

Q. It seems like every spring I have to make repairs to cracks in our concrete patio and front walkway. How can I avoid this problem next spring?

A. The arrival of fall and winter weather should signal homeowners to protect driveways, patios, sidewalks, pool decks, foyers, garage floors and other exterior concrete surfaces around the house in danger of being harmed.

Concrete is like a rigid sponge that can become saturated from rain and melted snow and ice if not properly sealed and waterproofed. When that happens and temperatures drop below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, the water saturating the concrete freezes (expands) and thaws (contracts). This repeated freeze-thaw process will eventually cause the concrete surface to flake, spall and/or crack. Concrete surfaces left unprotected can also become discolored or blemished by salt, leaves, dirt and other materials that can accumulate during the fall and winter months.

Fortunately, homeowners can easily avoid these issues by protecting the concrete surfaces around their homes with a [QUIKRETE® Concrete & Masonry High Gloss Sealer](#). In addition to repelling oil, grease, acids, household chemicals, food stains and ultra violet rays, our water-based, acrylic clear sealer can enhance the color and decorative impact of concrete masonry, pavers, bricks and stone surfaces.

Steps for selling concrete surfaces:

(Note - when working with cement sealers, always wear eye protection and gloves.)

1. For existing concrete surfaces, repair any unsound concrete areas, clean thoroughly and allow to dry for 24 hours. For tough oil, grease and other unwanted stains, use a Solvent-free, low odor and low VOC cleaner, etcher and degreaser.
2. For previously sealed surfaces, clean the concrete thoroughly.
3. For new concrete surfaces, allow the concrete to cure at least 30 days before.
4. Apply the ready-to-use sealer with a roller, brush or garden sprayer; Depending on the porosity of the concrete, one gallon of sealer uniformly applied should cover 200 to 400 square feet
5. A second coat of sealer can be applied in two hours; the second coat should be applied perpendicular to the first coat for best results

Homeowners seeking a more natural-looking protected concrete surface should consider applying [QUIKRETE® Concrete & Masonry Waterproofing Sealer](#) following the same step-by-step directions.

For more tips, direction and information on repairing, sealing and protecting concrete surfaces, visit www.quikrete.com.

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