

FAQ Acid Stains

What exactly is acid stain?

- Acid stains are a combination of several materials. When applied properly over cured concrete they will leave a permanent color in the surface of the concrete. It is a chemical reaction to the concrete.

What type of colors?

- Most stain companies will have a selection of 8-10 standard colors, the brand we carry offers 8.

Why so few?

- A composition of the materials allows for only a few earth tone types colors. Light tans with shades of yellow, light and dark browns, some with reddish tones, blacks, light and dark shades of greens and light blues are all possible. A true acid stain is a chemical reaction within the concrete. There are no pigments, fillers or tints in the stain, the reaction with the cement creates the color deposit.

So then, what can I expect?

- You can expect a wide range of color even with 1 color. Just the finishing of the concrete allows for an uneven variegated look. Stains create the look of older stone and marble effects. Each floor will provide a new challenge, plus allow for a different look. One color may look different from job to job.

How is the floor prepared?

- Our recommendation is to create a profile in the concrete; this allows the stain to penetrate more into the concrete. All forms of cures and sealers must be removed. Remove any glue, paint or any coating that might be on the concrete. Use of a floor polisher is one good method with 100, 200, or 400 diamond pads. Buffers with black pads or sanding screens can also be effective. Chemical surface prep may be used. Test several areas with water. If the water beads up or you see visible stains, there is something that needs to be removed. If the water darkens the concrete then the acid stain should penetrate. NEVER USE MURIATIC ACID.

How is the stain applied?

- Several ways will provide a different look. The best methods we recommend are to apply with a non metallic pump up sprayer or bottle, cover the area thoroughly and PROTECT walls, doors, trim, and other objects that might be affected by over-spray. You may also use an acid resistant broom or brush to move the stain after spraying. DO NOT over brush and use the broom in a circular motion. Keep a wet edge; *a test of application methods is highly recommended.*

How soon can stain be applied over freshly poured concrete?

- We always recommend a 28 day cure time. By doing this hydration water has left. Many times you may be able to stain sooner but because of the way concrete cures you should always wait at least 28 days so you can seal when done staining. Most sealers are moisture sensitive and the concrete needs to properly cure.

What about clean up?

- Stains will leave a residue which needs to be cleaned before sealing. Sweep up the dry powdered residue first. This can help avoid the need for extra water and run off problems. To successfully clean up squeegees, wet-vacs, floor buffers or floor scrubbers should be used. Clean until water is clear, then neutralize with 12 oz of ammonia to 5 gallons clean water, warm if possible, followed a final clean rinse.

How soon can we seal?

- When applying a sealer for stains we recommend that floors or slabs be completely dry. Check joints and cracks using a leaf blower to remove debris & water trapped here. Most sealers are moisture sensitive so the use of air movers and fans can help speed up the dry time.

What type of sealer should be used?

- We offer several types and the intended use should determine what will work best. Our staff is always happy to review sealers with you as well as our suppliers to find the best for your job. We also highly recommend that our diamond gloss wax be applied over the sealer for added protection indoors.

What about maintenance?

- Having a maintenance program will greatly increase the life of both the stained floor and the sealer. Routine cleaning with a neutral cleaner and reapplication of wax from time to time can help avoid wear and surface defects to the sealer. Reapplication of wax can help keep the new look of the floor. Wear in winter can be damaging to the floor from de-icing salts and sand tracked in. This is where having the owner know that a program will help protect the floor and avoid issues.