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**Noticeable Appearance Differences When a Paint is Spot-Applied  
to a Previously Painted Surface**

**A. How the Appearance Can Differ**

1. **Color:** hue of the subsequent applied paint may be lighter or darker
2. **Sheen:** sheen or gloss development can be different; the touched up area may be higher in sheen than the surrounding area, though it can be vice versa.
3. **Profile:** touch up can be noticeable depending on how much the re-applied paint is built up above the original paint, as apposed to being flush and even.

**B. Variables that can cause or contribute to touch up problems**

1. **Application at different temperatures:** touching up at significantly higher or lower temperatures vs. that of the original painting may make a difference.
2. Use of **different methods of application** (e.g., using a brush to touch up paint that was sprayed on)
3. Application over **surfaces of differing porosity**; for example, applying a satin paint to unprimed (porous) wallboard will result in a lower sheen than will develop with the same paint applied to itself when touching up.
4. Inadequate **color acceptance** (i.e., sub-standard compatibility between tinting color and the paint): the paint may develop a slightly darker color depending on shear stress applied to the paint by the act of applying it;  
Shear from spraying > shear from brushing > shear from rolling
5. **Higher Sheen** paints (eggshell, satin, semi-gloss) tend to show ( sheen differences) more than flats, with touch-up.

**C. Tips for avoiding touch-up problems**

1. Apply an **appropriate primer** before painting
2. Be sure the paint has been **tinted properly** (appropriate tinting base/colorant type/colorant level per gallon)
3. Some painters find it helpful to immediately **backroll after spraying**, to purposely make a less uniform surface that touches up well with careful rolling.
4. Touch up **within about 5°** of the original application temperature
5. Do the touch-up in a **thin application**; a foam brush can be helpful for this, especially if the surface was originally sprayed; slight dilution of the touch-up paint may be helpful; never force dry the touch up
6. Some painters **pre-condition touch-up paint** that was originally sprayed, by spraying a quantity into a 5 gallon pail, then using that for touching up by use of a narrow foam roller, a foam brush, etc.; use extreme care, wear eye, skin and breathing protection, and cover as much of the pail as possible with a heavy dropcloth while spraying the paint.