

# DECORATIVE CONCRETE SUPPLY

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## FAQ'S For Stamped Concrete

### **What is stamped concrete?**

- Stamped concrete, often called textured or imprinted concrete, is concrete that replicates stones such as slate and flagstone, tile, brick and even wood. Ideal for beautifying pool decks, driveways, entries, courtyards, and patios, stamped concrete is the perfect outdoor paving choice.

### **How much concrete can be stamped at one time?**

- Crew size, experience, & weather conditions all play a part in this equation. For a 400-600 S/F pour a 3-4 man crew should work.

### **How many types of stamps are there?**

- 100's of patterns: slate, stone, tile, cobblestone, brick, and even wood. Several sizes, shapes, and textures allow for an almost endless selection of tools; seamless patterns also allow for specialty saw cuts and border tools can be used to add contrast.

### **How many stamps will it take to do a job?**

- We recommend a full row to span the widest area and at least one to begin a row back. Two flex stamps should also be used in areas where a solid stamp cannot fully layout on the surface.

### **What is a flex stamp?**

- A flex stamp is made to bend or flex very easy. They are used around edges and walls where access is difficult.

### **What type of sub-grade should the stamped concrete be placed?**

- The sub-grade should be both well compacted and well drained prior to pouring. This ensures that the pour will be even in depth. This will also help ensure even set times for imprinting. A crushed stone base works well.

### **What type of reinforcement should be used?**

- Use what is designed for your project. We feel that rebar is a much better option than wire mesh and should be chaired up to the proper depth in your pour. The use of fiber mesh will be a benefit to stamped concrete as a secondary reinforcement only.

### **What about release for stamping tools?**

- You will need a release agent. There are two types of release agents, powdered release and liquid release. Powdered release agents come in multiple colors and are applied to the surface. A 30LB pail will cover approximately 1,000 S/F. The slab must be washed off and dry before a cure or sealer can be applied. Liquid release agents are clear and allow you to see

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your work better and do not require washing before a sealer is applied. A 5 gallon bucket will cover approximately 1,000 S/F of stamping.

### **Will stamped concrete crack?**

- Yes, stamped concrete is no different than normal concrete. Remember to provide proper joint spacing. If saw cuts are used, cut ¼ of slab thickness and within 24 hours of placement. Border tools can be used to 'hide' cuts and tooled joints. The use of fiber mesh can also help in crack control.

### **How much water can be added to a load of concrete?**

Adding 1 gallon of water will increase the slump about 1" per cubic yard. It can also decrease compressive strength by 200-300 PSI & increase the potential for shrinkage by approximately 10%; you could also waste as much as ¼ bag of cement and affect the final durability of the concrete. Take caution when adding water to colored concrete as extra water can affect the tinting strength of color.

### **Coloring of stamped concrete-how is it done and what are the methods?**

Several methods can be used.

- Integral color - This method comes in either powder or liquid and is added to the concrete truck prior to pouring. A predetermined amount is added to each cubic yard of concrete to provide color throughout the mix.
- Color hardener - This method is broadcast over the surface of the concrete then troweled in. By doing this the surface PSI is increased. This method makes it easy to apply one or more colors. Coverage is around 100 S/F per 60LB of hardener.
- Acid or water-based stains – These are topical color applications applied to existing concrete slabs. They are typically sprayed on to the surface, but some products can be brushed, rolled or sponged.

### **I see some jobs with many color schemes how is this done?**

- Again, several methods can be used. Two of the more effective methods we have found are use of two or more colors of release powder, (this can be achieved by both liquid and dry applications) and the use of two or more color hardeners.
- Water based stains and acid stains may also be used according to manufacturer's directions.
- Each project is different; please work closely with all involved so that expectations are reasonable and obtainable.

### **Should stamped concrete be sealed?**

- Yes, sealing allows for easier cleaning of the concrete and it will provide increased protection when the concrete is exposed to freeze-thaw cycles. It also provides a thin film which can protect from oil & grease and greatly reduce pop outs and scaling.

### **Is sealer permanent?**

- No, concrete will need to be resealed. Weather, traffic and other elements the slab is exposed to will determine how often you should reseal.

### **Which sealer is the best?**

- The intended use will determine the best sealer for the job. We offer several water-based, solvent based, epoxy and poly-urethanes. It is important that each project be evaluated individually for the best sealer for the job.