

What is the best way to remove ivy and other vines from brick, stone, and masonry walls?

Ivy growing on the side of a home or building creates a feeling of warmth, reassurance, and interest. However, the tendrils or aerial roots can grow into the brick or stonework, causing it to flake and fall apart. If you decide to remove ivy or other vegetation from a brick or stone wall, do so with care to avoid further damage to the masonry. Here is a procedure to follow that should help you safely clear the growth.

NOTE: Before attempting any removal, make sure you are wearing the proper personal protective equipment, such as gloves and goggles.

Step 1. Kill the Ivy

If there is any living ivy, it will need to be killed using a glyphosate-based herbicide. Spray the ivy, making sure to saturate it, avoiding any nearby plants. Wait for it to turn completely brown. It may take several days. Reapplication may be necessary. Make sure to do this in dry, low-wind weather.

Step 2. Cut the Ivy

Once all the ivy is dead, use a saw or sharp shears to cut the main trunks as close to the ground as possible.

Step 3. Remove the Ivy

Remove as much of the top growth as possible with shears. DO NOT pull the ivy. Pulling can cause additional damage to the brick or stone.

Step 4. Remove the Roots

Once all the top growth is removed, scrape the aerial roots with a putty knife held at a 30 degree angle. Be careful not to dig the putty knife into the brick or stone. Difficult aerial roots can be burnt off with a torch. Remove any

remaining aerial roots with a wire brush.

Step 5. Rinse the Surface

Rinse the brick and stone with clean water. You can scrub with a soft scrub brush, if desired. DO NOT use a metal brush with water. Use only a nylon brush.

Step 6. Clean the Surface

Clean the brick or stone with a good, quality, stone-safe, pH-neutral cleaner.

Even with the greatest care, removing ivy can result in damage to the masonry.

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