

# Concrete Driveways



# Concrete Driveways

## Table of Contents

Concrete for the Driveway: A Natural Choice.....	3
Design Options Run the Gamut .....	4
Stamping .....	4
Exposed aggregate.....	5
Colored concrete .....	6
A sample color chart .....	7
Staining.....	8
Sawed or grooved patterns .....	8
Sprucing Up Your Existing Driveway.....	9
Overlays.....	10
Sawcut and scoring .....	10
Maintaining Concrete Driveways.....	11
Eight Tips for Hiring a Concrete Contractor .....	12
About The Concrete Network .....	13

Read More Online about [Concrete Driveways](http://www.ConcreteNetwork.com) at [www.ConcreteNetwork.com](http://www.ConcreteNetwork.com)

*“The owner invests a great deal of money  
and pride in their home.  
A beautiful patterned driveway and entry  
is the first thing one sees when arriving  
and greatly enhances the value and beauty of the home.”*

— MARK FOREMAN, Apex Concrete Designs, Inc.



ARTCON STAMPED CONCRETE



CHAMELEON CONCRETE DESIGN AND RESTORATION

# Concrete for the Driveway: A Natural Choice

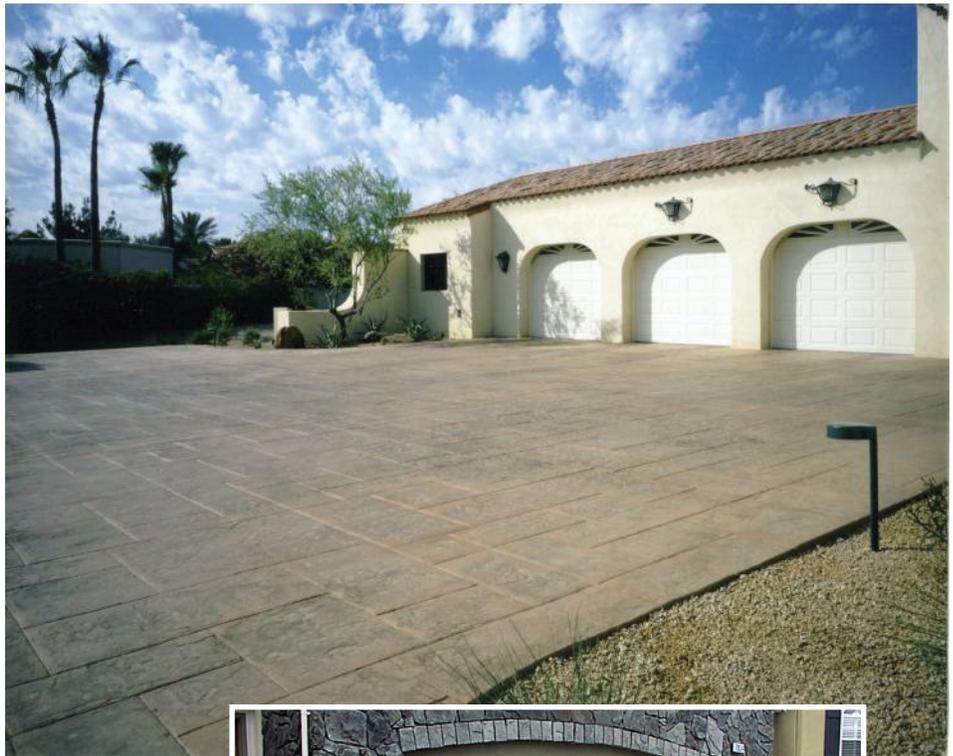
When homeowners build a new driveway or revamp an existing one, many turn to concrete. But it's not just the boring, old gray stuff anymore. Concrete is the one material that does it all. It's versatile, durable, looks great, and is easy to maintain.

Today's homeowners take great pride in their home, and are fully aware of the "curb appeal" it exudes. One of the most effective ways to enhance the look of a home is by gracing it with a decorative concrete driveway.

Because concrete can be forged into a range of textures, colors, and patterns, it is a versatile part of an overall landscape design and can increase the value of your home. Concrete can have the look, feel, and color of brick, slate, tile, or stone. This range of choices can complement a variety of exterior treatments of your house.

And it will hold up for a long time with little maintenance required. Many concrete driveways last for 30 years or more, meaning in the long run it costs you less than other types of driveways.

Decorative concrete contractors say decorative stamped concrete driveways cost less than using natural materials like flagstone, brick, or slate.



PROGRESSIVE CONCRETE WORKS, INC.



RICHARDSON'S CONCRETE COATINGS

*"Also, properly maintained stamped concrete driveways that are sealed occasionally tend to stay cleaner than natural stone would and can be easily cleaned if that old clunker you have been restoring over the past several years drips a little oil."*

— LAWSON EDWARDS, *Concrete Creations*

Another advantage of decorative concrete driveways is that it will not sink or buckle like driveways made from other materials that use a paver system or stone that has been grouted.

And you won't have grass, dirt, or weeds growing up through the grout joints, which frequently happens when using natural stone, which has to be "locked" together with mortar.

# Design Options

## Run the Gamut

Decorative concrete driveways are extremely versatile because concrete can be shaped into any pattern. It can be lightly smoothed or heavily brushed; surfaced with attractive pebbles; swirled or scored; tinted or painted; patterned or molded to resemble another material.

### Stamping

One of the most popular methods used in decorative concrete driveways is stamping, a process in which concrete is patterned to resemble brick, slate, flagstone, stone, tile — even wood.

Stamped concrete is becoming increasingly popular and a more frequent material of choice for homeowners across the country because of the wide array of patterns and colors available.

Colors and patterns for stamped concrete are often chosen to blend with other stone or tile elements at the residence. Stamped concrete can also be blended with other decorative concrete elements such as exposed aggregate finishes and acid-etch staining. Many offer dozens of patterns. Some of the more common stamped patterns include:



PBC COMPANIES



Cobblestone



Ashlar slate



Weathered wood



Clay tile



European fan



Roman slate tile



Herringbone



Granite

## Exposed aggregate

Exposed aggregate is another option for driveways. The rock (aggregate) in the concrete mix is exposed by either water pressure, chemical application, or by sandblasting.

The aggregate can be purchased from a material yard for “seeding” in the fresh concrete mix. Or a ready mix supplier may have colorful aggregates suitable for seeding or poured integral in the mix and then exposed by sandblasting.

A variety of looks can be achieved by exposing the aggregate. Aggregates vary widely from region to region, so the look can be different depending on what part of the country you live in. Another factor that will determine how the finished driveway looks is the amount of aggregate exposure, which can vary from light to heavy.

Sandblasting aggregates can produce a heavy or fine aggregate exposure. In addition, some fields that are side by side, or in a pattern, can be sandblasted to different exposure levels for an interesting effect.

Sealing exposed aggregate concrete with a clear coating, consisting of acrylic resins, brings out the natural color of the aggregates. Properly placed exposed aggregate concrete, in either bands or fields, contrasts beautifully with colored, scored, sawcut, stamped, or textured finishes.



JS FRAZER CONSTRUCTION



CONCRETENETWORK.COM, INC

*“We’ve been doing large driveways,  
many 2,000 to 5,000 square feet,  
lakeside patios and wraparound porches.*

*This is in keeping with the rustic  
and log homes found in the lake areas.”*

— MIKE VERLENNICH,  
*Verlennich Masonry and Concrete*

## Colored concrete

One of the biggest draws of decorative concrete driveways is the expansive range of colors available. Because of ever-advancing technology and incredible chemical techniques, concrete can be colored in just about any hue imaginable. Some contractors offer upwards of 250 hues and shades.

Colored concrete can be used in combination, abutting each other, or stamped with a variety of textures to simulate brick, flagstone, pavers, or tile.

The same colored concrete can be made to look different, just by using different finishing techniques: For example, a broom finish creates a unique look.

Brooming the concrete in opposite directions creates shadow effects. Swirl or fan patterns create a different type of look.

Colored concrete is considered one of the most effective ways to improve the appearance of a project.



MCCLELLAN CONCRETE



VERLENNICH MASONRY AND CONCRETE

*“It’s booming. Every year I think it can’t get any bigger and it does.  
You don’t have to settle for the gray stuff anymore.”*

— LAWSON EDWARDS, *Concrete Creations*

# A sample color chart

*The chart below is representative of the myriad integral colors available.*



*“With the rising popularity of acid-stained concrete, we have been using less iron oxide integral colors and instead using multiple colors of acid stains to achieve a more realistic look.”*

— LAWSON EDWARDS, *Concrete Creations*

## Staining

Another method for coloring decorative concrete is through chemical stains. They penetrate the concrete surface to create beautiful color tones in concrete. Stains react directly with the concrete’s minerals and produce uneven, mottled, and variegated color effects.

Chemical stains can be used for both interior and exterior applications and are often used on concrete that has already been colored integrally or with the dry shake method.

Although they are often called acid stains, acid isn’t the ingredient that colors the concrete. Metallic salts in an acidic, water-based solution react with hydrated lime (calcium hydroxide) in hardened concrete to yield insoluble, colored compounds that become a permanent part of the concrete. Several companies manufacture chemical stains that are variations of three basic color groups: black, brown, and blue-green.



RICHARDSON'S CONCRETE COATINGS

*“What we’re seeing is more homeowners are getting away from the dull, gray concrete. They’re becoming familiar with what’s now on the market.”*

— MARY AMARO, *AMCON, Inc.*

## Sawed or grooved patterns

Concrete can be sawed into patterns with a concrete saw or grooved with a hand tool. Often different colors will be used in the different “fields” of the pattern by using concrete stains.



CONCRETE ART

# Sprucing Up Your Existing Driveway

There are many decorative treatments for freshly placed concrete, including pattern stamping, exposed aggregate, and textured finishes. But what about an existing plain-gray concrete driveway that lacks personality? You can give it a dramatic and lasting makeover without having to rip it out and start over.

One answer is engraving—the use of special tools and equipment to cut patterns and designs into existing concrete. Unlike toppings or overlays, engraving is a permanent treatment that won't wear away or lose bond because the patterns are carved into the concrete rather than applied on top of it. When the concrete is further enhanced by staining, the decorative possibilities are truly amazing.

Concrete engraving is staining the concrete to give it color, then engraving (routing) out a pattern. This leaves the routed area uncolored, so it looks like a grout line.

Concrete Engraving involves the following:

- The concrete is cleaned, and acid-etched if needed to provide a bond for the stain to the concrete.
- Cracks, if any, are repaired (though sometimes cracks are left in the concrete, which produces an aged brick or stone look).
- The concrete is stained.
- The concrete is engraved.
- The job is cleaned up and a sealer is applied.



CUSTOM SURFACE DESIGNS



BECKER ARCHITECTURAL CONCRETE, INC.

## Overlays

Overlay products can be applied over existing concrete to give your driveway the look of cobblestone, brick, stone, slate, tile, or wood. Mike Verlennich of Verlennich Masonry and Concrete says overlay products must be applied to properly prepared existing concrete.

Self-leveling overlays are great pallets for decorative work, like cutting and staining.

Polymer cement overlays were introduced some 20 years ago. Their original use was as a thin surface restoration material

for concrete substrates. After years of successful and permanent applications, polymer cement overlays were brought into the realm of architectural concrete, evolving into an industry norm. They are used for interior and exterior applications.

The new surface is only 1/8" to 1/4" thick. The concrete is cleaned, acid-etched and neutralized, then a primer coat is rolled on the driveway surface. Finally the colored polymer is applied and stamped or jointed, and the concrete sealed.

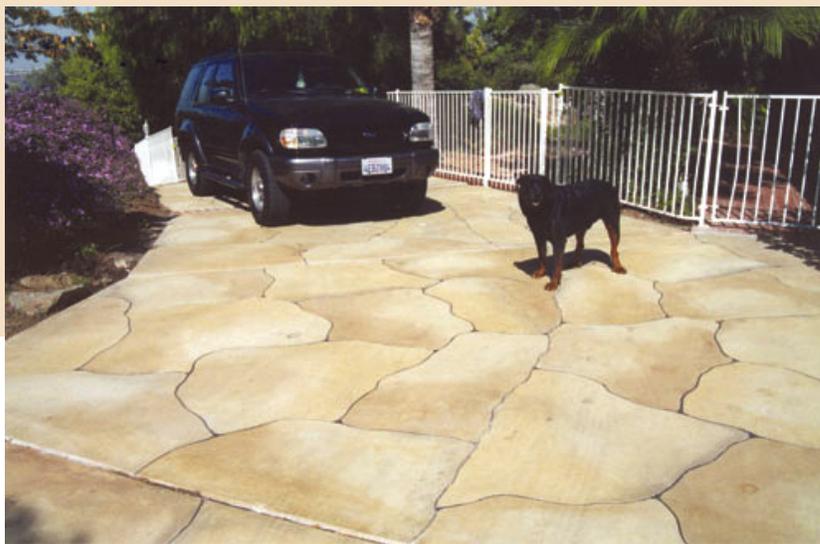
### *Sawing and Scoring Existing Concrete*

An existing driveway can be sawcut in different square or rectangular patterns. For example, borders



*“As people continue to expand their investment in real estate, the demand for beautifying these properties should continue.”*  
—MIKE VERLENNICH,  
*Verlennich Masonry and Concrete*

VERLENNICH MASONRY AND CONCRETE



CONCRETENETWORK.COM, INC.

might be made square-shaped, then the interior pattern is cut on a diagonal pattern. Sawcutting is often combined with concrete staining.

Concrete can also be sawed into

random patterns with a concrete saw or grooved with a hand tool. Often different colors will be used in the different “fields” of the pattern by using concrete stains.

*“Beautiful, durable concrete is the best choice for long-term function and aesthetic appeal.”*  
— MIKE VERLENNICH, Verlennich Masonry and Concrete

# Maintaining a Concrete Driveway is Simple

Cleaning and sealing stamped and colored concrete should be done on a regular basis just like any other home maintenance. The frequency will depend on how high of a traffic area it is to cars, foot traffic, water, and any chemicals the concrete is exposed to.

Distinctive Concrete of New England recommends resealing every 2 or 3 years. If you wait longer, the color may fade slightly. But just like waxing a car, reseal your stamped concrete and the color will be as vibrant as the day it was installed.

## Distinctive Concrete offers the following maintenance plan:

1. Rinse dirt/debris off stamped concrete surface with a garden hose or pressure washer.
2. Apply a small amount of liquid dish soap to surface and scrub with a push broom.
3. Rinse well with a garden hose or pressure washer until there is no sign of soapsuds.
4. Dry surface completely by using a leaf blower or by waiting 24 hours to air dry.

**DO NOT APPLY SEALER TO A DAMP/WET SURFACE.**

5. Once the surface is completely dry, apply the sealer as follows:

- Stir in one jar of Anti-Skid material to a 5-gallon pail of sealer. (One 5-gallon pail of sealer will cover approximately 1,000 sq.ft.)
- **APPLY SEALER USING A 1" NAP ROLLER**

**ONLY. ANTI-SKID MATERIAL WILL NOT TRANSFER THROUGH A SPRAYER.** Apply sealer in approximately 2' x 4' sections. This will ensure full coverage without missed spots. Keep stirring sealer while applying to keep the Anti-Skid suspended in the sealer.

- Sealer should be applied when air temperature is above 55° F. Best results will be obtained by applying sealer during cooler temperatures - fall and spring - or before 10 am and after 4 pm in summer months when surface temperatures should be under 90°.

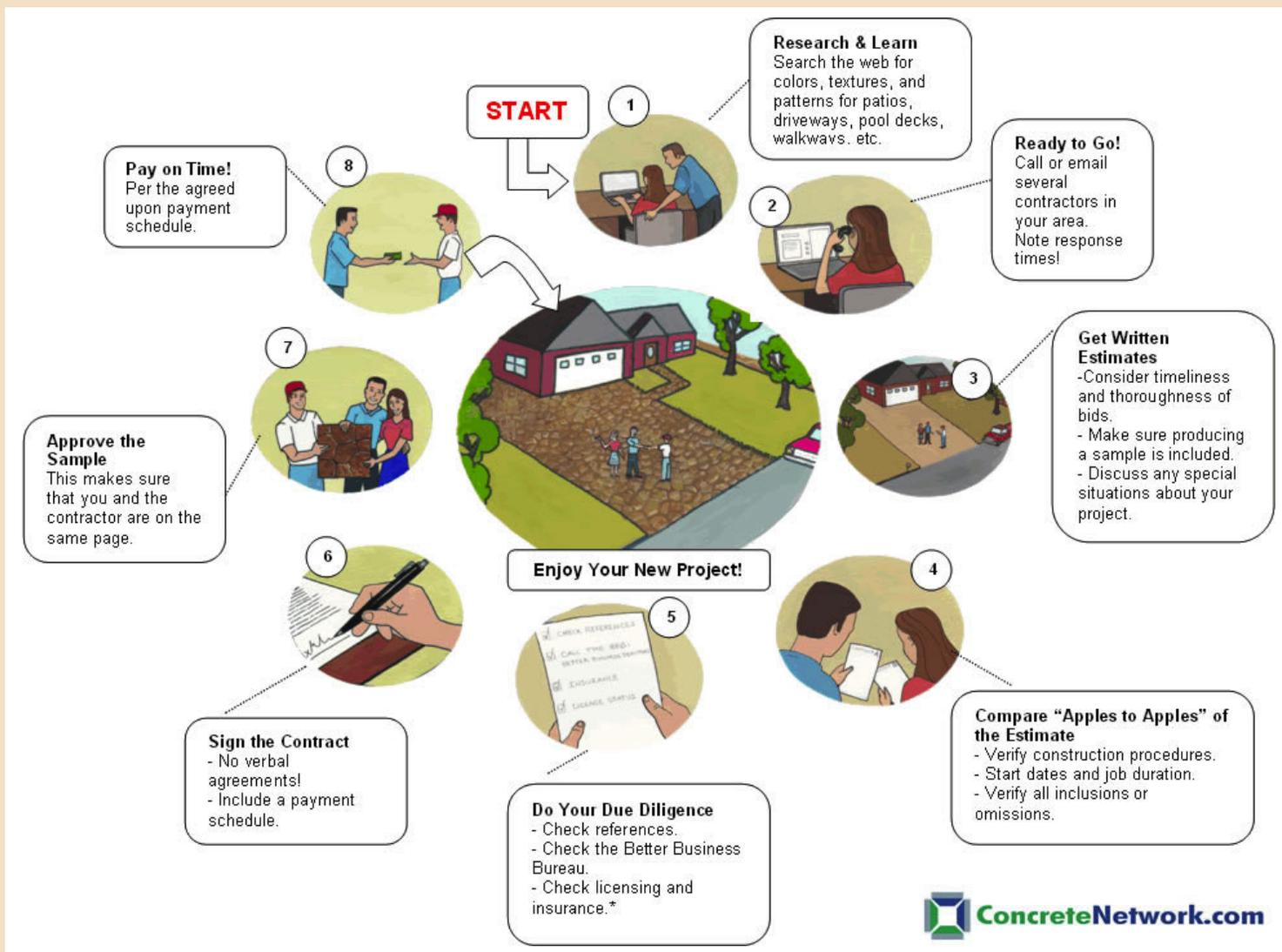
6. A second coat can be applied after the first coat is tack free (not sticky to your touch).

7. Your stamped concrete should be resealed every 2-3 years to protect your investment.



D&D SUPERIOR CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION

# EIGHT TIPS FOR HIRING A CONCRETE CONTRACTOR



Use this guide to make sure you're prepared when it comes to hiring a contractor. These 8 simple steps are your key to knowing what information you should look for, what questions you should ask, and to understanding some vital do's and don'ts during the process. Your preparedness can make a difference in how smoothly your project gets installed. Print a copy of this diagram and refer to it through each step of your project. Before you know it, you'll be enjoying your new concrete too!

## About The Concrete Network

**The Concrete Network** ([www.concretenetwork.com](http://www.concretenetwork.com)), located in Yucaipa, Calif., is the largest and most comprehensive resource online for concrete information. Over 1 million people visit the site each month to read articles, get design ideas, and to search its extensive directory for a concrete contractor in their area.

Established in 1999, **The Concrete Network's** purpose is to educate homeowners, contractors, builders, and designers on popular decorative techniques and applications. With thousands of articles, photographs, and a comprehensive directory of concrete contractors, The Concrete Network is a repository of information about the industry's products and services, including stamped concrete, stained concrete floors, concrete countertops, polished concrete, and much more.

The site excels at connecting buyers with local contractors in their area through its Find-A-Contractor service. The service provides visitors with a list of decorative concrete contractors throughout the U.S. and Canada, and is fully searchable by 23 types of decorative concrete work and 200 regional areas throughout North America. The directory is organized by area and specialty, such as patios, pool decks, driveways, countertops, floors, stamped concrete, and water features, among many others.

Site visitors can choose their local area and view concrete contractors and concrete products, obtain full contact information for the listed businesses, and contact them directly.

**The Concrete Network** was founded by Jim Peterson, a former Vice President of a major concrete company in Riverside, Calif. During the 1999 World of Concrete Trade Show in Las Vegas, Peterson had the idea to create an industry portal on the World Wide Web for all things related to concrete.

