

LIMEWASHING

on new lime renders or lime plasters

Limewash is the preferred finish on traditional buildings as it allows the structure to "breathe", allowing any damp present to evaporate away rather than be trapped in the wall. It has a matt finish and helps consolidate and improve the surface of both old and new plaster physically and visually. We supply a range of colours as well as white. Because limewashes are porous paints they shade in depth of colour to reflect the dampness of the background material.

Generally limewash should be applied thinly and be allowed to dry out slowly. Our limewash is prepared from the finest quality lime putty slaked from Buxton quicklime. It will develop a fine finish over several coats, we recommend a minimum of four on new render and plaster. Our limewash has a small quantity of linseed oil added to reduce "dusting" and improve external water shedding. Historically, many ingredients were added to limewashes to modify their performance such as common salt, casein, tallow and linseed oil.

Preparation

The surface to be limewashed should be brushed and washed free of any loose particles, dust, dirt, lichen etc. If there is mould growth the surface should be treated with a fungicide (e.g. a weak bleach solution) which should be rinsed off before limewashing.

Damping

It is very important for dry surfaces but may not be necessary if limewashing new lime render or lime plaster which has yet to totally dry out. Spray the area before limewashing with water as this prevents the water in the limewash from being sucked out too quickly on application. This must be allowed to soak in from the surface or failure can occur due to lack of suction.

First Coat

Please whisk the limewash thoroughly before use as the putty will settle out. Brush the limewash onto the dampened area with a large emulsion brush. Work it well into any cracks or joints but don't let it build up too thickly as it can craze on drying out. Remember it's a wash and will look transparent on application but will dry opaque. Coloured limewashes dry to a much lighter shade than the wet limewash.

Subsequent Coats

Four coats (five for white) are recommended on new external lime render, three coats on new internal lime plaster. Ideally leave each coat to cure for a minimum of 24 hours. For each further coat, follow the same procedure of misting well before limewashing and allowing to dry out slowly, with light spraying if necessary. Protect external limewash from the weather if necessary. A thin coat curing slowly in the presence of moisture will form a more crystalline, hardwearing surface compared to a chalky finish if a thick coat dries out too quickly. After the initial carbonation and curing limewash will continue to strengthen for several weeks.

NB Use White Peak limewash if the render is one made from NHL or a weak lime/cement as this is more likely to adhere due to its finer particle size.

Frost

As limewash is a water-based paint, it shouldn't be applied in low temperatures of less than 5°C or if there's a risk of frost.

Quantities

A litre of limewash will cover 3 - 6 square metres for one coat, depending on the smoothness and porosity of the surface being limewashed.

Safety

Limewash is caustic. Always wear eye protection and protective gloves and clothing and follow the safety instructions on the labels.

Our advice and information are given in good faith. It's important that users satisfy themselves that they've chosen an appropriate product and have a suitably skilled workforce.