



Bricklaying made easy

If you want the exterior of your house to be as effective as the interior, it's time to get 'Real' with the help of Bromley Crafts

Most craftsmen seem to be continually looking for way to improve their product and make it easier for hobbyists to use. Richard Bromley, of Bromley Crafts, is no different. Thanks to him, now it is easier than ever to create authentic-looking brick and stone effects, thanks to his latest and somewhat unique realistic finishing system.

A wide variety of finishes can be created using Realistic Brick Compound, which is applied directly to dolls houses using a stencil to create the chosen brick or stone pattern.

Anyone who has used this tried and tested method will confirm how much fun it is and how rewarding the results are. Unlike other methods, these compounds are pretty economical. For example, if you are going to brick a twelfth scale house then you should be able to complete the job with about two bags of compound and a stencil for under £20.

Unlike papers, which quite frankly look like what they are and offer little in the way of choice, the stencils for Realistic Brick Compound come in 27 different designs, including both twelfth and 1/24th scale brick and stone patterns. Once you have the stencils in your craft collection, you can wash and

reuse them as many times as you like. This means that you can continue bricklaying any surface area without any annoying joins or seams being visible.

As with any craft job, attention to detail will produce better results. Bromley Crafts offer a spray adhesive in their range that should be used to hold the stencil firmly in position during the application to prevent the compound bleeding underneath.

There are currently three compound colours to choose from; red, buff/sandstone and grey/neutral, so any style or era of house can be achieved.

So easy to use

It is generally easier to apply the compound to a dolls house before it is completely assembled, so you can work on a clear, flat surface. However, if you have already built your dolls house you can still use the stencils, but you might just need to pay a little more attention to the alignment of the pattern as you work around the complexity of the walls.

As with any decorating, mask off any areas you don't want to brick up, using masking tape. Then paint the walls with matt emulsion in a colour that is suitable as your background mortar.

Position the stencil on the wall, ensuring it is correctly aligned and press down firmly to make sure all areas are in contact with the wall surface. Then spread the compound mix over the whole stencil area using a pallet knife or similar. The compound can be applied as a smooth, even covering, or a thicker, uneven layer, depending on the finished effect you want to achieve. Simply peel the stencil off, leaving the brick pattern on the wall. Heavens – you've made a mistake! Then don't worry, you can easily wipe the surface clean with a damp cloth and re-apply the compound until you get it right.

