

Important notes on Firth Elements coloured concrete

1. A number of variables will mean that no two decorative slabs look the same; specifically:
 - Concrete is made from natural raw materials
 - Weather and site conditions at the time of placing
 - Placing and curing methods
 2. Decorative slabs will often exhibit uneven shading of aggregates and / or oxide, giving a look which is sometimes referred to as 'mottled' or 'aged'. This is the expected finish with decorative concrete and should be considered part of its character.
 3. Use of a damp proof membrane (e.g. polythene) over the sub-base may limit the appearance of mottling (more noticeably so on coloured slabs) by providing a consistently dry sub-base and therefore more even curing.
 4. The inconsistency of shade/light may mean that two pours of the same mix appear different. Comparing variances in shade on a decorative slab is similar to comparing full, half or even quarter tints of paint.
 5. Sample discs on coloured concrete sample boards are small and have been cast and not poured like floor slabs, therefore the uneven colouration effect (point 2) cannot be truly replicated in the samples.
 6. All samples, photographs and brochures should be used as an indication only, not a direct comparison.
 7. All concrete slabs may at some time exhibit cracking in some form. Whilst there are several procedures, which should be practiced by your placer to lessen the likelihood of cracking, crack free slabs cannot be guaranteed.
 8. Trowel marks and screed marks may sometimes be visible.
 9. The appearance of a decorative concrete slab will change significantly once acid washed.
 10. A decorative concrete slab spanning from an internal area to an external area will appear different inside than out due to the differing light.
 11. Polished or 'honed' concrete needs extra attention when placing. Broadcasting with additional stone is required so no foot prints will be highlighted when later polished. When concrete floors are honed/polished you will need to ensure that they comply with the New Zealand Building Code Standard for slip resistance.
- Firth insists that due to the nature of concrete all of these points be viewed (from an aesthetic perspective) as positive characteristics and not faults.
 - The above information should be considered regardless of plant location or installer contractor used.
 - We advise you to read the 'Decorative Concrete Guidelines' brochure by the New Zealand Ready Mixed Concrete Association, available from Firth.
 - We strongly advise considered consultation with our team of concrete professionals prior to proceeding.

Helpful hints for cleaning

- To maintain concrete, spray at least once a year for moss and mould.
- Always use low-pressure to wash concrete as high-pressure water-blasting breaks down the concrete.
- You can design your concrete surface to channel water away from your home using clever contouring and drainage.
- Use a sealer when concrete is laid to add sheen, highlight colour, protect the aggregate and help prevent stains such as oil leaks. Always follow the directions of the sealer supplier



Changing cements mid-job will result in a colour difference.



Inconsistent cure produces inconsistent colour which is much more noticeable in coloured concrete compared to grey concrete.



Close-up of curing differences. Surface effects can produce inconsistent colour.



Combine different colours and textures. Break up large, integral colour projects with different colour and texture bands.



Controlling all the variables can produce large, integrally coloured concrete projects.



After it is cleaned and sealed, the proper colour in the concrete comes to life.



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