

# CLAY WALL

*Top*

*By William Stanwix*



*Clay Wall Top is a finish coat plaster suitable for skimming onto various substrates, it can be left naked or painted with a natural paint or a clear glaze.*

*Clay Wall Top has only 3 ingredients all sourced within the UK.*

*Clay wall top can be used over most standard substrates such as clay basecoats, lime basecoats or gypsum boards.*

<b>COLOUR</b>	Straw White
<b>APPLICATION DEPTH</b>	3mm to 4mm
<b>SUPPLIED AS</b>	Dry mixed in 25kg bags.
<b>COVERAGE</b>	1 bag will cover approximately 3sqm at 3mm-4mm deep.
<b>PALLET SIZE</b>	40 bags per full pallet
<b>INGREDIENTS</b>	Clay / Chalk / Sand





## **SUBSTRATE PREPARATION**

*Clay Wall Top can be used over lime, clay or other solid and level basecoats. For best results use over Clay Wall Base.*

*When finishing the basecoat use a comb scratcher, devil float or other tool to ensure there is adequate mechanical key for the finish coat.*

*When using over plasterboard, scrim all board joints and apply a thin layer of gypsum plaster over the scrim tape. Once dry apply 2 coats of a primer that will provide key and even suction, such as Blue Grit, Baunit Premium Primer, Claytec Yellow Primer or other suitable priming solution.*

*Ensure any basecoats are thoroughly dry before applying Clay Wall Top.*

## **MIXING**

*Clay Wall Top comes dry in 25kg bags. Mix in a large enough container to hold 2 bags at a time. Measure out 10 Litres of clean water and pour approximately 8L of this into your mixing container. Pour your first bag into the water then mix with a paddle mixer for approximately 30 seconds. Pour the second bag into the mixing container and mix thoroughly. Add the remaining 2 litres of water as required. Mix for at least 5 minutes.*

*The plaster can be left mixed up indefinitely, so long as it is prevented from drying, it is recommended to mix what you need for the day or for the week ahead of time and leave it to sit until it is required.*

*The plaster's workability and cohesion will improve as it is left to sit.*



## **APPLICATION**

*Brush the walls to remove any dust or debris. Wet down porous substrates, such as clay or lime basecoats, with a wet brush or sprayer (do not wet primed plasterboard).*

*Apply Clay Wall Top with a stainless steel or carbon steel trowel in two passes.*

*Apply the first pass 1.5 to 2mm thick and allow to dry until it is firm but still tacky. Over a clay basecoat this may be after 30 as it is very porous, over primed plasterboard this may be up to 2 hours or even more as it is not porous.*

*Apply the second pass with a stainless steel or carbon steel trowel (carbon steel is preferable for this second pass) at 1.5 to 2mm thick. When this second pass has stiffened until its tacky, a flexible plastic trowel or spatula can be used to remove trowel lines only if necessary.*

## **FINISHING**

*Described below are 3 different ways to finish your wall.*

### **Trowel Finish**

*Once the second pass has firmed up the plaster can be hard trowelled using a stainless steel, carbon steel or plastic trowel (Carbon steel and plastic are both preferable to stainless steel at this stage). If required the surface can be slightly wetted with a soft wet brush to bring out enough 'fat' to trowel in, however over wetting can lead to a patchy colour and blistering.*





*Top Tips- Plastic trowels are recommended for the final trowelling or burnishing if you wish to leave the plaster un-painted, they drive moisture into the plaster and are less likely to leave streaks.*

*Top Tips- For your hard trowelling use a smaller trowel than used to apply the plaster. This will help avoid leaving trowel lines.*

*Top Tips- If you are finding it difficult to get a flat wall then try floating the wall with a sponge or plastic float prior to hard trowelling. Before beginning your trowel finish use the sponge finish technique below, this should flatten the wall ready for you to 'trowel up'.*



## *Sponge Finish*

*Using a firm sponge float (sometimes described as 'fine sponge float') gives a textured finish. Once the second pass has firmed up wet the float slightly and float the wall in a circular motion always keeping the float parallel with the wall. Clean the float from time to time to avoid build-up of material.*

*The floating action naturally takes out high points and fills in any low points. For any stubborn low points dab some stiffened-up plaster into the low point and float in to make them disappear.*

*When nearly dry, brush the walls with a soft brush to remove excess sand and to make the wall smoother.*

*The sponge finish is easier for beginners and for very curved walls. It is possible to achieve very smooth walls this way by following the sponge floating process with sponge burnishing as described below.*

**Top Tips-** *when applying your first pass of plaster put some blobs of plaster on a spare hawk or an empty bag and leave in the open air to stiffen up. You can then use these to fill hollows whilst sponge floating as the plaster will be a similar stiffness to that on the wall. If you use fresh plaster to fill hollows, it will be too wet and will be difficult to float well.*



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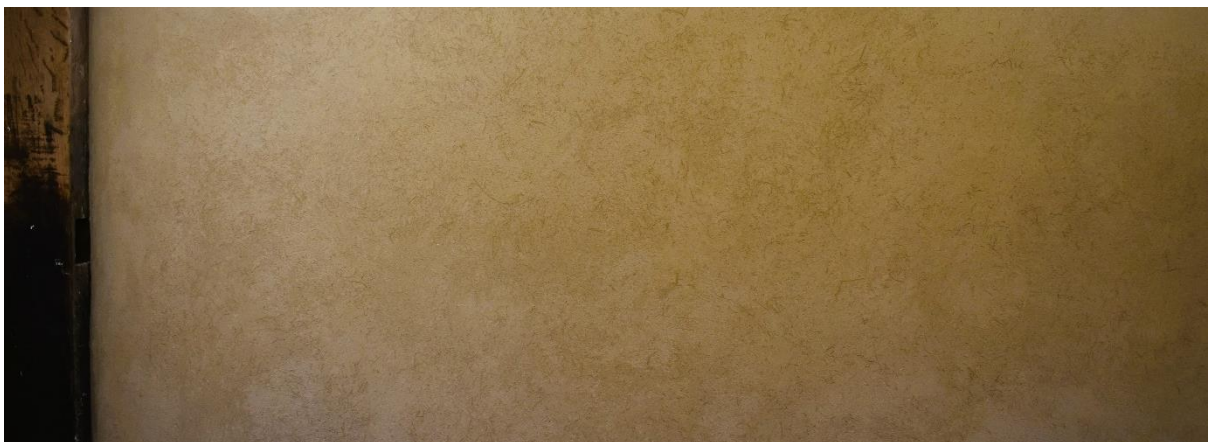
### *Hard float finish*

*The hard float finish creates a beautifully flat and finely textured wall.*

*Once the second pass has firmed up use a stiff plastic float on the wall. Rub the wall in a circular motion always keeping the float parallel with the wall. If you are just moving material around on the wall and making a mess then the plaster is too wet, leave it to firm up a bit more. If the plaster is too hard to float, then you can try wetting it and letting this soak in for 5 minutes or so before trying again.*

*The floating action naturally takes out high points and fills in any low points. For any stubborn low points add some stiffened-up plaster (put aside earlier) and float in to make them disappear. Continue until you have a flat and even texture.*

*Top Tips- To get a good hard float finish your plaster needs to be very flat. If when you begin to hard float you find your plastering is not flat enough then mix some plaster up wetter than you normally would and cover the top half of your float in a thin layer of this by simply dipping into the mix, float this into the wall all over. It should even out the wall and create a beautiful flat textured surface.*



**SPONGE BURNISHING** (mainly used on trowel finishes but also suitable for float finishes)

Once fully dry a cellulose sponge (available from most DIY stores and sometimes known as decorators sponge) can be used to clean off the clay dust from the surface leaving it smooth and clean to the touch.

Wet the sponge and ring out so it is wet but not dripping. Wipe the sponge over the surface of the wall in a circular or figure of 8 motion, concentrating on a 30cm square area at a time. You will notice streaks of clay, continue wiping softly until you no longer see streaks then move to the next area.

The cellulose sponge process will also fill any small cracks or knocks in the wall surface and give a more even colour.

**Top Tips-** don't over wet the sponge, be gentle with the sponge burnishing process and keep the sponge moving around, if you stick to one small spot you may rub a hole in your plaster!

**SURFACE TREATMENT**

If desired the wall can be finished with Earth Born Clear Wall Glaze for a more resilient and wipeable surface. Use according to the product instructions.

Clay Wall Top can also be painted with a clay or chalk paint or other vapour permeable natural paint.







## REPAIRS

To repair a knock or scratch in a finished wall mask around the area so that there is 50mm strip of plaster visible around the knock and brush out any loose material.

Wet the area with a soft wet brush and apply some plaster to fill the void. Leave to fully dry and before removing the masking tape use the sponge burnishing method above to finish to a smooth clean surface or rub with a float if the wall has been float finished.

## USEFUL TIPS

- Try experimenting with different tools for different finishes. Floats and trowels made from different materials all give different textures and effects.
- Wet brushes can give a really soft lustrous finish. Once the wall is flat and before it is fully dry, paint it back and forth with a soft damp brush. This will bring out the clay and burnish the surface.
- Keep an eye out for helpful videos @William.Stanwix on Instagram and @WilliamStanwix on YouTube.

*Have Fun!!*