



**1 Potential problems with masonry surfaces**

Masonry surfaces include bricks and cement plaster. In some instances gypsum-based plasters or skim coatings are also used. These surfaces provide specific challenges for the painter:

- a) Most masonry surfaces are weak, friable porous and sandy.
- b) Cement plasters are seldom aged long enough to allow the alkaline lime content to neutralise with carbon dioxide from the air. The surface is alkaline a consequence.
- c) Moisture and damp are often present during and after application of paint. This can prevent good film formation as well as cause blistering in the dry paint. It is good practice to locate and remove all sources of water ingress into a structure before painting. A reputable waterproofing contractor should be capable of doing this. Promac Paints has a full range of waterproofing products. Contact Promac Paints for advice.
- d) Efflorescence can be a problem on bricks. This is due to water carrying soluble salts from within the brick to the surface.
- e) Fading and discoloration sometimes occurs when painting cement plaster as well as gypsum plaster. This is normally due to lime or alkali attack on the finishing coat in the case of cement plaster. The solution is to use an alkali-resistant plaster primer as a barrier film between the plaster and the topcoat. On gypsum, a white patch often develops if the plaster is painted with a waterborne product before the gypsum has been adequately cured. The white effect is due to soluble sulphate being extracted into the wet paint. It tends to bleed through subsequent coatings as well. The solution is to ensure the plaster cures overnight before painting and that a sealer such as Promac Bondseal should be applied. This prevents extraction of soluble material into the finishing coating.



**2 Standard surface preparation method**

This is the critical part of any painting project: poor preparation is the principal cause of coating failure. Cement plaster should be strong and hard. If it is not, this indicates a poor sand/cement/water mixture. Painting over poor plaster will usually result in flaking, blistering and efflorescence defects – which are not due to the quality of the paint system.

- 1. Brush off all loosely bound sand particles.
- 2. Open out any cracks using a sharp knife.
- 3. Seal all cracks or surface imperfections using Promac Bondseal. Leave to dry for 2 hours.
- 4. Fill cracks or surface imperfections using Promac Crack Fix. Leave to dry for 4 hours. Sand the surface smooth.
- 5. If surface is highly porous or friable, apply Promac Bondseal over the entire surface.
- Important**
- 1. Always use a penetrating sealer such as Promac Bondseal if the surface of the Masonry (especially cement or gypsum plaster) is friable. This will strengthen the surface and reduce the possibility of coating failure.
- 2. The use of gypsum-based fillers and skim coatings are NOT recommended by Promac Paints. These materials have inadequate flexibility and wet strength and should not be used. Promac Paints recommends the use of Promac Crack Fix for this application.
- 3. For fibre-cement boards, or lower porosity surfaces, it is recommended that Promac Bondex be applied in place of Bondseal.



**3 Primer selection**

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| <b>A.</b>  | <b>B.</b>   |
| Top coat: Enamel   | Top coat: Acrylic (waterborne)  |
| Primer: Promac Plaster Primer Alkali-resistant barrier to protect enamel system. | Primer: Promac Plaster Primer Water-resistant barrier to protect acrylic system.              |
| Undercoat: Promac Universal Undercoat Aids overall coating integrity.            | Undercoat: Promac GP-filler coat Available in a range of textures: smooth as well as rippled. |



**4 Finishing coatings**

Use the highest quality that you can afford. It is well known that the higher quality paints give the best durability and this results in the lowest cost in the long term. Promac Paints has a full range of finishing coats ranging from matt to high sheen acrylics as well as enamels.

Contact Promac Paints for further information as well as details of your nearest stockist.  
Promac Paints: Tel: (012) 800 1055 - Fax: (012) 800 4046



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