

WORKSHOP BEST PRACTICES

We can safely say... customers LOVE workshops. Especially FAT Paint workshops. They're fun, interactive and informative. They also help drive sales and create repeat customers. In fact, many people who take part in a FAT Paint workshop immediately ask when they can sign up for the next!

Workshops are exciting and great for business, but hosting them can be daunting for those just getting started. There's a lot to think about: the project, pricing, payment... the list goes on. And there's really no wrong way to do it—everyone has their own style—but we do have some suggestions that will help set you up for success.



Workshop Type:

When it comes to workshops there are many different approaches. From the basics for beginners to advanced techniques like creating textures with Extra FAT and faux finishes with our FAT Specialty Glazes, the possibilities are endless!

When designing workshops for your customers, our recommendation is to ensure you are completely comfortable with the technique *before* you teach others how to tackle it. You need to be confident and knowledgeable before you can successfully pass along your wisdom to others.

The Basics

These workshops are a great introductory course for anyone new to FAT Paint or chalk-style paint in general. You will teach your customers how to prep their piece along with best practices for using FAT Paint, sanding and distressing then sealing the final results FAT Wax or CLEAR Top Coat.

We recommend you showcase some of the most popular painting techniques, such as dry brushing, and explain which brushes are best suited for each job. You should also show your clients how to clean up and care for their brushes along with their completed pieces.

Be prepared to answer a wide range of questions and maybe learn a few new tips or tricks of your own!



Advanced Techniques

For those already familiar with FAT Paint, an advanced workshop is the perfect way to inspire the creative mind. You can focus on just one technique with a large project or show off several with small sample pieces of wood.

- **Tinting colours:** Use White or Patina FAT Waxes to create heirloom/antique or beachy/salty finishes
- **Textured Finishes:** Use Extra FAT to create crusty/chippy effects or embossed reliefs
- **Faux Finishes:** Use FAT Specialty Waxes to create prized heirloom effects or patterns such as faux wood grain or marble

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Specialty Projects

Holding a workshop focusing on a big ticket projects, like renewing kitchen cabinets, front doors, fireplaces and patio furniture, is a great idea—but only for those well-versed in FAT Paint. Due to high-traffic and exposure to the elements—water, grease, chemicals, just to name a few—home renovations need to stand the test of time.



Prep is the single most important thing to think about when putting your workshops together. Make sure to teach your clients how to properly clean the item: remove grit, grease and grime, and prepare the substrate or surface before they start painting. Depending on the condition, prep can range from a light burnishing to heavy-duty sanding with a machine.

Some jobs may require a coat or two primer or Shellac to prevent bleed-through. And don't forget about sealing the surface with CLEAR Top Coat once the FAT Paint job is complete. FAT Wax usually won't cut it for these types of projects. If the piece will be exposed to the great outdoors, we suggest using an exterior polyurethane.



The Project:

Once you've decided what kind of workshop you'll be holding, the real fun begins: choosing the project you and your customers will FAT Paint together. It may sound obvious and easy, but picking a project can be more difficult done than said.

Many of our current retailers tell us the workshops their clients get the most excited about are the ones where they get to take home the project. There are unlimited options.

If you're having trouble deciding, think about objects you'd like to personalize for your own home or office. Chances are if you want it in your home, someone else will as well.

You're free to source the projects from garage sales, second-hand, craft or home stores or make them yourself to save a little cash. Here's some suggestions to get you started:

- Signs (stencilled or free-hand)
- Birdhouses
- Holiday decorations
- Planters and pots
- Crates and Mason Jars (with or without flowers/succulents)
- Farmhouse Clock
- Stenciled pillow cases, table runners, wall hangings or other textiles

While many DIYers want to create something new, many want to learn how to upcycle a specific piece of furniture they already have in their home.

You're more than welcome to offer a workshop where people supply their own projects—just make sure they are small enough for them to carry home at the end of the night.



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Getting the Word Out:

There are any number of ways you can promote your workshops: sign-ups in your shop, tabs on your website, posts/adverts on social media, email newsletters and word-of-mouth. Your best bet is to really understand where your clientele spends their spare time and put the bulk of your effort in that direction.



Once people sign up, send them an email confirmation clearly specifying **directions, hours, payment details, etc.** Add these email addresses to your contact list so you can inform your customers about any upcoming classes or promotions. Make sure to let them know that they are on the list so they can remove themselves, if they so choose.

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Pricing and Payment:

Deciding on how much you should charge your clients is arguably the toughest part of setting up a workshop. You need to set reasonable prices while still walking away with a profit at the end of the night. Here are some things to consider:



- Number of people in attendance
- Length of workshop
- Cost of the object to be FAT Paint'd
- Cost and quantity of FAT Paint and other FAT products
- Cost of other supplies: brushes, sanding paper/sponges, cloths, aprons, stencils, etc.
- Cost of refreshments or lunch, if applicable
- Time spent designing and managing the workshop (advertising/promoting, taking payment, answering questions, etc.), purchasing supplies, set-up, instructing and clean-up.

Now, you need to collect the cash. Some retailers ask for a deposit to be paid as soon as customers sign up, others require payment in full. That's really up to you, but getting people to fork out at least a portion of the price right away lessens the chance of no-shows.

Supplies:

The products will vary from class to class, but most of the supplies will remain the same.

- FAT Paint and other FAT products (will you supply each participant with their own jar or portion out the product?)
- Brushes (synthetic, natural bristle, sponge, artisan, etc.)
- Painter's or palette knives
- Sandpaper or sanding sponges
- Tack cloths, lint-free cotton cloths, polishing sponges
- Paper towels, plates
- Stir sticks
- Newspaper or roll of butcher paper (to cover surfaces for easy clean-up)
- Bucket of water (again, for easy cleanup or to fix mistakes)
- Samples of wood or individual projects people can take home
- Refreshments or lunch, if applicable

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Setup and Execution:

There is no right or wrong way to hold your workshop. Everyone has their own style. Some will prefer to teach all the skills off the top and leave questions for later, while others will allow customers to ask questions all throughout the tutorial. It will likely be a process of trial and error as you go—you'll find your stride and likely make improvements based on the lessons you learned after each workshop.

We recommend making sure you are all set up and ready to go well before your customers arrive. Make sure to have all supplies set up in stations, with one item each per participant.

Keep clean-up supplies nearby, just in case!

Keep everyone close. That way they can learn from each other, ask questions and hopefully make some new friends!

Set-up the workshop in an area of your store where FAT Paint and other FAT supplies are easily within reach, or view. Chances are your clients are going to be as inFATuated with FAT Paint as you are. That means they may want to buy some to take home. Make it easy for them to do so.

Make sure you set aside more than enough time for questions. A lot of newcomers will come armed with "how do yous" and "what ifs". You want to make sure you are able to answer all their burning questions without going over time.

That's really about it. If you take away only one thing from our advice, let it be this: relax and have fun!

If you have any tips for on workshops you want to share, by all means let us know! We always strive to learn ourselves and help our retailers have the best experience possible.

