

# Brick and Paving Information Guide



## Brick Information

Clay bricks are the dominant building material for WA houses and the first choice amongst builders and consumers because of their superior strength and quality, impressive colour and low maintenance.

Plus, brick homes are warmer in winter, cooler in summer and quieter all year round.

Bricks are made from a wide range of clays containing many different natural minerals which influence the final colour and appearance of the fired brick.

Because they are made from naturally occurring materials, bricks will vary from one production run to the next. This natural variation is part of the charm and character of fired clay bricks.

### Did you know?

Bricks are made only of clay and shale; they have no emissions like man made materials and therefore create healthier living and working environments.

At Brikmakers we want to make sure you get the most out of our products and enjoy them for years to come. Here are some helpful and handy tips on how to get your bricks looking their absolute best and keep them looking that way.

## Vanadium Stains

Light-coloured clays often contain vanadium salts which are generally colourless but, under certain conditions, may appear as a yellow, green or reddish-brown discolouration of the brick. This staining can occur whenever the bricks are subjected to excessive water from rain either before or during the bricklaying process. When drying out, the water evaporates, leaving vanadium salts on



the brick surface. The vanadium salt turns green when it crystallises in an acidic environment, such as one created by acid cleaning or exposure to rainwater.

Vanadium stains are neither permanent nor harmful and do not indicate a defect in the brick. Vanadium stains in exposed areas generally wash off or disappear naturally over time but their removal can be hastened by chemical treatment such as applying a diluted solution of household bleach.

## Treating Vanadium Stains

Sodium hypochlorite (for example, household bleach or swimming pool chlorine) is an inexpensive treatment for mild cases of vanadium staining.

Simply spray or brush sodium hypochlorite onto the stain without pre-wetting, allow it to stand until the stain disappears, and then rinse.

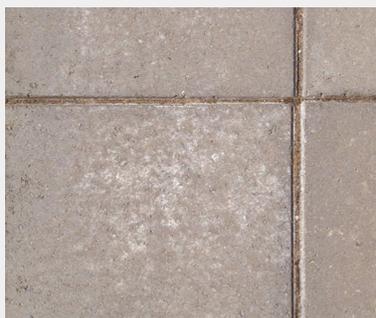
For your protection, please ensure correct safety procedures are followed and equipment such as goggles, gloves and protective clothing are used, as per the manufacturer's chemical-use instructions.

## Efflorescence

Efflorescence is a powdery and sometimes 'fluffy' deposit which forms on the surfaces of porous building materials such as bricks and concrete. The temporary appearance of efflorescence is common on new masonry. It occurs where salts migrate via evaporation to the surface of the brick or paver.

## Treating Efflorescence

Most efflorescence will disappear naturally over time. However, its removal can be accelerated by brushing



with a stiff dry brush. The use of a dust pan or vacuum cleaner to collect the salts after brushing is recommended as this will prevent salts from re-entering the brickwork or any porous paving materials below.

After brushing and cleaning up, an absorbent cloth (wrung out until damp only) can be used to pick up any residue. Frequent rinsing of the cloth in fresh water is advisable. Rinsing brickwork with water will only cause the salt to be reabsorbed into the bricks and reappear when dry.

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