



Rendering Brick Walls

Introduction

Render is a great way to freshen up a wall or entire home, however with traditional render this is not easy to apply, and as the colour is painted on, will require regular re-coating to maintain its finish.

Several new types of render systems have entered the market making it easier to complete as a DIY project. These systems are suitable for new walls (which should be allowed to cure before application) and older existing walls. These render systems already contain the colour, and are an acrylic base making them easy to work with and to clean up with water.

If a wall is being built you can save yourself some time by leaving the mortar joints flush as these will only have to be filled with the render product. These products can be used to create a variety of finishes ranging from the traditional smooth finish to a rough (bagged) look.

Materials

- Bondall Render Finish
- Bucket with clean water
- Rubber (foam) grout float
- Old paint roller
- Filling Blade
- Trowel (to get material out)
- Drop sheets

Step 1 - Preparation

Once the wall has cured, (normally 3 to 5 days) you are able to prepare the wall for the first coat of render. As bricks tend to absorb moisture it is important to thoroughly wet the wall down, as the longer it takes to dry, the greater amount of time you have to work with the product prior to setting.

For this reason do not apply the render when the wall is in full sun as you have problems with the finish drying before it can be worked with.

The product may settle while in shipping or storage, therefore thoroughly mix the material until a constant

colour and texture is obtained.

Ensure the ground is covered as while the product is water soluble, it will easily stain timber or any other surface if it is left on. In many cases it may be easier to render the wall before laying down paving or decking to avoid staining.

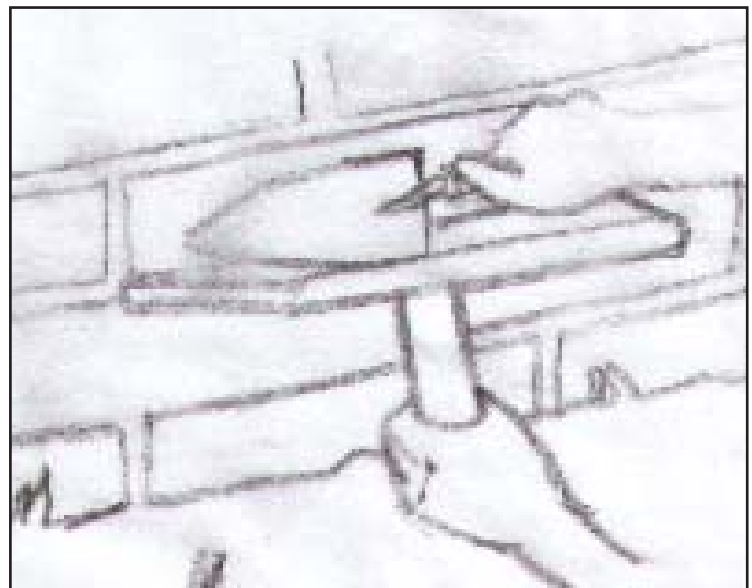
It is also recommended to wear old clothes and shoes, preferably full length as the material requires vigorous scrubbing to come off the skin!

Step 2 – Filling the joints

If you are rendering an existing wall, it is most likely to have raked joints. This refers to the mortar between the bricks being compressed to expose each brick. If your mortar joints are flush, you can move on to the next step.

Starting with a corner, work the product into the joints of the brickwork with the rubber grout float. This will allow you to flush the surface. As you will only be filling the joints, you can work quickly.

Work on one metre at a time and to get a smooth finish, roll a slightly moistened paint roller over the area. This will compress the material as well as maintaining a smooth finish to allow subsequent coats easier.



Compressing the material into the mortar joints

Depending on the size of the wall, you may find it easier putting some material on the plasterers hawk or similar and then using the grout trowel to push the material onto the wall rather than loading up the trowel.

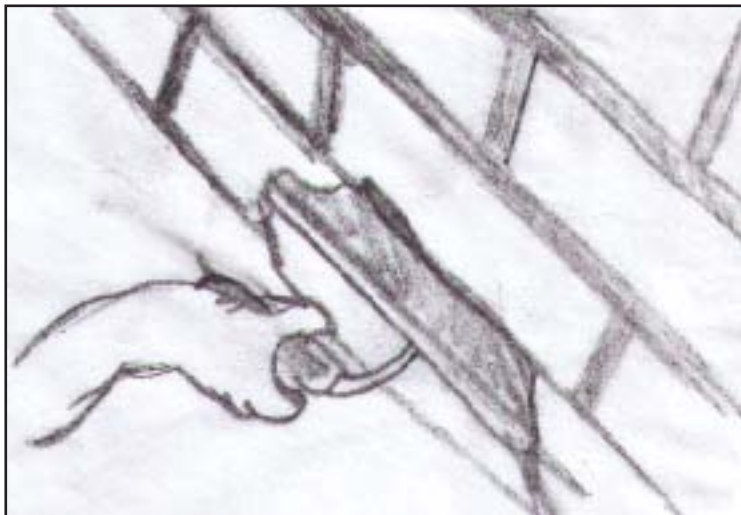
In warm conditions or when the material starts to dry, spray the edges with a mist spray to maintain a wet edge. Work over the entire wall in one session as the material dries, it will be more difficult to match the product especially in the final coat.

Step 3 – First full colour coat

Once you have filled the joints, and you have allowed sufficient time for the material to set, (I would recom-

mend a minimum of 24 hours) you are ready to apply the first full coat of product.

To achieve a better finish, and to make the application process easier, I would recommend applying 2 thinner coats rather than applying more material to save on the application time. These acrylic renders will give you many years of trouble free wall finish, and the time saved by rushing the result will only leave a constant reminder of rushing the job through uneven finishes and lumpy walls. Ideally you should not apply more than 5mm of product at one time.



Pushing the material into the wall to gain maximum grip

Using the same process as filling the joints and working in small areas (1 square metre) push the render up the wall with the grout float. As before you will need to moisten down the wall and maintain a wet edge through light misting to avoid joints being visible. It is recommended to work in pairs with the second person moistening the wall, keeping plenty of product on the tray and gently rolling the wall as each section is finished.

Rolling the wall with an old (or sacrificial) paint roller will compress the material as well as provide a smoother finish similar to that of a traditionally rendered wall. It is important to also moisten the roller to avoid ripping the material from the surface as well as ensuring you are not adding water to the finish. To determine the right moisture content, the rollers should not drip, or leave water behind when rolled onto a flat surface.



Once again, once the first coat is complete, allow sufficient time for the material to set properly. It is important to finish the entire coat in one session, if absolutely necessary to break the job up, do so at the corners as the joins will be less obvious.

Step 4 – Final Colour Coat

Again repeating the process outlined in Step 3, apply the final coat of product. It is not necessary to have the second coat 5mm thick, as a thinner coat to provide additional cover is all that is required. It also provides you with the opportunity to cover up any errors in the first coat.

While the first coat was rolled to compact the material, you may not want the totally smooth finish that this provides. For a different texture, the second coat can be textured with a sponge to provide a swirl, rags to provide a rag finish or a fine light brush to provide a swept finish. With all the finishes, you need to ensure that you do not apply too much pressure as this may damage the coat, or remove too much material.

It is best to also spray the wall with a fine mister which will blend the smaller sections together and reduce the chance of damaging the finish.

Step 5 – Finishing

With the second coat complete, you have finished the render process, however there are several points that should be mentioned to protect the newly applied render material.

- The render is a totally flat finish, and therefore will not be able to be matched to paint colours easily. It is better to use accent or complimentary colours if using paint on adjoining surfaces.
- While acrylic products are more resilient to cracking and knocks compared to a cement render, it is still possible to chip or stress the finish, so care should be taken when leaning objects against the finish.

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