

Exteriors 1: Stucco

May 10, 2019

It's spring time, and you know what that means! It's time to go outside and see what kind of effect our unpredictable Alberta winter had on your home exterior. Hopefully, you are one of the lucky homeowners, and your house came out of winter completely unscathed. There is always a chance though, that you will need to have some repairs done. Or maybe you want to take preventative measures and create a more durable exterior. Or maybe it's just time for an update, and you want to increase your curb appeal. Whatever your reason for change, we want you to get the absolute best exterior for you and your home. Stucco, vinyl, stone, brick, and more... In this multi-part blog, we are going to discuss your exterior options, evaluate the pros and cons of each, and help you make informed decisions when the time comes for you to consider your exterior

Stucco

Stucco siding is made from Portland cement, lime, sand, and water. A contractor applies it in several coats over a lath base. Once finished, stucco gives your home a durable, seamless exterior.

While there are advantages, stucco is a significant upfront investment. While stucco works in humid environments, like coastal areas, it can expand and contract too much and eventually crack in areas of intense rain. Also, if you have any settling or shifting in your foundation, your stucco is not going to 'give' like vinyl; therefore, you may experience more exterior cracks. For homes in the Edmonton and Calgary areas, these issues are not usually a problem.

Some benefits of using stucco over other types of siding include:

- **Reduced sound:** Stucco may reduce sound transmission. Therefore, if you live in a high traffic area, you will hear less noise with a stucco siding exterior
- **Flame Retardant:** Stucco is naturally flame retardant, due to the materials used to create it
- **Resistant to Moisture Damage:** Unlike other exterior surfaces, stucco can resist mildew, dry rot, and mould, which is helpful if you live in a high-moisture area.
- **Energy Efficient Shell:** Properly applied stucco does not allow air exchange, so it insulates the interior to help maintain comfortable temperatures. It requires less energy to heat up in the winter and cool in the summer.

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- **Smart Home Investment:** Stucco, when maintained with care, can last on your home upwards of 50 years; therefore, it is an investment that certainly pays for itself. It is also easy to maintain, and sturdy enough to handle washing.
- **Aesthetically Appealing:** Stucco looks great when it is done. It has a solid, smooth surface, and a variety of colours to choose from to complete your exterior look. And if you want to get really creative, you can have designs made into the coating for something unique.
- **Quick and Easy to Install:** Each coat must dry before the next application, but your contractor can install stucco in one to two days. It can apply over concrete masonry and wood frame, which makes it hassle-free for installation too.
- **Paintable:** If you decide later that you do not like the colour of your stucco, you can paint it with ease.

Did you know that Ultimate got its start as an exteriors company? Way back in 1979, we were working out of the garage, initially with window cladding, then moving into full exteriors. Even though we've grown up to build full custom homes now, we are always happy for a reason to get back to our roots. Call us to talk about what we can do to help you with your exterior.



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