

Frequently asked questions about Alcolin Rainseal

1. **I have a flat concrete roof on my house. There are two areas where water leaks through the slab. White deposits have developed below where the water comes through. What is this?**

The white deposit is calcium carbonate – the same material that stalagmites and stalactites consist of. Calcium hydroxide that is present in hardened concrete is soluble in water, and as water moves through the concrete, it dissolves the calcium hydroxide and carries it with it. When it emerges from the bottom of the concrete slab, the water evaporates leaving behind calcium hydroxide that reacts with CO₂ in the atmosphere to form calcium carbonate. Once the roof is sealed, the problem should be solved. Physical chipping and scraping will remove the deposit. The remaining residue should be easily removed with a 10% solution of phosphoric acid.

2. **Is it essential to use membrane with Alcolin Rainseal?**

No. Membrane is only essential when waterproofing over joints, gaps and cracks.

3. **Can you paint over Alcolin Rainseal?**

Yes, as long as the paint is flexible. If you use a less flexible paint, crazing or cracking can occur.

4. **Can I use Alcolin Rainseal on fresh concrete?**

No. Its best to wait a minimum of 28 days for the moisture to completely escape from the concrete.

5. **Can I saturate the membrane with water and then wring it out first before painting with Rainseal to aid in its absorption?**

No This practice is not recommended.

6. **How do you solve a damp problem?**

As a general rule, it is always best to call in a waterproofing specialist. If you must do it yourself, this guide will help you find the source of the leak and how to solve it.

If damp is coming through from the outside due to rain, then the outside walls need to be treated. Generally speaking, damp coming through an outside wall usually indicative of a structural / design fault – exterior walls should be a “cavity wall” i.e. two walls of bricks with a gap between each, to prevent water that penetrates the outside brick layer from penetrating through the inside brick layer. So a problem of rain penetrating through outside wall usually indicates that the exterior wall is only a “single wall”, or if the exterior wall is a “cavity wall”, then the builders at the time of construction probably failed to clean all the cement / rubble build up from the cavity.

Face brick can be treated with Alcolin NC120. *Plastered walls* – repair and fill cracks with crack filler. Paint exterior with waterproofing grade paint. Prime surface with diluted Alcolin Permabond 1:3 with water prior to applying the waterproofing paint. If re-plastering, clean the wall, remove loose paint and apply a priming coat of diluted Alcolin Permabond 1:3 with water prior to re-plastering with a plaster constituted by replacing the water component with a 1:3 Permabond dilution.

If damp is on the upper inside walls, this is often due to a fault on the roof e.g. cracked or missing roof tile. Use Alcolin Rainseal or Alcolin Vinoseal and a membrane to cover faults at parapets, chimneys, broken tiles and gaps.

If damp is starting at the bottom of the inside walls, this is due to rising damp.

Again usually a design problem – is there damp proofing in place (black plastic sheet, just above ground level – should see it sticking out by a cm or so if it is present). If there is no damp proofing in place, or if it is damaged, use Alcolin NC120. Drill holes along the bottom at an incline, $\frac{3}{4}$ through the wall, about 12cm apart. Inject Alcolin NC120 under low pressure. It is best that a professional do this application

Also look for weeping holes – that drains water that gets into the cavity gap. If there are no weep holes, drill your own into the brickwork.

If the damp is on a wall that is not connected to the outside of the house, then possibly one is dealing with a leaking pipe within the wall. Also check what is the other side of the wall – perhaps a shower, in which case the shower needs to be re-waterproofed.

And finally, one of the most common and frequently overlooked causes of damp problems, the blocked gutter or downpipe. Always ensure that these are unblocked. If they are blocked, water dams up behind them, and has great potential to cause damp problems.

