

40 DECORATIVE CONCRETE TIPS IN 60 MINUTES

Brought to you by:

Todd Scharich



AGENDA

- Design
- Forming
- Safety
- Tools
- Placement
- Cleaning
- Business
- Surface Crusting
- Finishing Aids
- Step Facing
- Stamping Early
- Seamless Stamping
- Borders
- Detailing





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DESIGN — CREATE WORKABLE LAYOUTS



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FORMING — CUT SOD WITH CUT OFF SAW

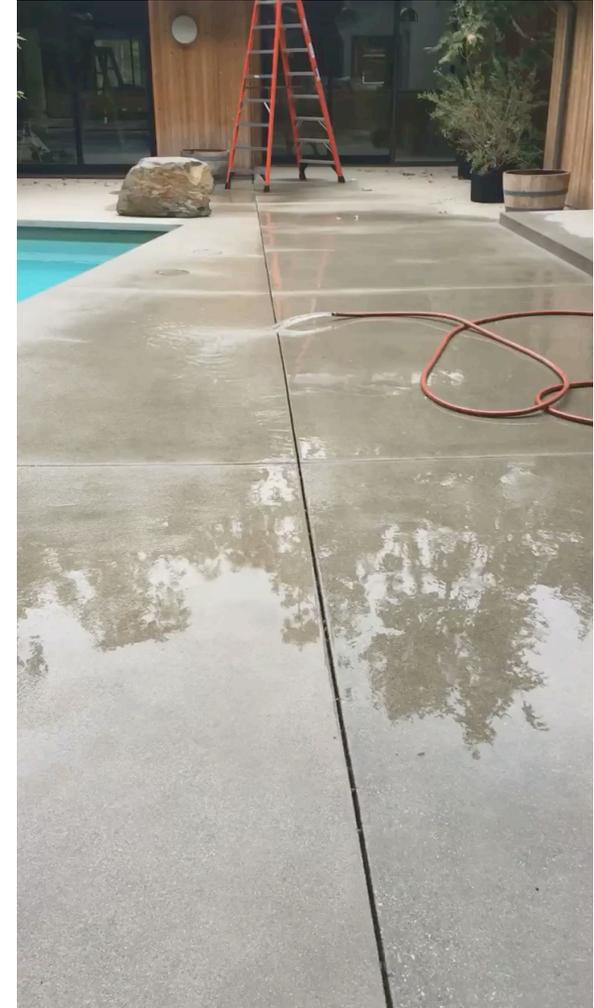


FORMING – SAW CUT TRENCH DRAIN

- 2-4” PVC pipe
- Placed at lower ¼ of the slab
- Screws keep it from twisting
- Stack blades if needed
- Cap for cleanout if possible



FORMING — SAW CUT TRENCH DRAIN



FORMING — HOLD EXPANSION UP



PLACEMENT — BARRICADE YOUR PROJECTS



SAFETY – CAUTION AROUND POWER LINES



In the fall of 2016, a male **concrete finisher** in his 30s was electrocuted when the metal handle of his 29-foot-long metal bull float he was using to smooth **concrete** contacted an energized 7,200 volt **power line** overhead. MIFACE researchers became aware of the fatality via the MIOSHA 24-hour ASAP reporting system.

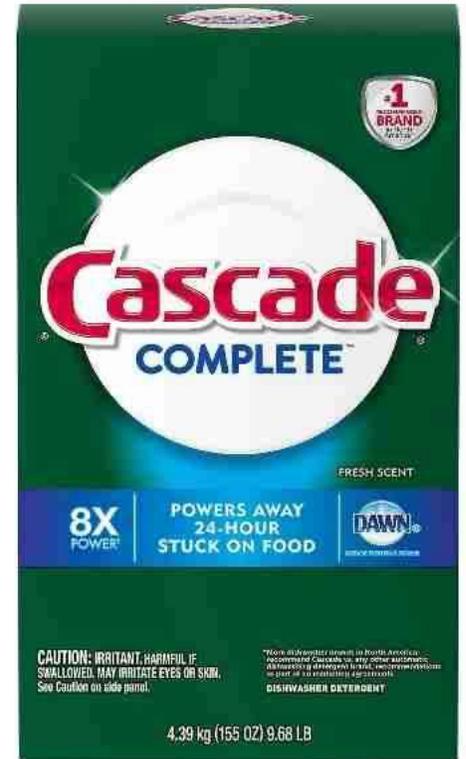
www.elcosh.org › document › Concrete+Finisher+Elect... ▼

[Concrete Finisher Electrocuted When Bull Float ... - eLCOSH](#)



PLACEMENT — PROTECT SURROUNDINGS

- Use soap scum to protect:
 - Neighboring concrete
 - Vinyl siding
- Protects from:
 - Concrete splash
 - Powdered release
- Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup to 1 gallon of water
- Spray at least once, but twice is better



STAMPING — AVOIDING SURFACE CRUSTING



STAMPING – AVOIDING CRUSTING

- Conditions that create a brittle surface are
 - Early spring day – cold base slows the set of the concrete
 - No humidity – dries out the surface
 - Warm sun – dries out the surface
 - Wind – dries out the surface



STAMPING – AVOID CRUSTING

- Use non-chloride accelerators to speed set of the full matrix
 - Can use for efficiency in warm weather with smaller projects
- Constant use of evaporation retarders
 - Solomon Day One, Increte Delay, Scofield SikaFilm, WR Meadows Evapre, Euclid Eucobar,
 - Use up until release is broadcast or sprayed



PLACEMENT — FINISHING AIDS

- Widespread use of Day 1 by concrete stampers
 - Improves workability on high risk days
 - Aids in application of color hardener
 - **Hardens and densifies the slab**
 - Reduces water vapor transmission
- Use on regular or colored slabs
- Trowel it in or it may leave white residue



Best Practices in Decorative Concrete

Surface Tears in Textured Stamped Concrete

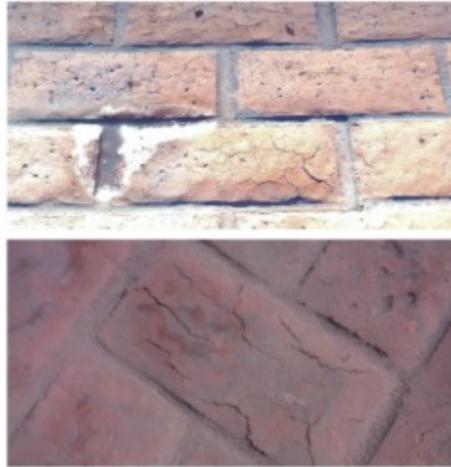
Textured stamped concrete is created by indenting fresh concrete with rubber mats. To form crisp, clean impressions, the concrete must have stiffened enough to walk on yet still be workable enough to allow the ridges on the mat to be pressed into the concrete.

If the surface is crusted, however, the ridges will act like blunt knives as they're pushed into the concrete, causing the surface between ridges to stretch and tear. While the tears can be unsightly, they are not structural. Projects with surface tears have been monitored for nearly 10 years. Even in environments with cycles of freezing and thawing, unrepaired surface tears have not grown in size or caused degradation of the concrete surface.

Still, they should be minimized, and this can best be achieved by reducing the probability of surface crusting before the surface is stamped. Surface crusting can occur when the surface temperature is higher than the slab base or when the surface is exposed to low relative humidity and a slight wind.

The best practices for minimizing crusting and surface tears are:

- *Use a concrete mixture specifically developed and recommended by your concrete producer for stamped concrete.* Such a mixture will have ample paste (cementitious material and water). Avoid concrete mixtures developed for highway or industrial floor applications, as they tend to have large coarse aggregates (greater than 1 in. [25 mm] maximum size), and they typically do not have sufficient paste for stamping.
- *Reduce the setting time.* Use a non-chloride accelerator in the mixture to speed concrete setting, especially if the base is cold. This reduces the retarding effect of the cold base and promotes faster setting of the concrete surface so that it is less affected by the sun or wind.
- *Keep the surface moist.* Spray an evaporation reducer on the surface to keep the surface moist and soft. Evaporation reducers do not affect surface color or color hardeners, and they can be used up to the time that release agents are applied. Do not spray water on the surface, as it may lighten the color. Also, do not spray the concrete with a surface retarder (typically used to create exposed aggregate finishes), as these materials are not evaporation reducers.



Decorative concrete contractors that use these practices can minimize, but not always eliminate, surface tears in stamped concrete. If surface tears occur, they can be repaired. If the concrete is still workable, use a small, 2 to 3 in. (51 to 76 mm) diameter foam roller covered in release agent to close the tears. If tears are discovered after the release agent has been removed, work a slurry of water, polymer, and color hardener (sifted to remove larger particles) into the tears. After the slurry has dried, use a damp sponge to clean the surrounding area to minimize the amount of slurry mixture that will remain visible after the slab has been sealed.

Members of the Decorative Concrete Council (DCC) of the American Society of Concrete Contractors (ASCC) will work with owners and architects to develop specifications to meet appearance requirements for their decorative concrete projects. For more information, visit www.asconline.org or call the ASCC Decorative Concrete Hotline at (888) 483-5288.



As published in *Concrete International*, a publication of the American Concrete Institute.



FINISHING – MOPPING THE BULL FLOAT

- Mop technique rotating over the form
- Weight stays on the form
- Reduces dipped edges



STEP OR PORCH FACING

- **Slurry for Step or Porch Facing**
 - Drill 50 ¼" holes in the lower 1/3 of a 5-gallon bucket
 - Fill bucket with extra colored concrete from pour
 - Set bucket on 6-10 mil plastic or sealable bag
 - Vibrate slurry out of bucket holes
 - Fold plastic around slurry and place out of sun, or in cooler
 - Use slurry later, or next day to finish vertical face



PLACEMENT — STEP OR PORCH FACING

- Capture cream for step or porch facing (integral color)
- Stick rebar under the last chute and capture the cream in a 5-gallon bucket
- Place metal open screen trash can inside a 5-gallon bucket to let cream drip ooze out.



PLACEMENT - REDUCE HONEYCOMBING



Video – Courtesy Jason Geiser



STEP LIGHTING W/FORM-LINERS

- Cut 2" foam to match the size of an outlet box
- Insert conduit / wire into 2" foam block
- Wrap with tape



STEP LIGHTING W/FORM-LINERS

- Use putty to help secure
- After pouring, cut or drill out the foam



FORM LINER TIPS

- Cut liners with a razor blade
- Cut corners 45 degrees, use putty to fill any voids between pieces
- Use brad nail to secure liner to form
- Use Gorilla Glue Super Glue Gel to re-assemble cut liners
- Mark the liners before or right after cutting for re-assembly



FINISHING

- Reduce color issues with consistent finishing
 - Consistent type of tooling and number of passes



COLOR ISSUES CAUSED BY POOR FINISHING



STAMPING — STAMP EARLY

- Use picks or stages to start early



SEAMLESS TEXTURE SKIN STAMPING

- Flip your mat edges to eliminate pattern lines



SEAMLESS TEXTURE SKIN STAMPING

- Distribute weight evenly to avoid heal marks





SEAMLESS TEXTURE SKIN STAMPING

- Start later than you would with traditional mats
- Avoid tamping the handles or magnetic dots
- Consider starting in the middle to make changes in texture less noticeable
 - Obviously need a sufficient quantity of mats

STAMPING — LIQUID RELEASE PUCKER MARKS

- Lift a corner of the mat to reduce tension
- Spray liquid release after lifting mat (test)
- Knock down with light swipe of steel trowel



DETAILING — COPING EDGES

- Caution tape works well to round the edges



BORDERS

- Use adjustable edger
- If broadcasting color, divide areas with:
 - Masonite
 - Glassboard
 - Lap siding
 - FRP – fiberglass reinforced plastic



BORDERS

- While stamping the field, protect the border with:
 - Cardboard, masonite, or seamless skins



BORDERS — JOINT STRIPS



BORDER COLORING

- For easy contrasting border colors consider Brickform Cem-Coat or Proline ProStain
- Can be antiqued as well

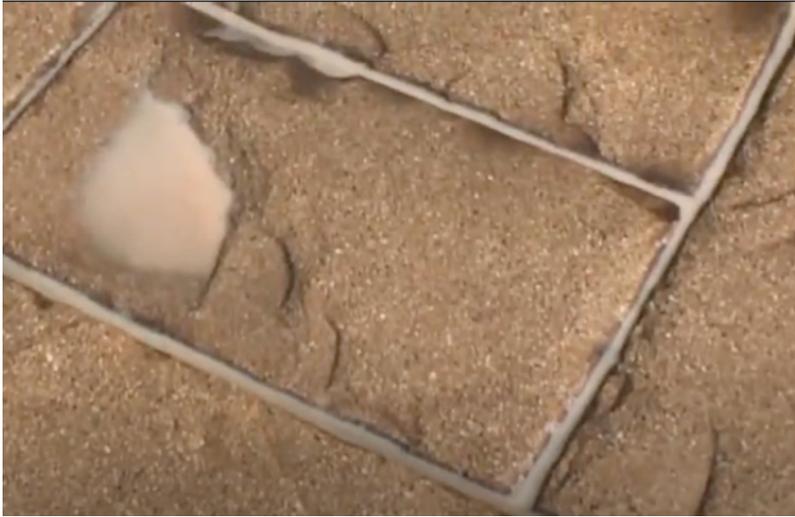


ANTIQUING NEW OR OLD STAMPED CONCRETE

- Pre-wet the concrete



ANTIQUING NEW OR OLD STAMPED CONCRETE



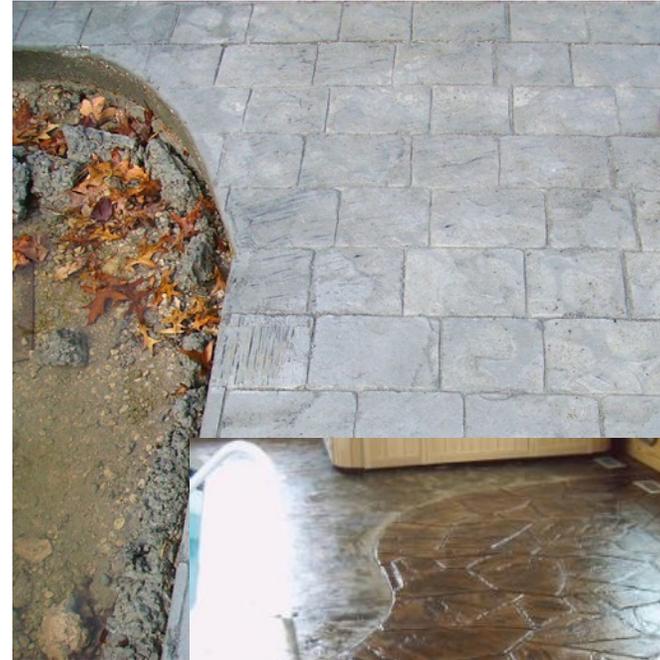
DETAILING — GROUTING STAMPED CONCRETE

- Charge \$2 - \$5 more per sqft
 - Cut and clean the stamped surface
 - Use ¼ “ or less roller cover to lightly seal and allow the sealer to dry 1-2 hours
 - Mix a rough grade or sandy overlayment
 - Wet the surface and use push broom to work grout into the grout lines
 - Continue to use hose and light spray along with broom to keep cleaning grout off the surface
 - Allow to dry and then seal



CLEANING — ACID VS POWER WASHER

- **Power Washing**
 - Doesn't leave residue in low areas
 - Can overpower the concrete
 - Can leave streaks or marks
- **Acid Washing**
 - Leaves residue in low areas
 - More consistent finished color
 - Lightly etches the surface and promotes sealer adhesion



CLEANING - MURIATIC ACID WASHING



CLEANING — FLOOR BUFFER

- Use floor buffer on larger projects to help with consistent finished coloring



CLEANING - LEAF STAINS

- 16 part water
- 16 part bleach
- 1 part liquid laundry detergent
- Spray it on
- Let it sit for a couple minutes
- Scrub if needed
- Thoroughly rinse



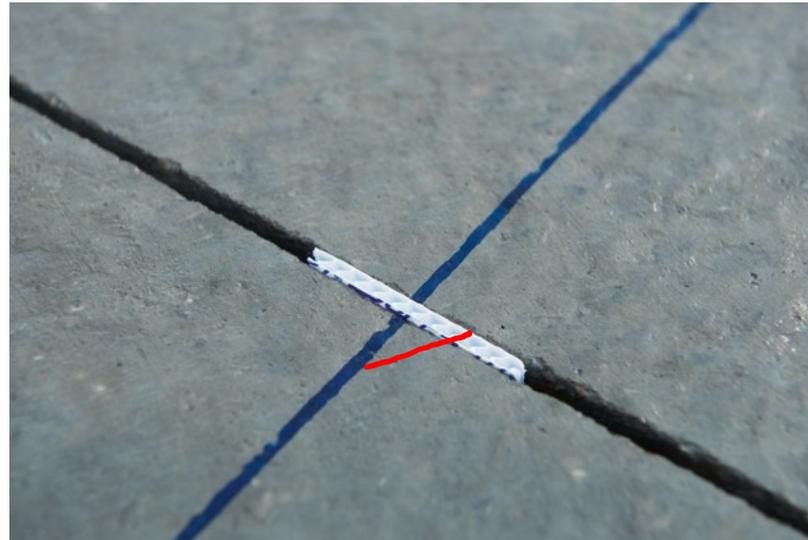
BUSINESS — GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

- Put a bottle opener in your door, sometimes the caps don't twist off



CUTTING — JOINT PROTECTORS

- Use old corrugated plastic signs
- Strengthens fragile corners during cutting
- Keeps corners from breaking and crumbling



SEALING — UPSIDE DOWN BUCKET



SAFETY – HOSE MISHAPS

- Use coconut oil to remove sealer from skin



TOOLS — STAY WARM

- Nitrile gloves as 1st layer keeps hands warm and dry



TOOLS — RUBBER BOOTS

- Use a plastic bag to slide on rubber boots



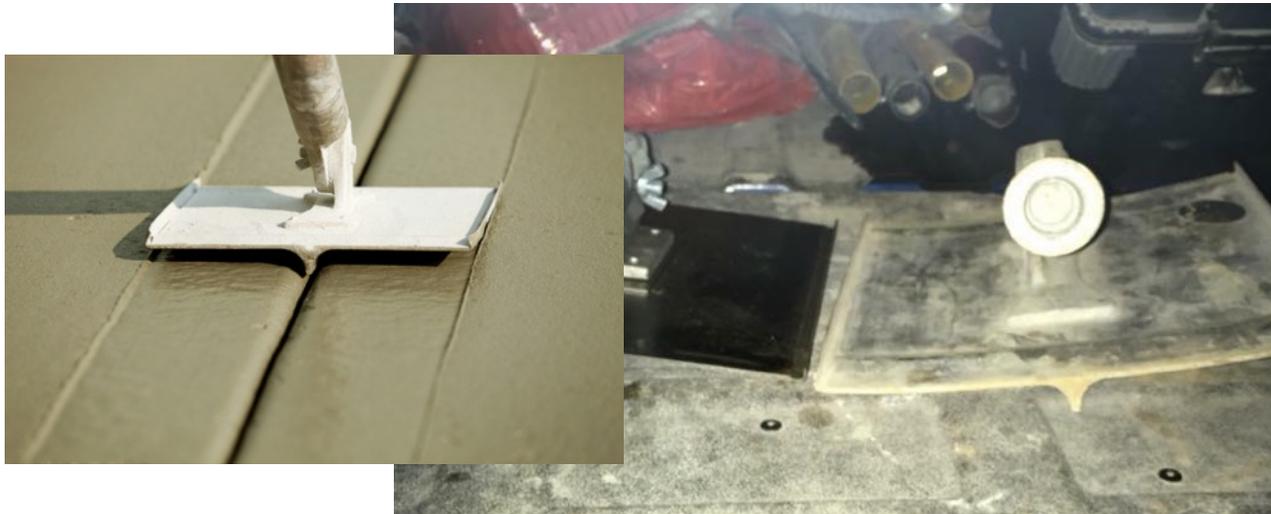
TOOLS — KEEP TOOLS TIGHT

- Use caution tape or old sealer rings to keep your tools from loosening



TOOLS – BENT JOINTER FOR BROOM FINISH

- Reduce ridges by bending jointer for 2nd pass prior to brooming
- Set in curb and step on it until you create the bend
- Keep checking the spot welds to not over bend



TOOLS — STRAIGHTEN METAL STAKES

- Hit a sledgehammer with your stake



TOOLS — SPRAYER SELECTION

- In a recent survey of 7,000 members of the Flatwork Kings Facebook Group, the overwhelming favorite choice was:
 - **Chapin Extreme Stainless-Steel Sprayer**
 - Survey found the stainless cleans far easier and is lasting significantly longer than other sprayer cans.
 - **Brickform Precision Tip Kit**
 - The Precision Tip Kit sprays about 20 degrees wider than normal and seems to eliminate the drip associated with most tips and does not clog with anti skid additives.



BUSINESS — SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

- Facebook
 - Inexpensive and easy to promote
 - Boost your finished work
- Instagram
 - Highest engagement rates
 - Typical cost of \$0.75 - \$1.00 per click
- Pinterest
 - Similar costs as Facebook
 - High volume viewership, less engagement

Promote Your Business Locally

Run this ad continuously
Your ads will run continuously for a daily budget. This option is recommended. [Learn more](#)

Choose when this ad will end

Duration ⓘ

Days End date

Daily Budget ⓘ

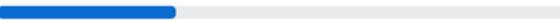
\$5.00 



Actual amount spent daily may vary. ⓘ

Estimated People Reached ⓘ

1,000 - 2,900 people per day of 17,000



Refine your audience or add budget to reach more of the people that matter to you.

You will spend a total of **\$25.00**. This ad will run for 5 days, ending on May 9, 2020.

BUSINESS — LIMITATIONS AND ABILITIES

- Know your limitations, but....
- Stay on the outer edge of your comfort zone
 - Size of pour
 - Incorporating monolithic borders
 - Adding secondary coloring
 - Medallions within the pour



SALES — SELL UPGRADES

- Look for low cost / high return upgrades
 - Medallions
 - Secondary coloring
 - Seating walls
 - Banding or borders



BUSINESS — GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

- **Lunch and learns**
 - Local landscape architects
 - Progressive landscape firms (create a deal)
 - Larger general contractors

- **Have a mentor**
 - American Society of Concrete Contractors Mix Groups
 - Flatwork Kings (Facebook Group)

BUSINESS — GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

- Make a good first impression
- Pick color before final pricing
- Show your passion for the trade
- Do it right the first time
- Put it writing
- Order extra

HAVE FUN



CHECK OUT NEW RESOURCES ON OUR WEBSITE

www.dcrconcrete.com

GET YOUR 2021 PRICE BOOK!

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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING



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