

Faucet Finishes and Care



Finish is second only to style when choosing faucets, tub fillers and shower sprays. Aesthetics and ease of maintenance are key criterion for selecting the appropriate finish for your bathroom. Please note that non-abrasive cleaners with no harsh chemicals are necessary for cleaning purposes on all finishes.

BRASS True brass has been a common finish since the nineteenth century. Real brass is a warm but relatively high maintenance finish, requiring frequent polishing to keep it shiny. Even with constant polishing, unprotected brass will tarnish (brown spots) in time. For some, the tarnish is desirable. Most modern finishes in the gold or brass color are super coated with a two-part epoxy that is applied electrostatically and baked on to insure a lasting shine. This is just one technique manufacturers use to protect brass and relieve maintenance responsibilities for those who appreciate the look of brass but wish to avoid the necessity of polishing. Physical Vapor Deposition (PVD) is another technique for protecting brass. It is a tarnish-resistant, scratch-resistant, and corrosion-resistant finish.

CHROME Chrome, or what is known as Chromium plating, became popular in the 1930's and continues to be a popular finish. It is versatile, can be traditional or contemporary, and economical. Chrome is a sophisticated tarnish-resistant finish. Solid brass fixtures are electroplated with chrome to provide a finish that lasts. Like brass, however, chrome requires frequent cleanings to maintain its shine.

NICKEL Back in the 1880s nickel was the preferred finish, right up to the 1930s, when chrome came on the scene and became all the rage. Nickel's popularity waned as chrome became the favorite alternative to brass. Nickel finishes range from the more chrome-like polished finish to the more stainless steel-like matte finish. Polished nickel is smooth lustrous; it is sometimes brushed to create matte or satin nickel finishes. The brushing highlights the beauty of the nickel and creates a low maintenance finish which hides scratches, fingerprints, and water spots.

STAINLESS STEEL Stainless steel is a combination of steel alloys and chromium (chrome). It shines like silver when new but its appearance can dull over time. With proper care and maintenance, though, this corrosion and rust resistant finish can last a lifetime.

DISTRESSED FINISHES Distressed finishes are the result of a renewed interest in vintage hardware and plumbing. Antiques can be expensive and difficult to find and may have unique care requirements

ANTIQUED FINISHES Weathered and antiqued finishes such as weathered copper, antique copper, antique brass, antique bronze, old bronze and antique pewter are chemically treated to age them. The result is a piece that looks as though it has been installed and in use for many, many years.

OIL RUBBED BRONZE Oil rubbed bronze is a handsome charcoal-colored finish that is a remarkable flat finish sure to draw attention. It is a popular choice for faucets, showers, and door hardware. Plumbing items finished in oil rubbed bronze often are protected but door hardware, copper basins, and other items are typically left unprotected to allow the item to gracefully wear with repeated handling.

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