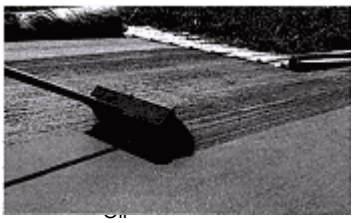
Project	Special Concrete Finishes

There are many alternatives to the standard smooth concrete finish; to select the right one, it is important to make a few practical considerations. For example, will the surface require frequent and thorough cleaning? If so, you should probably stick with a smooth finish, which is much easier to maintain than finishes that are grooved or heavily broomed. Also, will the surface be subjected to freeze/thaw conditions, abrasion or heavy traffic? If so, avoid splattered finishes which are more likely to peel and spall. And, if the surface will be subjected to traffic, is good traction a requirement? If so, plan to apply a floated, rough aggregate or an evenly grooved finish because they provide the best footing. Once all the practical considerations have been made, you can make your final decision based on such factors as visual appeal, color scheme, and location. Keep in mind that you can use a combination of finishes in a single project.

When a course finish is desired for non-slip footing, floating, edging and grooving may be the only steps performed. When a denser, smoother finish is required, the surface is troweled once or several times with a stainless steel trowel. Troweling takes place after the surface is troweled once or several times with a stainless steel trowel. Troweling takes place after the surface moisture has evaporated from the surface and the concrete has lost its sheet. This setting time may vary greatly with weather conditions and the moisture content of the mix, from 30 minutes to several hours. Thirty minutes to an hour is average in most cases.

Required Tools & Materials

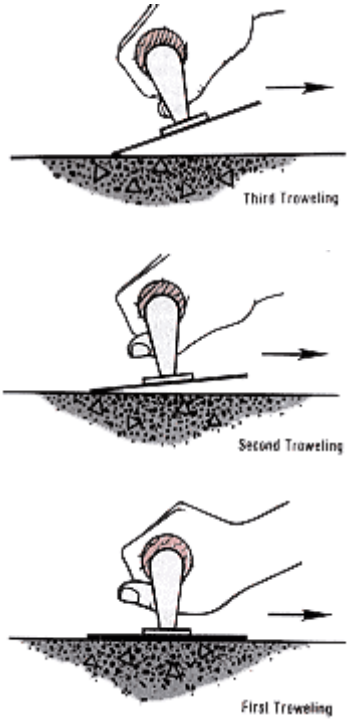
- QUIKRETE® Concrete Mix
- QUIKRETE® Sand Mix
- QUIKRETE® Concrete Bonding Adhesive
- QUIKWALL® Surface Bonding Cement
- QUIKRETE® Concrete Acrylic Fortifier
- QUIKRETE® All-Purpose Sand or Play Sand
- QUIKRETE® Cement Color
- QUIKRETE® Acrylic Concrete Cure & Seal Forms or molds
- Shovel
- Tamper
- Screed
- Darby or Bull
- Float
- Wooden Hand Float
- Rectangular Trowel
- Steel Trowel
- Masonry
- Brush
- Broom
- Rake



- Decorative Stone Aggregate
- Dry Pigment or Concrete Stain

Rough-Floated Finish

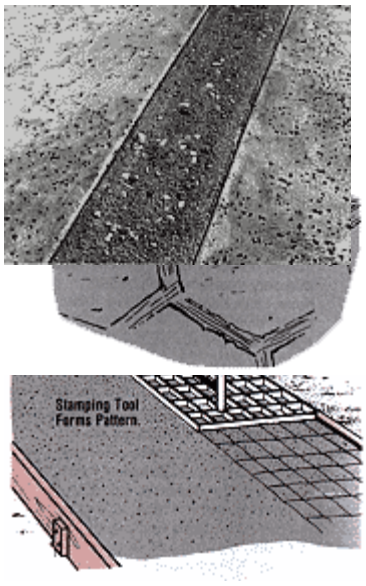
Rough concrete provides good traction, so it is particularly suited for pool decks and other areas frequently exposed to water. It is also more durable than smooth concrete. Work the concrete with a wooden hand float; if the surface is very large, use a darby or bull float. Move the float in various patterns until the desired effect is achieved. Smooth Finish A smooth finish is practical, easy to clean and ideal for making decorative inscriptions and impressions. Use a steel trowel, moving it in sweeping arcs; overlap the arcs to make sure the entire slab is smooth.



For very smooth surfaces, additional trowelings are necessary. On the second troweling, hold the leading edge up slightly and press down a bit harder. Repeat the process used in the first troweling. The third troweling should produce an almost glossy finish. Hold the leading edge up further, press down harder, and repeat the troweling process.

Broomed Finishes

Brooming can achieve a wide range of effects, depending on how soon you apply to broom, whether the bristles are soft or hard, and whether you sue it wet or dry. Simply pull the boom across the concrete while it is still soft. Be sure to rinse the bristles frequently to keep the tips clean.



A damp, stiff-bristled broom produces a course texture, which is ideal for slopes and heavy traffic areas. Medium to fine textures are created with a dry, soft-bristled broom. Always pull the broom toward you in parallel, slightly overlapping strokes; never push it back and forth. Sidewalks and driveways should be broomed at right angles to the direction of traffic. Use the broom to create curves, waves, even herringbone patterns.

Grooved and Stamped Finishes

Grooved and stamped finishes are produced by pressing masonry stamping tools and other objects into slightly stiff concrete. Stamping tools available at most large rental centers can be used to imprint simulated paving brick, stone, tile and other patterns. Small coarse aggregate such as pea gravel should be placed in the concrete prior to the stamping. After the surface has been floated and troweled, simply step on the pad to stamp the design to a depth of about 1" (25mm).

A piece of bent pipe works particularly well for making deep, clean grooves and a jointer can be used to groove the concrete to look like flagstone. Scoring must be done when the concrete has partially set. For a unique finish, create your own homemade stamp using typical household items such as cookie cutters.

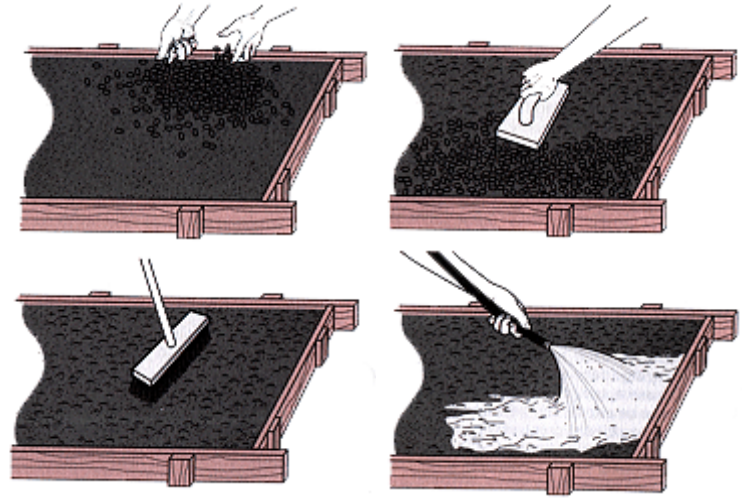
Rubbed and Hammered Aggregate Finishes

A sandy effect can be produced by applying a thin layer of QUIKRETE® All-Purpose Sand or Play Sand® onto a concrete surface that has partially set. Shake the sand over the entire surface, then rub it in using a piece of clean burlap.

Medium-sized aggregate (including pebbles, small gravel, and seashell fragments) can be hammered into fresh concrete. Use a screed to evenly distribute the force of each blow.

Exposed-Stone and Coarse-Aggregate Finishes

Stones of various shapes and sizes can be individually hand-set or sown like seeds into a surface of slightly stiff concrete. Coarse aggregate, such as large gravel, may be applied in the same way. Be sure to use clean, damp stones; after the application, press them into the mix (or slightly under the surface) with a heavy screed. Next, use a stiff-bristled broom to remove any excess mortar. Finally, clean the surface with a fine spray of water until there is not noticeable cement fill left on the aggregate. Larger cobblestone and rive stone can also be set in the surface of concrete slabs and step treads. This technique is very similar to settling pavers in a mortar bed. The fresh concrete must not be allowed to set up too stiffly before placing the stone. Press the stones into the concrete so that more than half of each one is embedded. Cover the stones with a piece of wood to protect them from being damaged if you find it necessary to hammer them into place. Brush between stones with a small hand broom for clean, even joints.



Colored Finishes

One method of coloring concrete is to pre-mix QUIKRETE® liquid Cement color with water before adding it to the dry concrete mix. This method ensures uniform color within a single batch. When coloring concrete in several batches, the proportions must be carefully controlled to achieve uniform results.

A second coloring method is to apply paint, colored coating, or pigmented stain to the concrete after it has cured. The easiest way to apply paint to concrete or masonry is with a long nap (3/4" to 1"

(20mm to 25mm)) roller. As for staining, the concrete or mortar must be at least 60 days old prior to the application. Stains can be applied with a brush, roller, or airless sprayerr.

Note: A variety of colors, textures and patterns can be applied to hardened concrete using QUIKRETE® Concrete Resurfacer.

Curing & Sealing

No matter what type of concrete finish is chosen, for best results use QUIKRETE® Acrylic Concrete Cure & Seal as the final step in achieving a durable and sealed surface.