



FINISHING CONCRETE FLATWORK

Finishing is the process of consolidating, leveling and creating a concrete surface with a desired texture or hardness, depending on the concrete's end use. Warehouse or industrial floors usually need to be level and smooth, while other interior floors that will be covered with carpet do not have to be as exact. Exterior slabs must be sloped to carry away water and given a texture that will not be slippery when wet.

How to Finish Concrete

- The finishing operation must be carefully planned. It's crucial to have the proper manpower and equipment available, and timing is critical. Delays after the concrete arrives can lead to problems in finishing and detract from the final quality. If possible, place concrete directly from the truck chute or use wheelbarrows, buggies or pumps to avoid excessively wet, high slump concrete.
- Using a wood or metal tool, float the concrete as soon as it has been struck off to further level the concrete surface and embed the large aggregate. One or two passes should be enough to smooth and level the surface and seal the concrete.
- Delay finishing operations until the concrete has stopped bleeding to avoid subsequent problems such as dusting, scaling, crazing and blisters. The waiting period depends on the amount of water, cement and chemical admixtures in concrete.
- Edge the concrete all the way around. Spade the concrete next to the form gently with a small mason's trowel and then use the edging tool to give the concrete rounded edges.
- Trowel the concrete according to its end use. Troweling may not be necessary for sidewalks, patios and driveways. For a smooth floor, make successive passes with a smaller steel trowel and increased pressure.
- Texture the concrete surface after floating or troweling using a fine push broom to give a nonslip surface if the concrete is being used for sidewalks, patios and driveways.
- Never sprinkle water or cement on concrete after finishing since this may cause dusting or scaling.
- Cure the concrete once all finishing is completed and a water sheen is no longer visible on the surface.

Products Used: Marshalltown Concrete Tools.