

## ConsumerReports.org

### 'Ace is the place' for two new exterior paint picks

#### Royal exterior paint joins Behr, Valspar, and other contenders

Published: March 26, 2014 04:00 PM

Once you're committed to painting your house, you head over to your local home center for the best deal, right? Not necessarily. Our picks typically do show the same cast of characters: Behr (Home Depot), Valspar (mostly Lowe's), and the pricey Benjamin Moore and Sherwin-Williams. But this year two paints from Ace Hardware made [our winners list](#) for the first time.

Officially called Royal Exteriors by Ace, Royal has been around for years but never dazzled us. A newer Ace brand, the higher-end Clark & Kensington, includes a built-in primer and has done well so far in partial testing.

The best of the fully tested crop, the [Royal Exteriors by Ace Semi-Gloss](#), \$29 per gallon, was edged out for the top spot by the self-priming [Valspar Duramax Semi-Gloss](#), \$40, but is a CR Best Buy that resisted cracking and color change. Like the other Royal paints (and the Clark & Kensington), it claims only 50 grams of volatile organic compounds per liter, which means it can be sold anywhere in the country. VOCs have been linked with ozone, smog, respiratory illnesses, and memory impairment.

The Royal semi-gloss is intended for exterior trim, but the [Royal Exteriors by Ace Satin](#), \$28, is for siding and also made our picks in that category. The satin paint gives siding a slight gloss, but if you prefer no gloss in a recommended paint, you'll need to look at other brands. One of the picks among flat exterior paint is the [Benjamin Moore Aura Flat](#), a self-priming paint that is especially pricey at \$68 but is often sold at Ace Hardware and other outlets.

Ace Hardware's Royals are only a few of the many new products we've added to our Ratings for [exterior paints](#) and [stains](#). Before you start on your next paint job, read our buying guides for [paints](#) and [stains](#) and then check out all our [recommended exterior paints](#).

—Ed Perratore

Copyright © 2006-2014 [Consumer Reports](#). No reproduction, in whole or in part, without written [permission](#).

