

Exposed brick walls are things of beauty and comfort. Whether harkening back to a classic red brick cottage or bringing character to a garden in the form of a beautiful arch or pillars, bricks bring something special to architecture. Unfortunately, when not done well, brick can harm your aesthetic. An imposing monochrome red brick wall falling into ruins can make your home feel more Dickensian than Victorian.

To help with this problem, today we're bringing you four ideas to show off your exposed brick walls.

1) Restoration

Alright, I'll freely admit this isn't a "decoration tip" per-say, but it is important. If your brickwork is crumbling to pieces, then no amount of simple touch-ups is going to help. Even worse than just looking like a haunted house, you could have a serious safety issue. Hiring professional help is the best way to go for this one, and the results will pay off. If you're in the Sydney area, Point Brick, Brick and Stone Mortar Repair is a good choice for this kind of work. Properly restored and cleaned brick walls are a thing of beauty, and once yours are in tip-top shape, you might reconsider the need for further decoration.

2) Contrasting Mortar

At one point, your brickwork might have had a beautiful contrasting white mortar. If that's not the case, or if time has turned both bricks and mortar into a muddy brown color, consider washing and refinishing your mortar. You can hire someone to come and repoint your mortar using a contrasting white. Alternatively, if your mortar is in good repair, you could try painting or staining it the desired color. Be careful not to damage your mortar while cleaning, then you can use a variety of products made for just such a project. Watch out that you don't get any paint on your lovely bricks, and you'll have a beautiful result.

3) Black Bricks

Having black bricks around any windows or doors, or even on corners, can be a beautiful and timeless effect. It breaks up the space and adds visual interest. If your brickwork is undergoing a complete restoration, consider replacing the red bricks surrounding windows and doors with black ones. Like the mortar, if your bricks are in good repair, you can paint or stain them to the contrasting black. Be careful of the product you choose, though, because bricks are so porous that a glossy paint could leave you with a "painted cinderblock" effect instead of your desired look.

4) Wrought Iron

Wrought iron and red bricks go together like cookies and milk, and boy, are they a tasty visual combo. The curly black details provide an excellent contrast to the straight red lines of the brick. Installing a wrought iron fence with brick pillars can make your lawn feel like the Secret Garden. Even better, wrought iron details on a wall or covering a door will surely give you that timeless look you've been searching for.

Remember, if your bricks are clean, well-maintained, and have a touch of contrast, they are decoration in and of themselves.