

MASONRY

MAY 2017

MORTAR COLOR



Thanks to the advent of factory pre-blended mortars, today, architects and contractors enjoy the ability to provide custom colors for nearly any project. From the Texas Rangers Brick Red used on the Ballpark in Arlington to the Cordova Cream used on the George W. Bush Presidential Center (see project profile in this In The Mix issue), custom mortar color options are relatively endless when there is extensive collaboration and a shared commitment between the architect, mason contractor and mortar manufacturer. At QUIKRETE, we're proud that our partnerships have resulted in thousands of custom mortar colors and satisfied customers on projects across the country. We credit a methodical approach for our success in delivering custom mortar colors to customers. A few considerations include:

- Clearly define the desired mortar color with the customer and architect
- Determine bag size and delivery system: 80-pound delivered in mixer or 3,000-pound delivered in silo (or combination of the two)
- Determine the base mortar type: Portland Lime or Masonry Cement Type N or Portland Lime or Masonry Cement Type S
- Determine the base mortar color: white or gray
- Provide the architect with kit(s) featuring a range of established custom colors choices for consideration on the job site
- If an established custom color isn't selected, test various combinations of mortars and pigments until reaching the desired color
- Manufacture a small batch of mortar with the custom color and provide as a test sample to the masonry contractor for trial
- Adjust the formula if the masonry contractor determines weather, striking, curing time or other job site consideration altered the expected color
- Finalize the custom mortar color formula with final field test
- Secure approval from the architect on the final formula
- Catalog the final custom mortar color formula for use in the future

The ability to make custom mortar colors that complement the bricks and/or stone as well as other architectural features allows the imagination to run wild in the design of any building, so while it's a more complex and timely process, the results are worth the effort.

<https://www.quikrete.com/media/newsletter/colored-mortar-letter.asp>