

Efflorescence is a white salt deposit, usually in the form of a white crystalline or powdery deposit that forms on the surface of masonry materials like stone, brick, or mortar. It is caused by moisture seeping through the masonry surface (wall, floor or object). The water dissolves salts found in the native soil, the gravel base or in the sand, stone, cement or masonry while moving through it. The water then evaporates leaving the salt on the surface.

It can be relatively easy to remove compared to some other stains. Often these salts are water soluble and, if outside, will usually disappear of their own accord with normal weathering over time. The recommended procedure is to allow this natural process to take place. The water soluble salts can be removed by dry brushing or with water and a stiff brush. Repetitive wetting can actually exacerbate the efflorescence.

Heavy accumulation or stubborn deposits of white efflorescence salts can usually be removed with a solution of muriatic acid and scrubbing (10 to 20 parts water to 1 part acid- this is *real* acid, follow precautions on the label). Wet the surface well before and after the solution is applied.

Less common salts that change their chemical structure during efflorescence formation require proprietary compounds to remove.