

The Homeowner’s Guide to Choosing Stone Veneer

Choose a look you love. Plan a project that lasts.

Choosing stone should be the fun part of your project. There’s no single right answer: your taste and how you want your home to feel matter more than any rule. This short guide shares what we’ve learned over 35+ years so you can choose with confidence.

From TriLite Stone, a family-owned manufacturer in Howard Lake, Minnesota, making stone veneer since 1990.

01 / Finding a stone style that fits your home

Almost any stone can work on almost any home. Plenty of beautiful projects break the “rules.” If you love a stone, that’s a great place to start.

- Long, low homes often look natural with longer, horizontal stone.
- Rougher, irregular stone tends to feel relaxed and rustic; squared stone tends to feel more structured.
- Stone usually looks most at home where real stone would be: at the base of walls, on columns, and wrapping around corners.

If your home leans toward...	You might enjoy exploring
Prairie, ranch, or modern	Ledgestone, Super-Stak Mortarless
Craftsman or bungalow	Ledgestone on porch columns and wainscot
Farmhouse, cabin, or lake home	Country styles: Fieldstone, River Rock
Traditional or European	Limestone, Traditional Stone, Specialty Blends

These are ideas, not rules. Mix and match, and trust what you like.

Popular places to use stone: fireplaces, accent walls, porch columns, entryways, a band along the base of the house, or a full exterior.

02 / Colors that work with your siding and roof

Color is personal, and there are many good combinations. A few tips that tend to help:

- **Start with your roof.** It's the hardest color to change, so many homeowners pick stone that picks up a tone from it.
- **Warm with warm, cool with cool** is a reliable starting point: tans and browns with brown roofs, grays and charcoals with gray or black roofs.
- **A little contrast helps.** Stone a shade lighter or darker than your siding usually stands out more than an exact match.
- **Mortar color matters too.** It can warm up or cool down the overall look.

Best way to decide

Look at real samples outside, in daylight, next to your house, and step back to the street. Photos and screens don't show true color.

About TriLite color. In our manufactured stone veneer, the base color runs all the way through, so a cut edge shows a color in the same family as the face rather than plain gray concrete.

03 / Common mistakes before ordering

Most of these are easy to avoid once you know about them.

- **Deciding from a photo.** See real samples first.
- **Forgetting corners and trim.** Corners, sills, and caps are ordered separately. Your supplier can help you measure.
- **Ordering too little or in pieces.** Ordering the whole job at once helps keep color consistent and avoids delays.
- **Ending stone at an outside corner.** Wrapping the corner looks more natural.
- **Setting stone too close to the ground.** Plan for at least 4 inches above grade and 2 inches above paved surfaces like patios and driveways.
- **Choosing an installer on price alone.** Good prep behind the stone is what makes it last.

04 / Manufactured stone vs. natural stone

Both are great choices. TriLite offers both, so we're happy to help you weigh them.

	Manufactured stone	Natural stone
Look	Molded from real stone; natural appearance	Real stone, natural variation
Weight	Typically lighter; adhered veneer generally needs no footing	Thin veneer differs from full-thickness stone, which may need a footing or ledge
Cost	Usually lower	Usually higher
Color	Consistent, made-to-order blends	Varies by quarry
Warranty / durability	TriLite: 50-year limited product warranty on qualifying veneer	Highly durable; product and installation warranties vary

For most homes, manufactured stone gives the look you want at a friendlier price. If having real stone matters to you, ask us about natural options.

05 / What to expect before installation

A little planning up front makes install day go smoothly.

1. Measure and choose. Measure your walls and corners, then approve your stone and mortar color from real samples.

2. Order everything at once, including corners and trim.

3. Prep the walls. Siding comes off where stone will go, and the installer adds the appropriate water barrier, flashing, and a base for the stone to bond to.

4. Mind the clearance. Stone should sit at least 4 inches above grade (soil) and 2 inches above paved surfaces so moisture can drain.

5. Install and finish. Stones are blended from several boxes as they go on, then grouted (for mortared styles).

Minnesota tip

Mortar needs suitable temperatures to cure, so fall and early-spring projects are worth booking early.

Installation details vary by product, wall system, and local requirements. Have your installer follow current manufacturer instructions and applicable building codes.

06 / Curb appeal and property value

Stone is one of the best-returning exterior upgrades. In Zonda’s 2025 Cost vs. Value Report, a manufactured stone veneer project returned an estimated **207.9% of its cost at resale** on average nationally, third-best of 28 projects.

That study looked at a stone band across the front of a home. Results vary by market and project. The appeal is easy to understand: buyers judge a home from the street, and stone conveys quality and permanence.

[Read Zonda’s 2025 Cost vs. Value Report →](#)

07 / Questions worth asking before you start

For your stone supplier	For your installer
Can I see real samples or a finished project?	Can I see a few of your past stone projects?
What does the warranty cover?	What goes behind the stone to keep water out?
Do you offer matching corners and trim?	Will you keep stone 4 inches above grade and 2 inches above paved surfaces?
Can you help me figure out how much to order?	Are you insured, and is a permit needed?

Ready when you are

Browse styles at trilitestone.com, visit our Howard Lake showroom or a TriLite dealer, or request samples and a quote. We’re glad to help you explore.

TriLite Stone Company

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Family-owned since 1990 · 50-Year Limited Product Warranty

Warranty applies to qualifying manufactured stone veneer; see current written terms. Property value figures: Zonda, 2025 Cost vs. Value Report. Estimates are not a guarantee of resale results.