



Classical Columns: Historical Notes

Columns, The Classical Orders

Classical columns as we know them originated in ancient Egypt in their first form, then were developed to extremely sophisticated levels by the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Entasis, the special shape of the shaft

Columns do not have a simple taper, they have Entasis which is a special bulge introduced into the design to compensate for the optical illusion of bowing; this makes a tapered column appear weak and slender in the middle of the shaft. A complex mathematical formula exists to compute the exact shape of this Entasis; we always follow this formula with great care during the design and fabrication of our columns.

Proportions, height vs diameter

All classical column proportions have been laid down in famous source works written by architectural authorities including Vitruvius, Serlio, Palladio. Ask us for our suggestions and we will give you a choice of correct proportions.

Quality Points to Note

Haddonstone columns are made with all the correct details directly from specially made patterns which comply in all respects to designs drawn up by Palladio when he was working in the Veneto area of Italy in the fifteenth century. Note that all fillet mouldings are sharp and crisp, and round mouldings are a full half circle. This makes the columns look far better and we also believe that due respect should be paid to the original designers.

Spacing Suggestions

We are often asked for advice on the most pleasing spacing between columns when they are used in pergolas or in a portico. The general rule is to make the space between columns equal to the height so that the space itself is roughly square. For porticos try a factor of 5 times the module or diameter at the base of the shaft for your distance between columns.

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