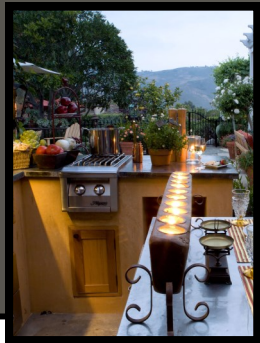
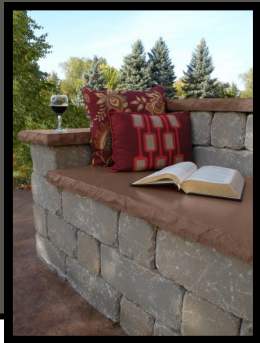
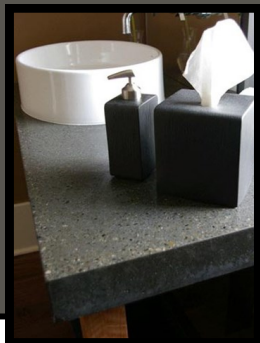




# PREMIUM CONCRETE COUNTERTOP MIX™

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### **Why use a black caulk instead of some other color?**

We recommend using a caulk color that contrasts with the forms you are using. Black contrasts really well with white melamine particle board.

### **When using more than 1 bag, do I need to mix every bag together prior to pouring it into the form?**

No, it is not required to mix all the bags, spread the first bag so that it covers the entire surface of the mold, then pour the subsequent bags on top of the first bag. We recommend using rubber gloves to gently mix or knead the top when all the material has been poured in the mold. Do not use a paint stick, it could scratch the melamine surface and leave a scar to form on the surface the countertop. If you are adding pigment, mix that to the dry powder before adding water.

### **Do I have to mix 3 minutes, let material set 2 minutes and then remix for 2 minutes?**

Yes mix time is very critical. Not following these steps can create inconsistencies in the mix.

### **How do you vibrate the form using a rubber mallet?**

Tapping around the perimeter of the mold works well to remove any air bubbles. We recommend 7-8 tapping sessions every 6".

### **Do I need to cover the countertop in plastic while it cures if it will be inside a garage during the summer?**

Yes, after 1-2 hours of open/drying time cover the cement with poly. Try to suspend the poly so that it does not touch the cement allowing it to air-cure.

### **If I leave the countertop in the forms longer will it be less fragile?**

The countertop is not fragile, but it can be scratched. Be careful when removing the forms not to pry against the countertop. This could cause scratches, chips, etc.

### **How durable are concrete countertops?**

Once cured, concrete is extremely durable, but like any other material the edges and corners are the most susceptible to damage or chipping standard precautions should be taken when working with pots, pans or other items.

### **Do concrete countertops stain?**

Concrete in its natural state is porous and will stain. Concrete countertops are sealed for stain and water resistance. However, spills should be cleaned as soon as possible; especially acidic or oily liquids. Mild soap and water is the best way to clean the surface.

### **How do I clean and disinfect my concrete countertops?**

The best cleaners are mild soap and water. Never use harsh chemicals or abrasive cleaners. Bleach can discolor the surface and abrasive cleaners can scratch the sealer.

### **Can I cut directly on concrete countertops?**

It is usually recommended that a cutting board or protective surface be used. Knife marks can scratch the sealer, so use a cutting board when chopping or preparing foods. Cutting on the concrete countertop won't hurt the concrete, but will damage the sealer, which can effect the sealers ability to keep out water and stains.

### **Can I set hot pots and pans on concrete countertops?**

Hot pots or pans can damage the sealer on countertops, so pot holders or hot pads should always be used. Placing hot pans on the concrete countertops should be avoided. Concrete is very heat resistant, but the issue is damaging and/or discoloring the sealer.

**What kind of maintenance do concrete countertops require?**

It does not take much to maintain a beautiful surface. A food-grade beeswax should be applied about once a month to help protect the sealer. Simply buff it on and buff it off.

**What should I use...penetrating or surface sealers?**

One basic consideration when choosing between penetrating and surface sealers is that sealing concrete that is polished can be a challenge. The surface may be too smooth for many surface sealers to stick to. When concrete is polished, a penetrating sealer or wax might be best. Here are a few basic tips, but understand that many types of concrete sealers are readily available and may serve your purpose.

**Penetrating Sealers** are applied to concrete and, once dried, can be nearly invisible. They often don't affect the appearance of dry concrete. Some products leave the concrete looking dry, while a few provide a darker, wet look.

**Surface Sealers** are the most common sealers on the market. There is a wide range of types with widely differing chemistries and varying degrees of appearance, performance and longevity. A few of the most common surface sealers are wax and acrylics.

**• Wax**

The most basic sealer is wax. Wax is both a penetrating and film-building sealer, depending on how much is used and how it is applied. Generally, a high-quality floor wax that contains carnauba and bees-wax, or just pure bees-wax, is used. Automotive paste wax should not be used because of the additives it contains.

Wax produces a finish that brings out the character of the concrete's color and visual texture. Wax is an easy to apply sealer, but may darken bare concrete. Wax cannot be scratched, although the concrete itself can get scratched or gouged. Wax will act as a "wear surface" and is easy to reapply and usually must be applied frequently to remain effective.

Many sources report that most anything can stain waxed concrete if left on the surface for an extended time, and exposure times must be short to avoid any kind of surface staining. Hot temperatures and acids like vinegar or lemon juice tend to strip off the wax.

**• Acrylics**

Acrylic (solvent based or water based) are common concrete sealers. They were developed for sealing floors and driveways, and offer modest protection. Solvent-based acrylics can darken the concrete, while most water-based acrylics tend to look pale like it does when it is dry.

Acrylics are thin-bodied liquids that are brushed, sprayed or rolled onto the concrete. Acrylic sealers sit on the surface of dense, impermeable concrete that is used in most concrete countertops. Acrylics generally provide modest heat resistance, but are UV resistant. Acrylics offer fairly good stain protection but are easily scratched. Scratches often leave the concrete completely bare and unprotected. Acrylic sealers often require frequent reapplication because they tend to scratch and wear off, especially if the surface they were applied to was not properly prepared.

**What is the difference between a precast and pour-in-place countertop ?**

There are two methods for creating concrete countertops. The "precast" concrete countertops are the most preferred way because it allows more customization, control, and level-smooth surface. "Pour-in-place" countertops are generally less refined and do not allow for some custom design elements, but may be a good alternative for certain projects. Though the precast method may seem more complex, at first, the skills required for final surface finishing are less demanding (for most Do-it-Yourselfers) than the pour-in-place method.