

How to remove merbau timber stains on sandstone patio pavers?

Q. We recently had some staining on our sandstone patio pavers where merbau timber was left on several pavers. Could you please help with how we might remove these stains?

A. Merbau is known for its rich reddish-brown color and natural oils and tannins. While these characteristics make it durable and beautiful for decking or furniture, this material can also leave transfer marks on porous surfaces like sandstone, especially if there's any moisture involved or it is left in contact with the stone for any length of time.

NOTE: Follow the manufacturer's safety precautions when using chemicals.

The first step is to clean the affected area gently. Always test a small, inconspicuous area first to ensure there's no unwanted reaction with your specific sandstone. Wipe the sandstone with a clean, white cloth and a small amount of acetone to remove any surface oils or pigments. Continue wiping until the cloth no longer picks up any color.

If the stain persists, a poultice can help draw deeper pigments out of the stone. For stubborn wood transfer marks, a poultice made with a commercial paint remover and a poultice powder can be effective. For detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to mix and apply a poultice correctly, check out our free [Stain Management App](#). Depending on the age and depth of the stain, it may take several applications to fully lift the color.

Allow the stone to dry completely before evaluating the results after each treatment. Moisture from the poultice may temporarily darken the stone, so any remaining discoloration after it is fully dry is coming from the stain itself.

It's important to understand that sandstone is porous and natural. Even with repeated treatments, some faint discoloration may remain.

If you're dissatisfied with DIY results, a stone restoration professional may be able to get better results. To find a vetted PRO in your area, visit www.surfacecarepros.com and click on **Find a PRO**.

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