

What are Bronzino® containers made of?

All Bronzino® containers are made by hand from solid sheets of copper or zinc, and finished by hand using traditional recipes.

How are they made?

They are formed by hand, without moulds, in a traditional coppersmith's workshop. We use traditional artisan techniques such as folding, riveting, welding and soldering. Planter rims and ribs are reinforced with bands of stainless steel.

How do you achieve the finishes?

We dip each planter into a chemical concoction to accelerate the oxidation process and thereby create the finish. These concoctions can be centuries-old recipes handed down in families, and they vary from place to place. The precise colour of each finish can be affected by air humidity, so variations do occur.

Tin plated copper is the same finish traditionally used on cooking containers and only needs cleaning with a non-abrasive cleaning agent, or even soapy water, to maintain its brightness.

Our Mid Grey zinc finish is achieved by applying a traditional chemical concoction by hand. This results in some colour variation, which gives the surface its special character.

How do they weather outdoors?

All Bronzino® containers are given a protective waxing prior to delivery. This is the traditional sealant for copper placed outdoors. This initial protective layer seals the finish and prevents it from oxidising further. For the finish to remain unchanged, coats of soft wax should be applied at regular intervals.

Over time, tin-plated copper will soften its appearance to a pewter-like finish.

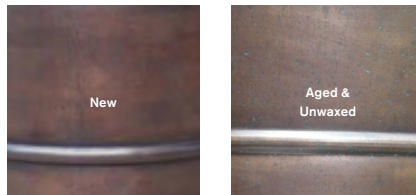
It should be noted that zinc is relatively soft when compared with metals such as steel, and therefore slight dents and scratches do occur during use. These should be appreciated as part of the character of the metal. If a pristine look is required for your containers, we would recommend that you consider alternative materials.

What happens if they don't get waxed?

When not protected by regular applications of wax, the copper will take on a more natural and varied finish. This will vary according to

weather conditions and the site chosen for the containers. Unwaxed containers in the Dark Grey finish will pick up the easily recognised blue of oxidised copper, while those in the Bronze and Green finishes are more likely to remain closer to the original.

If left unwaxed, Natural copper will oxidise further, dim to a bronze / brown and then begin to collect blue or green around the edges. The chart below provides a general guide, although this can vary depending on local climatic and other conditions.



Bronze appearance over time.

Is there a protective finish suitable for high traffic areas, or areas where acid cleaning agents are likely to be used?

For additional protection in high traffic areas, or areas where acid cleaning agents are likely to be used, we can give your planters a coat of matt cellulose lacquer at extra cost. Once the planter has been lacquered, we apply a top layer of wax. The wax should be re-applied regularly, as described in our care sheet, to prevent the lacquer from breaking down. Please note that planters treated with lacquer will not age and deepen in colour in the same way as planters treated with wax alone.

Bronzino planters should always be wrapped in polythene sheeting before surrounding areas are pressure washed or cleaned using chemicals.

Will the containers rust?

Unlike ferrous metals, which rust then decay, copper builds up a protective layer through oxidation. This is what gives patinated copper its special colour.

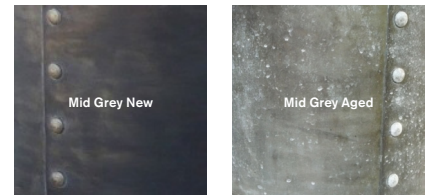
Zinc does not rust; in fact it offers excellent resistance against corrosion. It builds up a natural protective layer through oxidation.

What will Bronzino zinc planters look like over time?

One of zinc's greatest attributes is its

longevity – it has an extremely long service life. The surface of zinc sheet naturally oxidises to form a thin layer of stable zinc carbonate, which ensures it requires virtually no maintenance.

However, we always recommend that zinc planters are fitted with GRP (glass-reinforced plastic) liners or painted inside with bitumen, to protect the interior surface from possible reaction with chemicals in soil. A landscape professional can advise on the best method prior to installation.



Zinc appearance over time.

Over time, the matt grey colour of our natural zinc containers usually deepens to a shade that resembles old lead, although variations can occur depending on local climatic and other conditions.

Our Mid Grey finish on zinc softens into layers of warm grey, with more exposed areas displaying characteristic zinc oxide highlights. Once again, tonal variations can occur depending on local climatic and other conditions.

Are Bronzino planters watertight?

Bronzino planters are not watertight as they are made using artisan techniques. We recommend that you follow instructions from a professional landscaper regarding the frequency of watering your plants. The build-up of water that results from overwatering can exert pressure which damages a planter's joins.

Are there drainage holes?

Bronzino® containers and vases are supplied to order and therefore come with or without drainage holes. As most plants grow poorly in waterlogged soil, we provide drainage holes as standard. We drill the base with 5 holes, and a solid brass plate 5mm thick is riveted underneath. This lifts the base off the ground to allow free drainage.

If no drainage holes are required or if Bronzino planters are to be used indoors, you should take advice from a professional



Oxidisation of unwaxed natural copper. Chart used with permission from the Copper Development Association.

landscaper, who will be able to advise on the best type of liner to protect against unwanted water drainage. He or she will also be able to recommend suitable irrigation methods, and advise on related interior irrigation issues such as condensation.

All our planters are also stamped with the Bronzino® logo on the base.



Can my planter be moved once it has been planted?

Bronzino planters should only be planted once they have been placed in the correct location. You may find it easier to leave plants in their original polythene containers until you are happy with the location of your planters.

If it becomes necessary to move a large planter (over 750mm wide) once it has been planted up, you should take advice from a professional landscaper, who will be able to advise on the best way to avoid damage to the plant and planter.

Planters less than 750 mm wide should also be moved with caution. Any plants and soil should be carefully removed before the planter is moved, and can be reinstated once the planter is in its correct position.

What is the environmental footprint and working environment?

Copper is a valuable metal with a high market cost, and has therefore always been saved and recycled as new sheet. Our containers will always retain the intrinsic value of the metal and as they do not decay will still be here in the future.

The workshop is staffed by skilled craftsmen who are part of a team. They have spacious and well-ventilated workshops. There is a dining room where management and craftsmen sit down together for lunch and tea breaks each day. We at Bronzino® have regular meetings in the workshop with the staff and working conditions are monitored.

Caring for your Copper Container

Copper is naturally antibacterial and self-healing, which makes it wonderfully easy to care for!

General Care and Cleaning

To remove dust and cobwebs, simply give the container a brushing with a soft household brush from time to time.

Water marks and everyday grime can easily be removed by wiping with a damp cloth, mild soap and warm water. Ensure that all soap traces have been removed, and leave to dry. Finally, apply a thin layer of fresh wax if required.

We do recommend regular waxing, especially if the containers are in a hard water area, as it maintains the lustrous appearance of the patina, and provides better water runoff. We recommend the use of soft, natural beeswax from a jar or tin, or Renaissance Wax, a product specially developed to protect museum exhibits and other valuable artefacts. For more information, see www.picreator.co.uk

Never use disinfectants, household cleaners, pressure washers and abrasives on containers. There's simply no need, and they will remove or damage the finish.

Always ensure that containers are well wrapped in polythene or bubble wrap if the surrounding area needs to be cleaned with a pressure washer. Debris and other materials released by pressure washing can damage the surface of the container and its finish.

Scratches

As copper is softer than, say, stainless steel, it can scratch during everyday use. However, scratches almost always heal themselves if left alone. Within a short space of time, you'll notice that scratches begin to darken and blend back into the surrounding finish.

Spots and Stains

Acidic or alkaline substances such as gardening chemicals and pet urine should not be allowed to come into contact with copper, as they are likely to cause spots and stains. If this occurs, immediately rinse the surface thoroughly with water, then follow the simple cleaning routine described above.

Caring for your Zinc Container

One of zinc's greatest attributes is longevity – it has an extremely long service life. The surface of zinc sheet naturally oxidises to form a thin layer of stable zinc carbonate, which ensures it requires virtually no maintenance.

General Care and Cleaning

To remove dust and cobwebs, simply give the container a brushing with a soft household brush from time to time.

Water marks and everyday grime can easily be removed by wiping with a damp cloth, mild soap and warm water. Ensure that all soap traces have been removed, and leave to dry.

Never use disinfectants, household cleaners, pressure washers and abrasives on containers. There's simply no need, and they will remove or damage the finish.

Always ensure that containers are well wrapped in polythene or bubble wrap if the surrounding area needs to be cleaned with a pressure washer. Debris and other materials released by pressure washing can damage the surface of the container and its finish.

As zinc weathers and ages, it acquires a patina of great depth and beauty. Areas that are exposed or regularly touched will brighten, more sheltered parts will darken, and the end result is a material that blends beautifully into its surroundings.

Scratches

Light scratches on zinc containers will heal themselves if left alone. Over time, you'll notice that scratches begin to darken and blend back into the surrounding patina.

Spots and Stains

Like copper, zinc is susceptible to staining by acidic or alkaline substances. If this occurs, immediately rinse the surface thoroughly with water, then follow the simple cleaning routine described above.