

CHROME VS NICKEL VS STAINLESS FIXTURES

For interiors the choice between nickel plating vs. nickel & chrome plating can be based on the look of it.

- Nickel is very slightly yellowish/warmer more “traditional” look
- Chrome is very slightly bluish - bling-y-er.

STAINLESS STEEL - True stainless steel hardware is typically made from a metal alloy that doesn't have plating. Its composition does contain chromium and/or nickel to make it durable.

PRO:

Quality stainless steel hardware is corrosion-, tarnish-, and scratch-resistant.

CHROME - Metal core plated with thin chromium veneer. Chrome plating may be

- Hard chrome: a thick layer of chrome that offers exceptional hardness, wear-resistance, and oil-holding capability,
 - *but limited corrosion resistance*
- Nickel-chrome (nickel plating followed by a flash of chrome for tarnish resistance and extra corrosion resistance, e.g., on vehicles
- Standard chrome hardware has a polished surface that shines like a mirror and reflects light.
- Satin or brushed chrome has a matte surface.

PRO:

- sparkles, doesn't rust or need polishing
- . But for that reason, I wouldn't have polished nickel in my kitchen where it would get more heavy-duty use. Also, my kitchen is a transitional look - i.e. neither traditional nor contemporary, and I like the sparkle of the polished chrome faucet in it.

CON:

- can appear dull when damaged. The metal core can rust if it loses plating from accidental damage or natural wear.

NICKEL - Metal core plated with thin nickel veneer.

- Conventional electrolytic nickel plating is decorative, functional, and somewhat corrosion resistant.
- Electroless nickel plating (actually autocatalytic nickel plating) is a glassy nickel-phosphorous coating that is very corrosion resistant and quite hard, and often used on rough-service applications.

PRO:

- can have a high polish or satin finish
- resists corrosion and wear
- can be lacquered to help slow dulling and tarnishing

CON

- high maintenance, shows water spots, tarnishes but easily removed with either a damp cloth, or with some light silver polish
- not as hard as chromium
- can dull and tarnish over time
- polished nickel costs more than polished chrome