

How to Prevent Paint Flaking on Oil Paintings



Whilst professional flaking paint repair on oil painting can address existing damage, proactive care can significantly reduce this risk. Understanding the causes of flaking paint allows owners to create a protective environment for their artworks.

Most of the damage leading to flaking paint is caused by environmental instability. A painting's materials—canvas, wood, gesso, and oil paint—are sensitive to their surroundings, expanding and contracting at different rates with changes in temperature and humidity.

This repeated movement creates cumulative stress between the layers, causing the ground or paint to lose adhesion over time and leading to cracking and flaking.

Controlling the environment is the most effective preventive measure. A stable temperature and relative humidity of around 50% minimises structural stress, as sudden changes are particularly damaging.

Light is another highly significant factor. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation fades pigments and weakens the paint's binding medium, making it brittle. Artworks should not be hung in direct sunlight, and UV-filtering glass provides extra protection.

Safe Handling and Storage Practices

Improper handling is also a common cause of paint loss. When moving or storing paintings, key principles should be followed:

Always handle paintings with clean hands and, ideally, wear gloves.

- Carry smaller paintings with two hands, one on each side of the frame.
- Avoid touching the front or back surface of the canvas.
- When storing, use acid-free materials to wrap the artwork and keep it in a stable, climate-controlled location.

When Prevention Fails: The Need for Professional Flaking Paint Repair on Oil Painting

Even with meticulous care, the natural ageing of materials can lead to instability. When signs of lifting or flaking paint appear, it is crucial to seek professional advice promptly. Attempting to fix the issue with commercial adhesives can cause further damage and complicate future treatment.

An expert in [oil painting restoration London](#) can assess the condition, determine the cause, and perform a consolidation treatment to re-adhere the loose paint.

This process stabilises the artwork and prevents further paint loss. A specialist in oil painting restoration in London can provide the expertise and care needed to address these issues correctly.

Ultimately, a combination of environmental control, safe handling, and timely professional intervention provides the best long-term strategy for preserving oil paintings. This approach ensures that the need for extensive flaking paint repair on oil painting is minimised and that artworks remain in stable condition.

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