as this is exposed end grain pointing upwards to the weather.

2. Now paint the darker colour on the plinth and feature posts using the same techniques as above. **NB:** It is essential to repeatedly paint any feature post with a 120mm square dimension repeatedly. **THESE FEATURE POSTS SHOULD HAVE NO LESS THAN FIVE COATS.** As referred to before these posts are “green” timber, unseasoned Jarrah, so it is important to build up a genuine seal. **If not**, during the hotter months, the post will try and lose its moisture through “surface checking” or cracking. This can also result in the post faces concaving or collapsing. Repeated coating is not difficult as you incorporate it in the cycle of other painting work. A light sanding and recoating can be achieved up to two times in a single day. Also, a shining feature post finish will result. Even after repeated coats watch for cracking in the first summer and attend to.

3. Once the fence has had one complete coat it is time to fill all nail holes. We recommend the use of **oil based putty**. The oil in the putty helps protect the galvanised fastener. It is available in all Hardware stores. Most of the nail holes are very fine **Brad** holes. Finger or splade Knife the putty into the tiny holes being careful not to leave any residue on the surface. Immediately wipe or sand off any excess. It is most important not to overdo the filling or leave any on the surface. Before recoating all you have to do is a normal light sanding as you would do before any recoating. It is recommended to dab these spots with an oil based paint [use whatever you have that is oil based] **but** be sure it is bone dry before continuing with your acrylic coats. It is **critical** to “entomb” the fasteners in the paint job so they are not exposed to weather.

4. Now **repeat steps 1 and 2**. This involves another extensive full coat. It is important during this stage to build up the paint in areas where overlaps and junctions occur. Namely, rail housings and interfaces between pickets and rails. These points should be well sealed to avoid water traps.

5. **Final coating:** A third coat is only necessary now on the front face of the pickets and the picket heads themselves. Check again at this stage that all “water traps” are well sealed and that feature posts have been **repeatedly** coated. It is not necessary to do a final coat over the whole fence just concentrate on the front face view as this is the street scape and will most likely be taking the brunt of the weathering.

VARIATIONS:

We believe the best painting “rack” of all is the fence itself in its completed state. In some instances though, due to a well established garden, owners may request the pickets in advance. It is not always possible to deliver the pickets but they are freely available for collection. No special arrangements need to be made as the average site consists of a load that will fit into a standard vehicles boot. If this option is taken it is most important, again during the hot summer months, to take care with storage arrangements.

Keep the pickets in a tight stack weighted down and where possible away from direct sunlight. Try not to paint during a heat wave or leave the painted pickets leaning up against the walls of a hot shed. The pickets are fine dimensions and can be volatile to twisting whilst in a loose state. Be **assured** this is not a problem once they are fixed to the framework. The pickets must be restacked as soon as practical, however, be careful that they are genuinely dry before restacking to avoid them sticking.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE:

If you experience any problems after following these extensive instructions do not hesitate to call us. Providing you have followed these steps we are happy to **fully guarantee all materials and workmanship**. Having done a good foundation job you should be free of painting for at least 6 to 8 years. Old style paints use to flake; modern paints tend to just thin and become powdery. It is prudent when you see any evidence of this to commence a recoat. This is a very simple procedure particularly if done at an early stage. Just give the fence moderately vigorous sand down then apply one only good coat. Again, be on the lookout for water traps and paint to seal.

The only other problem could be a stiffening of the gate action. **Never push** a gate that shows some sign of ceasing as other problems could quickly occur. The gates will need regreasing at the hinge points. There is a hole for a grease gun but in the absence of this approach you can lift the gate of its hinge point then regrease the cup and pin. Lifting the gate off usually requires two persons to support the frame whilst it is rotated back and forth with an upward pressure. Sometimes a gentle hammering under the top support rail may be required.

CONCLUSION:

If you have followed the above instructions we recognise that you have invested a great deal of time and effort to gain a quality finish. **Rest assured we support you!** Understand that we are happy to guarantee your fence if any problems occur, providing you have followed the above procedure - so do not hesitate to call. **Heritage Fencing provides a firm and formal guarantee of 1 year from completion which will see you through the full cycle of the seasons.** To this day we are still replacing well maintained hardwood fences that in some instances were built as early as 1890.

Sincerely Yours,
Matthew Portus. Heritage Fencing.