



IMAGE COURTESY OF MAISON PAX

Unlacquered Brass Hardware:
Expectations of Aging Gracefully



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Unlacquered brass is simply brass hardware that does not have a protective coating such as a lacquer or sealer. The brass is left to interact freely with its environment developing a natural patina, tarnish and staining, achieving the highly valued aesthetic over time. Specifying unlacquered brass hardware is basically an instruction to the supplier not to interfere with the desired aging and patination process. The natural patination that develops forms a protective layer on the brass. This is the desired outcome when specifying or purchasing unlacquered hardware.

If unlacquered brass hardware is selected for a project, natural tarnishing and patinating will occur.

If natural patination and aging of the hardware is NOT desired, specify or order the hardware with a lacquer or sealer coat to help mitigate natural patination.

The actual rate of change will depend on the hardware composition, usage, installed location, and even location within a project. In some locations the noticeable changes may be immediate, or even before your product arrives on-site.

Aging Gracefully – Expectations with Unlacquered brass hardware:

- 1** Brass hardware is susceptible to patination when exposed to moisture, humidity, oxygen, air pollution and other elements in the environment.
- 2** Patination will naturally be uneven, determined by immediate environment, exposure to the elements and level of usage amongst other factors. This is the desired aesthetic outcome when ordering unlacquered brass hardware.
- 3** Air Quality: Pollutants and chemicals in the air, such as sulfur compounds, or coastal areas with high salinity will accelerate tarnishing.
- 4** Degree and rate of change will differ between exterior and interior surfaces.
- 5** Usage & Handling: Pieces that are frequently touched or used, will patina and show wear different compared to stationary pieces. Oils from skin will also affect how brass tarnishes.
- 6** Brass Compositions – Hardware components between suppliers, and even within the same components (i.e. hinges, hinge tips, handles) will contain different brass alloys made up of different chemical compositions, that will patina and naturally tarnish different shades and colors, and at varying rates of change.
- 7** Depending on the material composition of a part, expected shades and color can range from a combination of richer tones of pink, red, brown and Verde (green).
- 8** Natural Oils: Some pieces might retain natural oils from handling, which can temporarily protect them from tarnishing. If one piece has been handled more than another, it might show less change.

Unlacquered brass used to be referred to as “delacquered brass”. Delacquered means remove the lacquer coat from the finish. It is an instruction not to seal the brass against natural patination. Unlacquered simply acknowledges that adding a sealer or lacquer coating is an option you can choose or avoid as part of the hardware finish specification.

Patination and tarnish can be minimized with regular maintenance and polishing with a high-quality metal polish for example.

If you have any questions, please reach out to our customer navigation team.



EXAMPLE: ‘New’ Unlacquered Brass



EXAMPLE: ‘Aging’ Unlacquered Brass

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