

11 Questions to Ask Your Mason Contractor

Stoneyard has worked with mason contractors for 30 years, installing more than 5 million square feet of Stoneyard Thin Veneer, pavers and landscaping stone. Remember to ask your stone contractor these important questions prior to starting your natural stone project.





1. Can I see photos of your finished projects?

Stonemasons are like artists

Each stone contractor has their own unique style and are able to replicate a variety of stone installations. Ask your stone contractor to provide his/her completed project photos to ensure that the installation style you desire can be achieved.



2. How many times have you done this type of job?

Shaping Stone and Blending Colors

Thin stone veneer requires detailed attention to each stone. In order to ensure that your final project is balanced and consistent throughout, customizing the shape (tight fit) and stone selection (color and grain) is critical. Working with brick or tile is very different than working with natural stone. Be sure to inspect project photos carefully for evidence that your contractor knows how to shape stone, especially if you desire tight joints between stones.

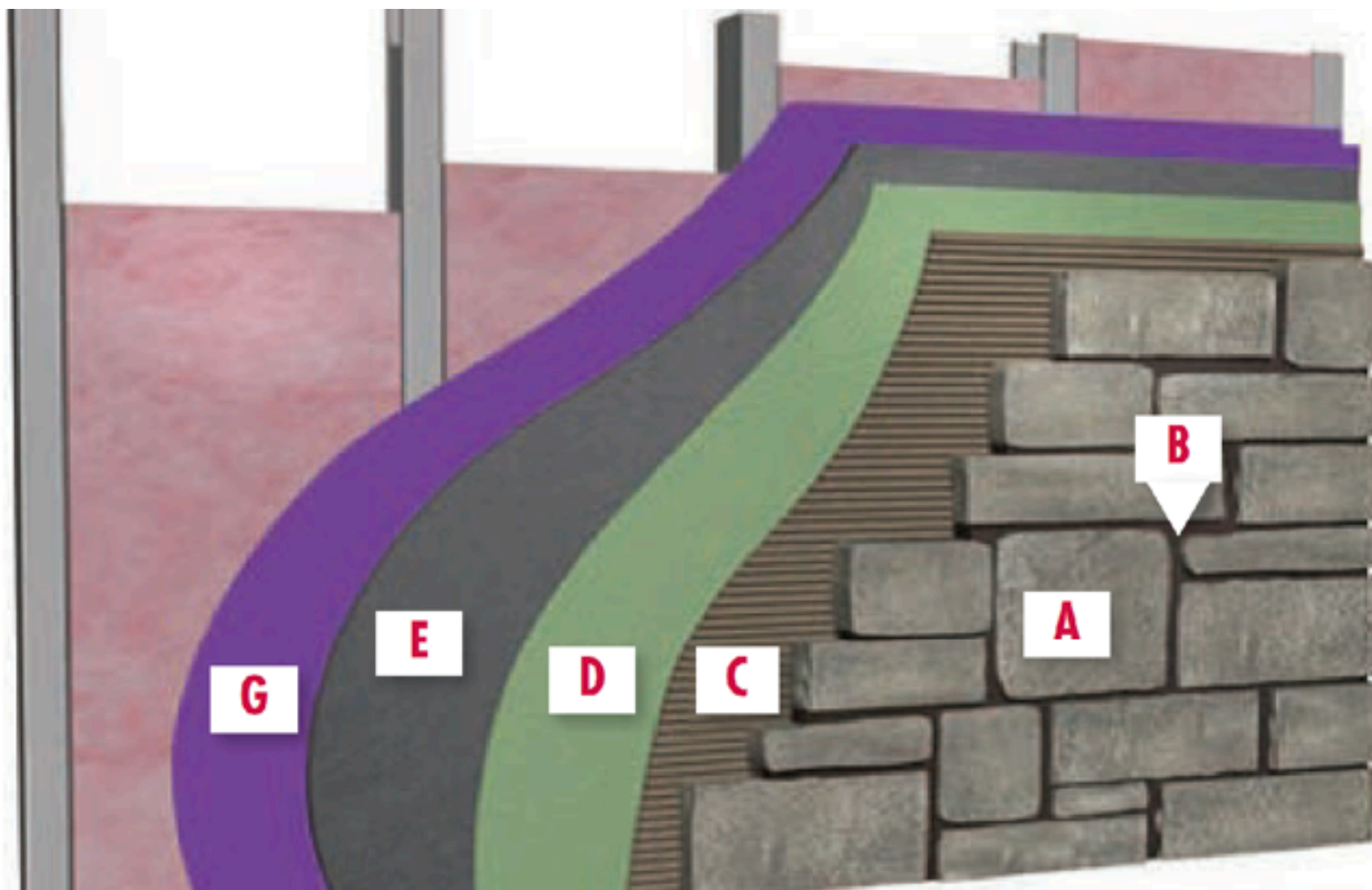


3. Is this stone the right type for this project?

Climate Matters

Experienced stone contractors will take into consideration the location and environment when recommending stone choices and mortar. Problem-free exterior projects use natural stone that is quartz-based and metamorphic, such as the stone found in New England. It is formed with exceedingly hard layers that hold up to freezes, thaws and harsh weather without being affected.

In this example in the Cayman Islands, the homeowner chose Stoneyard Coastal Sand Thin Veneer in the Mosaic shape because it is quartz-based, not sandstone, so it is Harsh Climate Approved™ and will withstand humidity, rain, and coastal storms.



4. What mortar are you using?

My name is Bond. Hi-Bond

Thin Veneer is adhered to a vertical surface. Natural stone will not fail but some masons will cut corners by using inexpensive or the wrong type of mortar. *This is not the place to save \$20 per bag.* If the mortar fails, all of the stone must be removed, It cannot be used again, and the surface it was attached to - cement board or CMU - will need to be replaced. New stone must be ordered and the job completely redone from scratch.

We recommend using [Laticrete MVIS Hi-Bond mortar](#), which offers a warranty of up to 25 years, which includes installation and materials.

DETAIL LEGEND: **A** Thin adhered masonry veneer **D** LATICRETE Air & Water Barrier **G** Exterior rated sheathing **B** LATICRETE® Masonry Pointing Mortar **E** Cement backer-board **C** LATICRETE Masonry Veneer Mortar **F** Concrete or masonry



5. Will you build a mockup for approval?

Reality Check

In order to get the full scope of your project on a smaller scale, it is very important to see a mockup of the stone installed to get an idea of the actual stone, joint width and overall look. The mockup should be at least 2' x 3' with enough stone variety to envision the final look. Pay attention to the width of the joints.

Replace the front entrance landing and step, replace the side entrance landing and install a new walkway \$ 6,500.00

Stairs procedures:

- ❖ Removal and disposal of the existing stairs
- ❖ Excavate the stairs footprint 18" in depth
- ❖ Mechanic compact the subsoil
- ❖ Delivery and mechanic compact 18" of clean gravel
- ❖ Install flashing where needed
- ❖ Install the provided granite landings and step
- ❖ Install new kick plate for the main front door
- ❖ This includes all labor, base materials, equipment and disposal

Walkway procedures:

- ❖ Removal and disposal of the existing walkway
- ❖ Excavate the new walkway foot print to a depth of 10"
- ❖ Mechanic compact the subsoil
- ❖ Delivery and mechanic compact 8" of dense grade gravel
- ❖ Delivery and mechanic compact 1" of coarse sand to receive the provided 24x36" granite pavers
- ❖ Install edging restrainer to hold the granite pavers in place
- ❖ Sweep polymeric sand into to the granite pavers joints
- ❖ This includes all labor, base materials, equipment and disposal

6. Why is your quote different / more than the others?

Walk me through the project

Clarify the differences in the process, the products used and the expected finished project when comparing quotes. Ask about exactly what materials will be used. Masonry is not an easy job to fix if shortcuts are taken to reduce project time or substandard materials are used. Installation details will be the difference between an adequate job vs a talked-about showpiece.



7. What will the worksite look like?

Job Site Protection

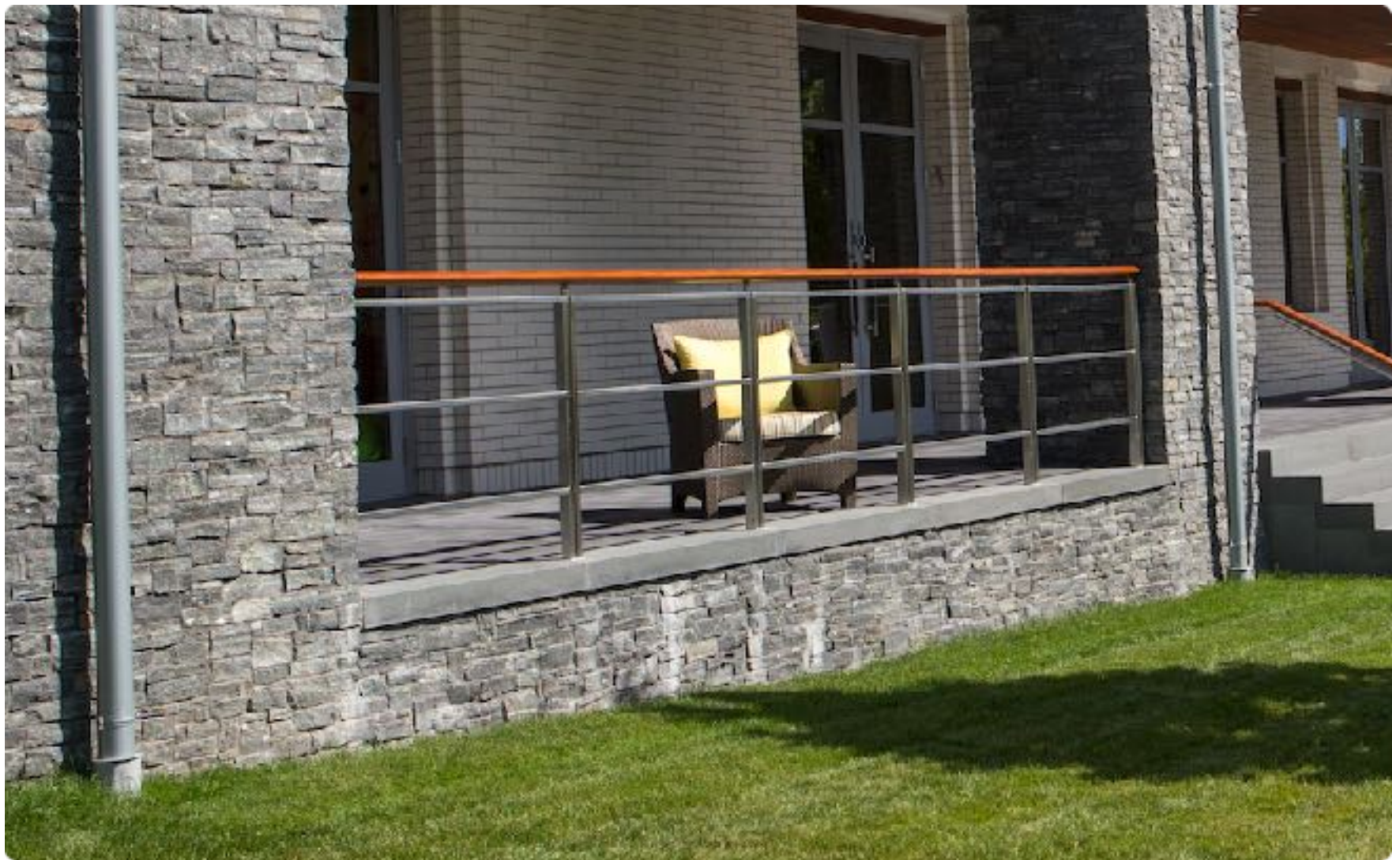
Masonry involves chipping and cutting natural stone, using water, extra-loud power saws with diamond blades (outside), and generating significant dust and flying stone chips. How will this affect the job site and surrounding areas? If indoors, will other rooms be sealed off, floors protected? Will the mason clean up at the end of each day?



8. How will you keep the temperature above 40 degrees while the mortar is curing?

Cold Weather Curing

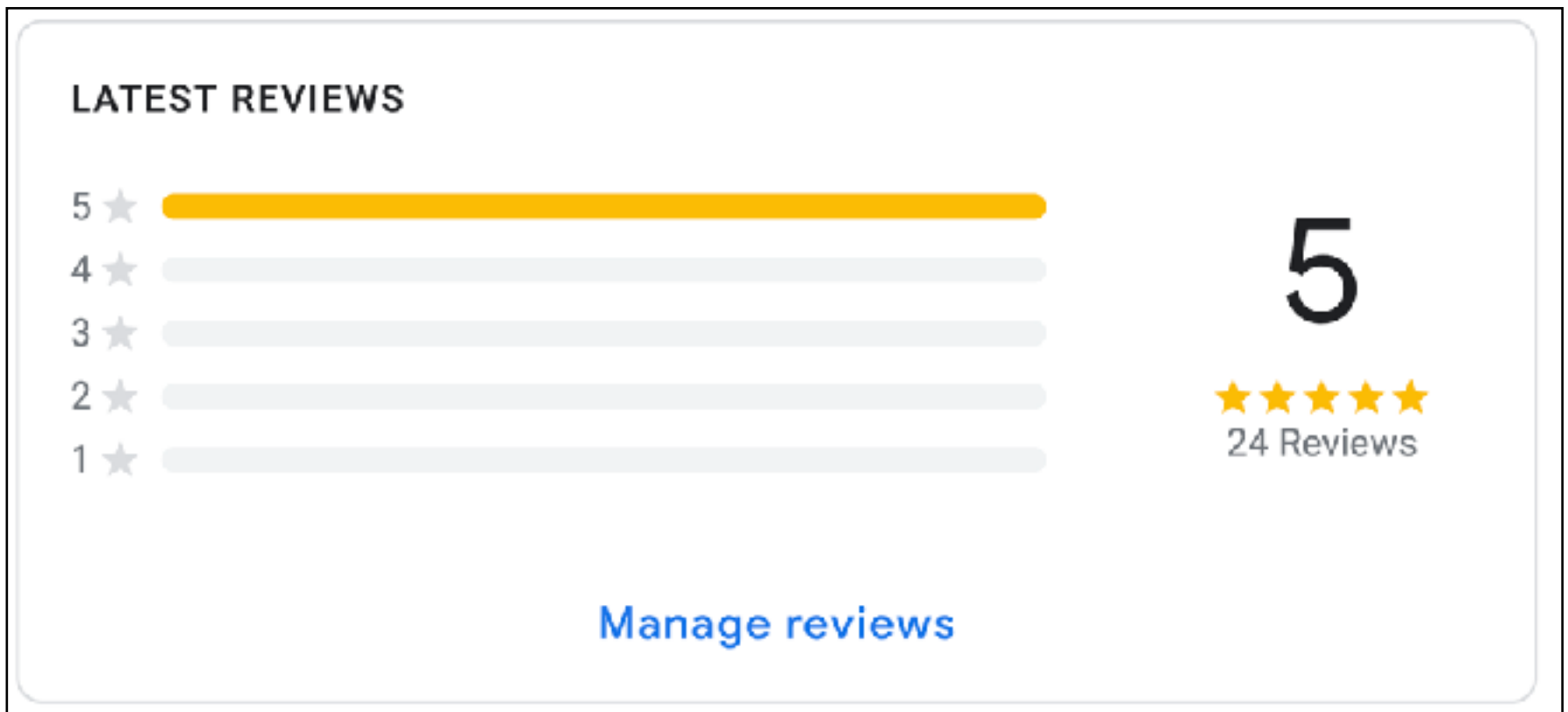
Thin stone veneer mortar requires a 40+ degree curing temperature during the 24 hours after application of the thin veneer stone. This is most important for outside winter projects and indoor new construction projects during winter. Stone masons will enclose the project in a temporary shelter and use a heater to keep the stone above 40°.



9. Are you using a water barrier?

Water

If your exterior project contains natural thin stone veneer, a water barrier or water drainage system will be needed to prevent the water from penetrating the mortar bond and the substrate material. Water barriers prevent efflorescence (water absorbed by the stone that either discolors the iron deposits found in natural stone or water that leaves behind salt deposits that bleed through the stone). Failure to use a water barrier or water drainage system will lead to loosening stone.



10. Do you have reviews, references or referrals?

Social Proof

Your mason contractor should have positive feedback from customers. Small stone mason companies may have very skilled masons that are not on the leading edge of technology, if at all. That does not mean they cannot do the job. Their references may be phone numbers of former customers or print photos. Larger companies should have an online presence and reviews.



11. What training do you have?

Certification

Is your stone contractor trained or certified to install thin stone veneer? Certified stone contractors understand the entire process and are up-to-date on the latest materials and products to ensure that your stone project will last a lifetime.