

Cleaning New Masonry

Products are vulnerable to staining if they are not adequately protected from the elements before and during construction. Good site practice during construction should minimise the need to clean down upon completion of the masonry construction, however, staining can occur for a number of reasons and the following procedures, which are given by way of guidance may prove useful.

All cleaning work needs to be carried out by a qualified /specialist contractor who is conversant with the susceptibility of masonry, walling and cast stone to various cleaning materials and processes.

General cleaning down of architectural masonry, walling & cast stone products (N.B not to be used on polished masonry.)

We would urge caution: when applying any cleaning methods it is advisable to carry out a test area before commencing upon the main work. Always start with the least aggressive treatment and then proceed to the next. Firstly commence with a general cleaning down with water and a mild detergent using a bristle (not wire) brush.

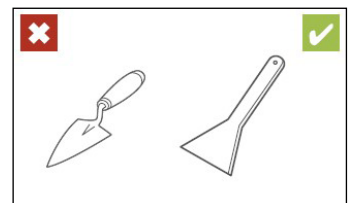
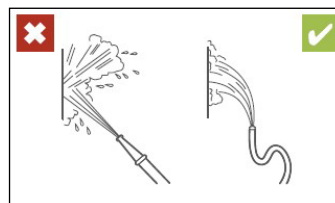
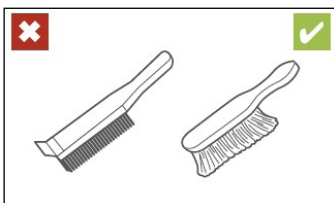
If the problem still remains when the stonework is dry you can apply a proprietary non-acid based masonry cleaner. You should consult the manufacturer of the cleaner as to its suitability for use on cast stone, walling and masonry products. Ensure that you wet up first and always use weaker solutions first and increase as necessary. Notwithstanding the manufacturer's instructions keep the dwell time to a minimum, scrub off with cold, clean water and do not let products dry in. Rinse thoroughly with a hosepipe.

As a last resort a Hydrochloric acid based cleaner can be used. Great care is needed when these types of cleaners are used. Again you should consult the manufacturer of the cleaner as to the suitability of the cleaner for cast stone, walling and masonry products. Follow manufacturer's instructions, wet masonry, use weak solutions first, increasing strength as necessary.

Notwithstanding manufacturer's instructions, only allow the product to remain on masonry for a very short time before rinsing with hosepipe, repeating the treatment as necessary. Do not use neat acid on masonry, walling and cast stone.

Notwithstanding any cleaning manufacturer's instructions do not use high pressure washers to rinse masonry, walling and cast stone as these can 'blast out' the fines on the surface resulting in swirling patterns which cannot be removed (refer to Technical Information Sheet 2- Pressure Washers).

Please ensure that you protect adjacent surfaces and obtain all information regarding Health and Safety regarding the use of cleaning materials and follow the recommendations.



Cleaning New Masonry



Polished masonry products

Any mortars, plasters or materials sticking to the block should be removed with a plastic or wooden scraper prior to the contaminant 'going off'. Care should be taken to ensure that this process does not scratch the surface of the block. The area must then be cleaned down using a mild detergent washed thoroughly and allowed to dry. A proprietary marble cleaner can be used to restore the product's sheen if the polished face is damaged during cleaning. A lamb's wool buffer can further enhance the product's sheen. Vegetable based waxes should not be used as they can attack the cement content of the concrete blocks. Please note that mortar which does encroach onto the face of the masonry should be cleaned off as work proceeds. It should not be allowed to 'go off'.

Further Information

Further details on cleaning of concrete can be found in BS 8221-1:2012 Code of practice for cleaning and surface repair of buildings-Cleaning of natural stone, brick, terracotta and concrete, or BRE Digest 449 Part 2 Cleaning exterior masonry: methods and materials.

Note: Saturation may increase the presence of lime bloom/ efflorescence.

Although the instructions contained in this publication and any other information published by Forticrete Ltd are believed to be accurate at the date of publication, they are strictly for guidance only and Forticrete Ltd accepts no liability in relation to their use or any losses, howsoever caused. You are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure your use of the product conforms to all applicable health and safety requirements from time to time. If in doubt, please consult appropriately qualified persons. All products sold by Forticrete are sold subject to Forticrete Terms and Conditions of Sale, a copy of which is available on request.