Oil based paints contain solvents to disperse and bind other paint components. Solvents are the major ingredients that contribute to volatile organic compound (VOC) levels in paints. VOCs can cause the formation of ozone and photochemical smog, which have harmful effects on human health and the environment. Paints that are specifically marketed as "fast drying" usually contain even higher levels of these solvents. Buying low VOC paints will reduce exposure to harmful chemicals and will reduce hazardous waste disposal costs for properly dispose of any leftover paints.

Choose

- Low levels of VOCs
- Recycled content
- Reprocessed
- Reblended (consolidated)

Avoid
- High levels of VOCs
- Oil-based
- “Fast drying”
- Over buying

End of Life

- Store properly and use it later
- Recycling and manufacturer take back programs "where available"

Environmental Labels

- Geca (Good Environmental Choice Australia); USDA Certified BioBased; Cradle to Cradle; Recycled Content;