

Congratulations, you are now the justifiably proud owner of a Fireplace. This Fireplace has been lovingly hand crafted from natural materials and will, with care, last more than a lifetime. This pamphlet is designed to help you learn about the specific material you have purchased helping you to care for it in the correct way.

Marble

Origins:

Natural Marbles are metamorphic rocks, occurring in a wide range of colours, consisting of fine - to coarse -grained calcite or dolomite. They have been re-crystallised by natural processes in the earth, causing them to frequently develop a grainy, "sugary" mineral texture. Rocks which are now marbles may have formed originally from ancient coral reefs (in which case you would find fossil outlines of corals, sea shells and other forms of marine life within the rock), or from calcareous sediments (where you would expect to still see the original sediment's mineral grains and bedding layers). Marbles which have undergone particularly high metamorphic pressure and temperature changes tend to lose their original sedimentary features, and become coarsely banded rocks. Many types of marble may be hundreds of millions of years old, and have been altered from their original state by a variety of natural earth processes (usually metamorphic changes involving great heat and pressure). These may cause the marbles to be folded, fractured, or veined with different minerals, or carry particular textures, streaks or colour patches which are indicative of the metamorphic processes which have changed them. Both the original sedimentary variation within the rock, and the subsequent metamorphic events that changed it, impose variations of colour, grain size, mineral pattern and mineral texture which are both totally natural and are in fact characteristic of the rock.

The term "marble" in industrial and commercial (as opposed to geological) terms applies to more or less any crystallised Limestone capable of taking a polish or of being used for fine architectural or ornamental purposes.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Marble is a natural product and, as such, will vary in nature as the different batches of material are mined from the quarry. No two pieces of marble (and therefore no two fireplaces) can be exactly alike in colouration or the amount of veining. Fossils and veining are a normal and acceptable part of genuine marble. Marble also nearly always has holes in it (pores), which will be filled prior to polishing. (Filled marble is not a sign of inferior material, Travertine Marble looks like Swiss Cheese in its natural form).

Customer Care:

The only cleaning that the marble needs is a wipe over with warm water to which a small amount of washing up liquid has been added, then dry & polish with a soft clean cloth. Avoid dropping anything onto the surface or resting on the marble as this can cause chipping & cracking of the marble.

Granite

Origins:

Granites are coarse-grained igneous rocks, solidified from molten lava, which have cooled and crystallised at great depth within the earth (some granites are metamorphic in origin, but these types are less important in the ornamental stone industry). Because they cooled at depth, granites have cooled slowly and their individual mineral crystals have had time to grow large, so today we see them as coarse grained rocks with a granular, interlocking mineral texture. The deeper they formed, the larger the size of the grains making up the granite rock, and the more attractive they can be as ornamental stone samples. Granites are usually formed of grains of quartz, feldspar and mica, but often with other minerals in small quantities as well. This combination of pale and dark minerals gives the granite a characteristic "spotty" or mottled appearance. Because they contain a high percentage of quartz grains (which are hard and resistant), granite is normally a hard and durable rock type which weathers very slowly. For this reason, areas of granite often form resistant hills and mountains. This quality also makes granite a durable and long-lasting ornamental stone. After formation, granites (like all other rocks) are frequently subjected to deep-seated, earth moving pressures (eg. Mountain building, also called orogenesis), which can cause natural changes to the original granite rock. These changes may include new alignments of mineral grains, irregular colour changes, jointing, and mineral veining (eg. With quartz and calcite), which adds to the natural visual variation in the rock.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Granite is a natural material, and as such are inherently variable in shade and colour. No guarantee can be given that the product will be uniform, or indeed the same colour as depicted in the showroom or in samples.

Customer Care:

Granite can be cleaned the same as the marble products. Avoid dropping anything onto the surface or resting on the granite surface as this can cause chipping & cracking.

Limestone

Origins:

In geological terms, a limestone is a sedimentary rock consisting mostly of calcium carbonate, usually in the form of the mineral calcite. Common accessory minerals include silica, feldspar, clays, pyrite and siderite. Limestones may be formed in a variety of ways, but many are highly fossiliferous and clearly represent ancient shell banks or coral reefs. Many examples of limestone may be hundreds of millions of years old, and can give a fascinating indication of general reef conditions at the time of formation (including types and sizes of shells, corals etc.) A detailed study of ancient reef limestones will show many species of shell and coral which became extinct on earth millions of years ago. Because of their environment of formation, most limestones will

show a naturally high degree of variation, in terms of colour, fossil content, mineral grains etc.. Like all rock types, limestone's have often been subjected to natural earth stresses, resulting in features like jointing, which are sometimes filled by later veins of minerals like quartz and calcite. As with the original variations of colour and mineral texture, described above, these joints and veins are totally natural features, and indicate the history of formation of the limestone.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Limestone is a natural material, and as such is inherently variable in shade and colour. No guarantee can be given that the product will be uniform, or indeed the same colour as depicted in the showroom or in samples.

Customer Care:

Limestone is extremely porous and therefore nothing at all should be put onto its surface. Lightly dust using a lint free duster/feather duster. Limestone is likely to dry out over a period of weeks and lighten in colour slightly. Limestone can also be soft in nature, therefore no force should be applied to this product.

Grit Stone/Sandstone

Origins:

In geological terms, a grit stone is a type of coarse sandstone, containing angular particles or fragments. They may vary widely in colour, ranging from red, brown, yellow, grey etc.. They are usually quite "well sorted" (ie. Having mineral grains all about the same size), and often show sedimentary features like bedding layers, current bedding, ripple marks etc.. They are usually made up of grains of quartz, feldspar and lesser micas or other minerals, and may contain fossils. Traditionally, quartz-rich grit stones were valued in Britain for their hard, abrasive character, and after quarrying they were shaped into millstones and grinding stones. In fact, there is a very thick and prominent bed of grit stone in the Peak District in Derbyshire. This grit stone is Carboniferous in age, and is so resistant that it forms many hills and ridges in the Peak District. Because it became well known as a source of mill stones and grinding stones, this geological formation was officially named the "Millstone Grit". Where they have good colours (eg. Honey or buff colours), grit stones are popular as ornamental dimension stones, since besides their attractive colour they are hard and durable. Like all rock types, grit stones have often been subjected to natural earth stresses, resulting in features like jointing, which are sometimes filled by later veins of minerals like quartz and calcite. These joints and veins are totally natural features, and indicate the history of formation of the grit stone.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Grit Stone is a natural material, and as such are inherently variable in shade and colour. No guarantee can be given that the product will be uniform, or indeed the same colour as depicted in the showroom or in samples.

Customer Care:

Please note that natural stones can sometimes be quite soft and susceptible to damage from impact, causing chipping or markings of the surface. Slight marks to the face can easily be removed by lightly rubbing with a coarse sandpaper. All stones can be washed down with warm water and the stone will dry back to give a smooth even surface.

Reconstructed Stone

Origins:

The production of reconstructed stone involves crushing natural Limestone (natural stone dust), special sands and cement. The process used is an age-old process. The subsequent reconstruction of the stone ensures that the material retains the original character of the limestone, and is consistent in colour throughout the fireplace. All finishing processes carried out on reconstructed stone requires the use of water to lubricate the saw blades and chamfering wheels. This means that the parts being worked on absorb large quantities of water. This will mean that the surround may appear to be patchy when you receive it. It will take up to 3 months for the surround to dry out completely and during this time it may continue to appear patchy. This is a perfectly natural occurrence as is the emergence of salts. This can appear as a white dusty stain on the surface caused by the passage of the water travelling through the limestone. However, to avoid this they introduce a special chemical, which stops this emergence in most cases. Initially small fires should be burnt, all materials expand when heated and this is normally taken up within the various joints of the fireplace. Occasionally slight movement cracks may appear in the units, particularly around the fire opening. All relevant units are adequately reinforced and such movement will not affect the stability of your fireplace.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

As the flame of a solid fuel fire is hot it will eventually scorch the stone and may cause some pitting of the stone immediately around the area of the fire. The stone inside the fire opening of open hearth fires, at the back behind the basket, should be protected using a traditional heat plate or a fire basket with integral fire brick. Constant use of the fire will cause some discoloration of the stone around the opening and to the underside and rear of the fire basket. Small cracks may also appear over the fire opening. These changes to the stone are not a threat to the structural strength of your fireplace and will not reduce the expected life of your fireplace.

Customer Care:

Wash or scrub your fireplace whenever necessary using plenty of clean warm water. Stone is extremely porous and oil and grease will penetrate very quickly so take great care.

Conglomerate

Origins:

In geological terms, a conglomerate is a coarse - grained sedimentary rock, composed of relatively large fragments (eg. Pebbles or cobbles) set in a fine - grained matrix (eg. Sand or silt). The mineral grains or fragments making up the Conglomerate rock may be of varied composition, and may range widely in size. Essentially, conglomerates are consolidated pebbles, gravel or boulder

beds, which accumulate in rivers or along sea and lake shores. They are indicative of shallow water environments, with currents which are vigorous enough to move relatively large rock fragments. The more rounded the fragments in the conglomerate are, the further they have been transported by the water before being deposited and becoming a rock. Some conglomerates are made up of many different types of pebbles and grains, giving a strong colour variation and a dappled visual effect. For this reason, they can make attractive ornamental stones. However, very coarse conglomerates may develop weaknesses along the edges of the large cobbles or boulders. Conglomerates may also have been subjected to earth pressures after formation, giving rise to natural jointing and mineral veining.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Conglomerate is a natural material, and as such is inherently variable in shade and colour. No guarantee can be given that the product will be uniform, or indeed the same colour as depicted in the showroom or in samples. Veining, and occasionally fossils, are a normal and acceptable part of conglomerates.

Customer Care:

The only cleaning that a conglomerate needs is a wipe over with warm water to which a small amount of washing up liquid has been added, then dry & polish with a soft clean cloth. Avoid dropping anything onto the surface or resting on the conglomerate as this can cause chipping & cracking.

Man Made Micro Conglomerate

Origins:

Micro or Agglomerate Materials are 90 - 95% Natural Marble, which has been crushed and then added to a resin bonding agent which is then moulded into the finished product.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Micro Marbles have a consistent texture and colour, whereas an agglomerate has chunky pieces or bits of different marbles showing. Micro's in general have a higher strength than a natural marble and they do not have any veins. Due to the structure of the material it gives a high quality finish when polished.

Customer Care:

It is best to care for your Micro Fireplace in the same way as you would for a Natural Marble Fireplace. Please see above, Marble & Conglomerate Information for in depth details.

Slate

Origins:

In its geological description, a slate is a compact, fine - grained metamorphic rock. They are formed from fine - grained rocks such as shale, which have been subjected to strong earth pressures that have imparted a slaty cleavage to the rock. This cleavage causes the slate to become fissile, so that it can be split into numerous thin, parallel sheets. Slates are usually black, or shades of dark grey, blue, green, etc.. It is their quality of being split into many thin sheets that has made slate such a popular roofing stone. North Wales is endowed with many large deposits of good quality slate, and in fact the Welsh roof slate industry developed as early as the 1750's. Like all rock types, slate has often been subjected to natural earth processes, which have resulted, besides their natural slaty cleavage, in features such as jointing and mineral veins. These joints and veins are totally natural features, and indicate the history of formation of the slate.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Slate is a natural material, and as such is inherently variable in shade and colour. No guarantee can be given that the product will be uniform, or indeed the same colour as depicted in the showroom or in samples. Mineral veins are a normal and acceptable part of slates.

Customer Care:

Slate scratches very easily, therefore nothing should be dragged or dropped across a slate surface as it will mark. In order to get the shine back into slate it is advised that Linseed Oil or WD40 can be put onto it, then give it a good rub and leave to dry. This should give the slate a nice clean, shining finish.

Glazed Tiles

Origins:

Glazed Tiles are a ceramic material which has been treated and painted or glazed with a pattern and then baked at a tremendous heat. Tub lined tiles are glazed tiles which the outline of each design is piped on by hand onto each individual tile. Different coloured translucent glazes are then applied - again by hand - to the separate areas of the design to create exquisite works of art. Crazing will appear on all glazed tiles, this is due to the heat process used, this is not a sign of an inferior or damaged product. Discolouration and shading will also be noticed in glazed products.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

In certain conditions high gloss glazes are prone to discolouration and marking due to chemical attacks from certain liquids including water and the atmosphere. Although tiles are very durable and are heat resistant (perfect for solid fuel), they are easily scratched and should not be used in areas subject to abrasion. Solid Fuel fires will also change the colour of the tiles over a period of time and use.

Customer Care:

Tiles scratch easily, therefore nothing should be dragged or dropped onto the surface. They can be cleaned with warm soapy water and dried off with a non-abrasive cloth. If your tiles have lost their shine then just polish the tiles with any furniture polish, this should restore their natural shine.

Solid Timbers, Veneers & M.D.F.

Origins:

Solid Timbers, Veneers & M.D.F. all originate from trees, ranging from different types of woods, for example, oaks, pine, beach, maple, e.t.c.. The diversity of veneers that nature provides us with is huge, as are the tastes and perceptions of human beings. It is therefore not possible to produce a single quality that will satisfy the entire market.

In each tree, we find very thin cells whose function is to redistribute the nutritive materials from the sapwood to the heart. These are called "medullary rays". In some species these rays are thin, but in some they are clearly visible and are called "flake". Oak, Beach and Maple for example show us well-pronounced flake. These rays cross the growth rings with a 90 degree angle and because of the angle the flake is shown in all its glory. For centuries oak flake was not only understood and appreciated, but was even sought after, as it was the distinctive sign of valuable wood. It is known that people who could not afford this quality of wood went to great lengths to achieve the look by painting on cheaper wood! Areas of veneer are called zones. Within these zones can be found both cross-graining and pores of greater density. These zones create what is commonly known as "mottle" and enhances the appearance of the veneer, typically found in American Cherry. As this is a natural phenomenon, the amount is variable. This can occur in many other species of tree. A few small pin knots or sound knots, veining or flake may be present depending again upon the species of tree. Some of the effects listed above will also apply to components on your product which may be made from solid timber. As with any solid timber item your product will have a certain amount of movement. This is natural and is controlled and restricted by construction design and methods of fixing.

Veneers are thinly sliced pieces of wood which can be cut at different angles, either quarter cut giving a mainly straight grained pattern or crown cut which gives more of a rounded shape pattern, also called flame-shaped arches or cathedrals. The veneers are then book-matched together and bonded to a substrate.

M.D.F. stands for Medium Density Fibreboard. M.D.F. is used commonly now on most furnishings because of its features, dense uniformity producing precision contoured profiles, exceptional dimension consistency allowing for tighter tolerances and greater stability, especially around an open gas or solid fuel fire. The use of M.D.F. is environmentally friendly, being taken from fast growing managed forests and recycled timber. The veneers that are applied are again of the highest quality, and being only a thin slice from a tree it can adorn many more pieces of furniture than solid timber. However, until there is an alternative, certain mouldings and facings can only be manufactured from solid timbers.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

The colours of most species of wood are each more beautiful than the next. They are not permanent however, and will change under the effect of light and moisture. Paradoxically, light species will become darker and dark species may become lighter. In fact over time all species turn grey, hence the importance of a good finish to help protect the wood from both UV rays and humidity. Whilst all manufacturers try their utmost to achieve the colours on their sample boards, please appreciate that no two pieces of veneer are identical and therefore no two finished products will be perfectly alike. As it is a natural product, pin knots, sound knots, veining or flakes may be present depending upon species of tree.

Customer Care:

Keeping your product in pristine condition is relatively easy. Lightly dust using a lint free duster/feather duster. Polish may be applied (use silicon-free type), be aware that this can alter the level of sheen that your product has and over time will change the colour of your product.

Ceramic Fibres

Origins:

Ceramic Fibre is a man-made product, which have as basic components high purity alumina and silica fibre. All products are manufactured from 1260 Degree Celsius Grade Material and is decorated with high temperature dye's.

The thermal conductivity is small for low temperatures, but it increases for high temperatures. Ceramic Fibres can be made into various different objects, for example, logs, coals, pebbles, driftwood, etc.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

Although they can withstand extreme heat, the ceramic fibres are extremely soft to any pressure or force and will therefore break easily if touched or dropped. Once the base matrix and coals, logs or pebbles have been placed in situ they should then not be touched other than by an engineer when servicing is required. As the ceramic fibre is decorated with high temperature dye's these do with time wear off, but you can buy Black Magic Ceramic Spray to re-new the life of your ceramics

Customer Care:

No care other than an annual service is required or a re-spray of the ceramic fibres.

We hope that the above information is of use to you and we sincerely believe that your new fire and fireplace will give you many years of faithful service as it gently mellows with time, to become an integral part of your home.