

LACQUERED BRASS CARE

Lacquered brass products need care to maintain their appearance over time.

The lacquer protects the brass from oxidising but it is not license to do nothing.

Sun, frost, rain, salt, pollution and scratches wear down the lacquer until the brass is eventually exposed. To prolong it's life, the following process should be done about once a week and more frequently in coastal areas...

1. gently clean the piece with a damp cloth to remove any surface grime or salt.
2. dry with a clean cloth.
3. with a wax polish (eg. beeswax, car polish etc.), gently buff the piece to an even finish. The wax acts as an extra barrier to the elements. Do NOT use metal cleaning polish.

Even with care, over time the lacquer will start to break down leaving the brass underneath exposed. This will usually start in a small area which is frequently handled/ has moving parts/ or where water can pool on it's surface. This will be obvious to see as dark patches which apparently cannot be buffed out.

At this stage you have 2 options...

1. leave the piece as it is. The metal will gradually oxidise as the lacquer breaks down and will tarnish to a dark brown/green colour. This will not harm the piece but does compromise it's appearance as some parts will inevitably tarnish quicker than others.

OR

2. remove the lacquer to leave the brass bare. This involves a short process to strip the lacquer completely and will require regular polishing to maintain it's shine forever after. This is more work but also a lot more rewarding. This process is described below...

- a. remove the piece which has started to tarnish from the door.
- b. apply a thick layer of paint or lacquer stripper to it and leave for about 45 minutes in a well-ventilated dry place.
- c. after this time the lacquer should be able to be washed off with the help of a scrubbing brush.

You should see and feel it peeling off but stage "b" and "c" can be repeated if necessary.

- d. the brass is now bare and exposed to the elements. To keep it golden and shiny, you should polish it regularly with a good ammonia based metal polish such as Peek or Wenol and buff to a finish with beeswax.