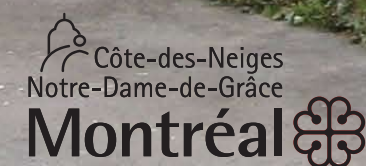


# Tricks and tips: graffiti and posters

Are you sick and tired of seeing posters and graffiti all over your walls? We have some helpful suggestions for you! You're apt to have even more success if you use a number of these tips in combination.

Whatever approach you use, remember that run-down areas (litter on the ground, vacant lots, etc.) attract vandals.

A well-maintained neighbourhood, on the other hand, improves residents' quality of life and property values. Invite your neighbours to take pride in your street, too.



## Six tips for preventing graffiti

### 1. Install wire mesh on the wall

You can choose strictly utilitarian wire mesh to discourage posting and graffiti, or wrought iron or other ornamental work that will also add value to your property.

#### Notes / Tips:

- Use closely woven wire mesh to discourage climbers and prevent people from hanging plastic bags. Leave two inches between the wall and the wire mesh.
- Install the wire mesh to a height of six to eight feet, starting two to three feet from the ground.
- Remember that keeping the area around a building clean, especially near alleys or footpaths, will reduce graffiti and posting considerably.

### 2. Install lights in problem areas

The most effective lighting devices are those with motion detectors.

#### Notes / Tips:

- Install lights high enough to prevent vandalism.
- Install wire mesh to protect light bulbs. Low-pressure sodium lights will also help keep graffiti writers away, as they make it hard to see colours.

### 3. Plant Engelman's ivy or shrubs

Engelman's ivy will not harm cement, brick or other wall coverings and grows well in confined spaces. It's not expensive, either, and doesn't require much light or maintenance. Attractive landscaping deters vandals. Shrubs, like wild roses, are another very good alternative.

### 4. Report vandalism every time

Reporting new graffiti to the Police as soon as it appears is a good way to prevent future vandalism. It will be even more effective if your neighbours follow suit. Persistence is key, though.

#### Notes / Tips:

- Avoid confronting graffiti writers.
- Call 911 if you catch graffiti writers in the act.

### 5. Tips for cleaning or painting over graffiti

For best results, graffiti should be painted or removed as quickly as possible, preferably within 24 hours. This approach gives good results, but calls for persistence.

#### Notes / Tips:

- Use darker colours (hunter green and brown give good results) and make sure you have enough paint matching your wall colour on hand, so that you can repaint it if graffiti writers strike again.
- It is best to leave a strip unpainted at the base of a concrete or brick wall, to prevent cracking or swelling caused by erosion.

N.B. Ask your hardware dealer for the best cleaning product for your walls. The table here also lists some techniques and products recommended by the Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough's graffiti removal experts.



### 6. Paint a mural

Although the most costly, this technique has proven the most effective for deterring vandals. It's also a way to beautify your property and allow artists to showcase their talent. Call for details on the borough's mural-painting program (514 872-9358).

## Techniques and products for removing graffiti

	Aerosol paint	Ink (other than India ink)	Comments
Brick, cement, concrete and stone	Use paint stripper with a neutral pH, then scrub with a stiff, non-metal brush. Rinse thoroughly.	Same method. ←	If your stone is old or very valuable, seek expert assistance.
Glass	Scrape with a razor blade and methanol (wood alcohol), then rinse.	Same method. ←	Take the usual safety precautions.
Wood	If the graffiti is on the surface, use paint stripper with a neutral pH. Scrub, then reapply wood protector, if applicable. May leave traces.	Nothing available for the moment.	- Treated wood may contain arsenic, so keep health risks in mind and be extra careful. - You are best to seek expert assistance, even for natural or stained wood.
Baked-on paint (aluminum, metal)	Using a nylon scrub brush, rub with methanol or paint thinner (e.g. Varsol), then rinse thoroughly.	Use methanol or spray lacquer thinner a few centimetres from the surface, then rinse.	If you decide to repaint, use a metallic paint as your base coat.
Painted metal	Cover with the type of paint suited to the metal.	Same method. ↑	Same as above. ↑
Unpainted metal	Use lighter fluid or paint thinner (Varsol).	Spray lacquer thinner a few centimetres from the surface, then rinse.	Handle lighter fluid with care. Keep away from open flames.
Marble, granite and fibreglass	Use a gentle solvent, methanol, paint thinner (Varsol) or paint stripper with a neutral pH.	Use methanol or paint stripper with a neutral pH.	

**CAUTION:** Always protect your hands and eyes when using these products. Always test the product on a small area before applying it to the entire surface to be cleaned. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when using these products. Protect yourself properly when using solvents or paint stripper. If you are not sure what product to use on your wall surface, consult an expert.

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