

CONCRETE FLOOR PREPARATION GUIDE

- good preparation is the key to a good job -

COATING TYPE	SURFACE TRAFFIC LEVEL	CONCRETE PREPARATION				
		NATURAL OR WATER CLEAN	ACID ETCH WASH	GRINDING DIAMOND/PAD	SHOT BLASTING	SCARIFYING
SEALERS • Acrylseal • UNISEAL	Light to Medium Pedestrians, cars & trolleys	GOOD	OK	GOOD	POOR	NO GO
COATINGS • Colourseal • Decracoat	Light Pedestrians	GOOD	OK	GOOD	POOR	NO GO
EPOXIES Water Based • Dimacoat	Medium Motor Vehicles, trolleys, stain and chemical resistant	OK	POOR	GOOD	GOOD	POOR
EPOXIES 100% solids – self-leveling • Sikafloor 261T	Heavy Trucks, Fork lifts, chemical resistant	OK	NO GO	OK	GOOD	GOOD
CEMENT SCREEDS	Heavy Trucks, Fork lifts, chemical resistant	POOR	NO GO	OK	GOOD	GOOD



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Concrete Surface Preparation:

Proper surface preparation is an extremely important factor in the immediate and long term successful performance of the floor system.

Proper surface preparation includes the following:

1. **Inspection of the concrete substrate** to determine its general condition, soundness, presence of contaminants, presence of moisture vapour emissions and the best methods to use in the preparation of the surface.
2. **Removal and replacement of non-durable concrete** prior to installation of coating type.
3. **Decontamination of the concrete surface** requires the removal of oils, grease, wax, fatty acids and other contaminants.
4. **Creation of surface profile** can be accomplished by a number of methods each utilizing a selection of tools, equipment and materials to accomplish the intended purpose.
5. **Repair of surface irregularities** including bugholes, spalls, cracks, deteriorated joints, slopes, areas near transition zones, such as drains and doorways, etc. must be repaired prior to the flooring coating.

On occasions the existing surface may need to be scrapped back to inspect the concrete substrate. Hand or mechanic scrapers can be used.



Power Scrapers

Walk-behind, powered strippers and ride-on scraping machines have made flooring removal and removal of other materials much easier, faster and more effective. Even hand scrapers are now contractor-tough with spring steel blades and comfortable, ergonomic handles. These tools use razor sharp blades or teeth to slide under, fracture or otherwise remove unwanted materials from the surface.

Scrapers are used to remove a wide range of floor coverings, waterproofing membranes, roofing materials and thick coatings. Scrapers can remove rubber, epoxy, thin-set mortar, coatings, adhesives and more.

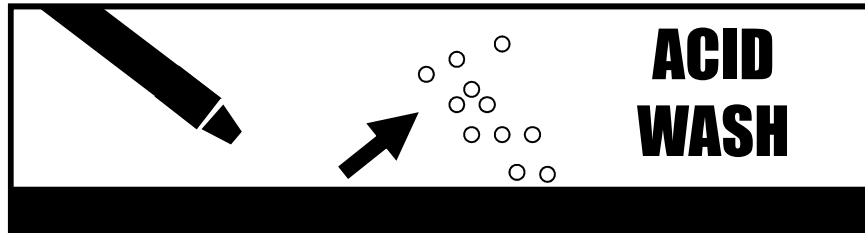


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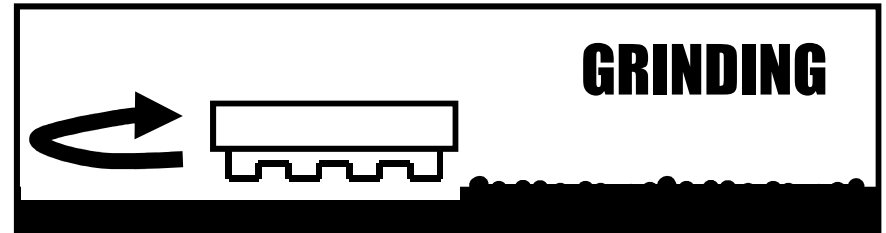
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Acid Etching

Of all the cleaning and profiling methods, acid etching produces the lowest profile, which is useful when the floor is going to be coated with a very thin system such as a clear urethane. The profile is similar to the roughness of 200 grain sandpaper. There is a widespread misconception that acid etching is the only process necessary to clean and profile concrete. But acid cannot remove coatings, dirt, oil, grease, or fat from concrete surfaces. Thus, other surface preparation procedures are needed in cases where cleaning is required. All contamination must be removed prior to the application of acid to create a uniform profile.



Grinding

Concrete grinding has a proven record for strength, durability and cost-effectiveness for a variety of applications, including floors, walkways, patios and driveways. As an increasingly popular alternative, grinding concrete flooring to a semi-gloss finish or a high gloss finish.

Diamond grinding results in a significant increase in surface macrotexture and corresponding improvement in friction. Diamond grinding restores rideability by removing surface irregularities caused by construction curling, slab warping, faulting, and roughness caused by construction work.

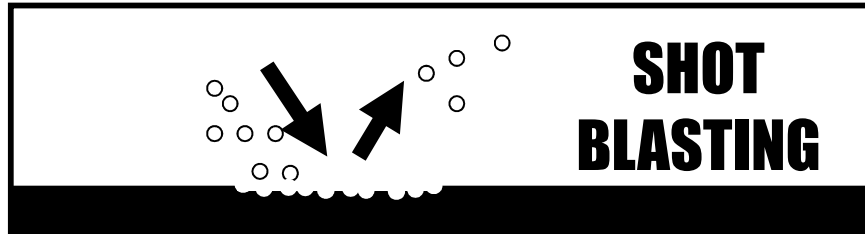


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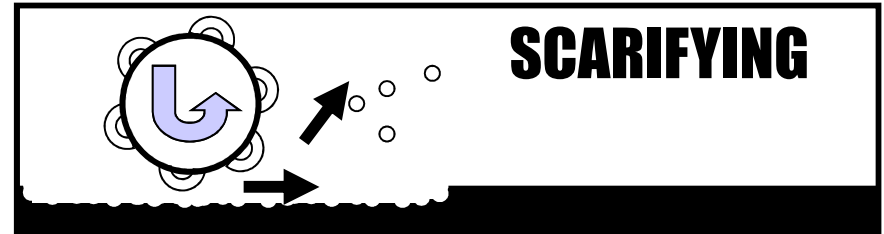
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Shot Blasting

Shot blasting is primarily known as an all-purpose, one-step cleaning and profiling method for concrete floors. It can efficiently clean materials such as dirt, grime, old coatings, and embedded chemical contaminants. Where there are not massive amounts of grease and oil on the floor, the recycled steel shot is cleaned sufficiently by the machine's air-wash separator so that the grease and oil are not redeposited on the surface. During recycling, dust from the concrete acts as a drying agent on the oil and grease and aids the cleaning of the abrasive. The shot-blasted surface is uniformly clean and profiled, and it readily accepts all coatings applied to it. In effect, a thin layer of the surface is blasted away, leaving essentially virgin concrete that will absorb the first coat of most systems.

The blasting process is contained within a housing, and the abrasive is recycled continuously.



Scarifying

To scarify a surface means to scratch it. Scarifying machines scratch the surface of concrete to remove dirt, coatings, grease, and sealers. Scarification is accomplished by a rotating drum, which has hardened cutters that scratch or abrade the concrete until all surface contamination is removed and sound concrete is exposed. Scarifying can achieve a profile ranging from 60 grain sandpaper to 1/8-inch grooves.



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