

# **Mixing techniques: concrete, soil and paint.**

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Often we need to mix things around the house and don't always have the best tools for the job. In this TV segment I showed two inexpensive tools that really help in this category. The Odd Job, available at many renovation centres, is a small barrel that was originally made for mixing small batches of concrete. The sides are molded in to create two well thought out mixing fins, a bit like the agitator in your washing machine. The size of the Odd Job is made precisely to hold one bag of concrete and the lid is the measuring cup for the water to add. Simply put in the concrete, add the water, screw the lid on tightly, lay the barrel on it's side and push it around the yard for 30 seconds and the concrete is ready to pour. Rinse out the barrel and you are already ready to mix another bag. It works equally well for mixing garden soil, fertiliser, even seeds. Two tips. When you want to put on the lid or take it off, put the tips of both shoes into the grooves on the side of the barrel to hold it tightly, giving you good leverage for turning the lid. Don't forget to time the concrete. It is so much fun that you will get into playing soccer with your work partner and forget that there is concrete setting in the barrel, especially if you are mixing quick setting post hole concrete. If you want to mix paint easily and quickly get yourself the paint stir drill attachment you see in the photo. What makes this work without splashing is that it pushes the paint down towards the bottom of the can. That also tends to wash into the mix all of the settled pigments and the like on the bottom of the can, better than trying to scrape the bottom. Don't use so high a speed as to draw air down to the bottom of the can. By the way, when you use the paint shakers at the store, be sure to let the paint sit long enough to get all the bubbles to the top, not onto your wall. Shaking a can at home and then painting immediately will often give you bubbles in your finish.

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