

PI.080 - HOW TO SERIES: Exterior Splatter Texture

Revised: 3/16/2023 Version: 1.2

The HOW TO SERIES documents are designed to give step by step instruction on the exact procedures it takes to complete various jobs. Keep in mind that some of the instruction may vary slightly compared to other documents published by Elite Crete Systems. For questions pertaining to those variations, please feel free to contact your Technical Support Representative.

Job Overview:

The job below started off as a conventional concrete pool deck. The customer not only wanted a non-slip surface but a finish that would be aesthetically pleasing and match the coloring in their landscaping and on their home. Although this document will detail all application procedures as it pertains to applying a splatter texture to a pool deck, the same instructions can be used to apply the same finish to a driveway, commercial pool deck, patio, sidewalks, etc.



1. Pressure wash the concrete with a 3,000 PSI power washer. Using a rotating turbo tip will increase the productivity immensely. Take your time while pressure washing as your objective is not simply to clean the concrete but to also remove any loose concrete that simple rinsing will not achieve. It is not uncommon for it to take 5 hours to pressure wash a 1,000 sq. ft. pool deck or driveway.
2. Start with an all-plastic sprayer or watering jug and mix 1-part muratic acid to 8 parts clean water in this container. The reason for all plastic is because the muratic acid will corrode metal parts. It is important to add the acid to the water, not the other way around. Adding water to acid can make the acid splash out and on you. Keep in mind you are working with acid and proper safety attire such as protective eye wear is recommended.
3. Spray or pour the acid and water solution on the concrete. You will see and hear a light fizzing of the surface. This is normal. Continue until the entire concrete substrate has been completed.
4. Using the same plastic sprayer or watering jug, mix 1 part ammonia to 8 parts clean water and apply to the concrete surface in the same manner. This acid and then ammonia wash will not only open the pours and capillaries of the concrete but will also neutralize the pH of the water in the concrete as well.
5. Rinse the surface off with water from a garden hose.
6. Mask off the pool deck coping, plastic drain and anything else that you do not want to get your initial skim/base coat on. It is important to use good masking tape. Blue or green masking tape is suggested for easy release once the job is completed. Do not be concerned with masking off areas from the spray procedure at this time.
7. Mix THIN-FINISH™ in a 5-gallon pail according to the mixing instructions for a skim/base coat. Of course, color can be added if the customer wants grout lines other than white but as you can see from the picture; this customer did indeed choose white grout lines so no color was added.

8. Wet the concrete again with a sprayer or hose. Although you do want the concrete to be wet, you do not want puddled water. If there are puddles remaining, use a push broom to spread the water and remove the puddles.
9. Using a hand squeegee (also commonly known as a magic trowel), apply the THIN-FINISH™ as thin as possible at a rate of about 225 to 275 sq. ft. per bag. You can do this on your hands and knees by simply holding the hand squeegee or more experienced installers can attach a handle or pole to the hand squeegee and apply the THIN-FINISH™ while standing up. While applying the THIN-FINISH™, remove areas of build up as you go to eliminate the need for rub bricking once completed.
10. While applying THIN-FINISH™, you must also honor any tool joints or expansion joints during this application. Failure to honor the joints may result in failure at those joints. For detailed explanation on how to honor various types of joints, please contact your Technical Support Representative for detailed instructions.
11. Once the initial coat of THIN-FINISH™ has completely dried, you must determine if an additional coat of THIN-FINISH™ is required. If the surface is smooth and consistent in color, you can proceed to the next step. If it is not, you need to apply an additional coat of THIN-FINISH™ by repeating steps 7 through 9.
12. Using design tape, begin to lay out your pattern. In this case, apply the design tape in brick patterns along the edge of the pool and 3' by 3' tile patterns on the rest of the surface.
13. Once the pattern is in place, you need to mask off everything that you do not want the splatter coat on. Generally, we recommend masking up at least 3 to 4 feet minimum. To mask off the pool, float a few pieces of large Styrofoam out onto the water and lay plastic sheeting across the pool adhering the plastic to the masking already in place covering the coping. The Styrofoam will simply keep the plastic from sinking into the water if there happens to be holes in the plastic sheeting.
14. Because this job had a brick border around the pool deck, you will at this time temporary mask off part of the primary surface so you can first apply the splatter texture to the brick border. This temporary only needs to be 3 to 4 feet around the brick border.
15. Mix THIN-FINISH™ in a 5-gallon pail according to the mixing instructions for a splatter texture finish and add the desired PORTION CONTROL COLORANT™ to the pail as well. In this case, 8 ounces of Chocolate PORTION CONTROL COLORANT™ was used for the brick border.
16. Pour the colored THIN-FINISH™ into your drywall hopper gun which is hooked up to your air compressor. Your air compressor should be set at 40PSI output to the hose. We recommend the Marshalltown Sharp Shooter as our choice of hopper gun.
17. With your hopper gun full, begin to spray the colored THIN-FINISH™ to the brick border section in a small circular motion while not building the THIN-FINISH™ up inconsistently in one area. At this point you can adjust the air settings on the hopper gun if you desire a heavier or lighter sprayed on texture. When spraying, think of the process of spray painting your bike when you were a child. If you held the spray paint in once area you would get a heavy build of paint and the finish wouldn't look consistent. But when you spray over an area in multiple lighter coats the finish comes out smooth. This is the same when applying the splatter texture. Continue this process until the entire area is covered in the splatter texture.
18. Once the brick border has slightly dried, remove the masking from the primary surface and mask the brick border area.
19. Mix THIN-FINISH™ in a 5-gallon pail according to the mixing instructions for a splatter texture finish and add the desired PORTION CONTROL COLORANT™ to the pail as well. In this case, 2 ounces of Palomino PORTION CONTROL COLORANT™ was used. Apply the splatter texture to the primary surface.
20. Remove masking from the brick border.
21. As a general rule, we highly recommend that all splatter texture applications receive what we call a highlight coat. This is simple a very minimal second splatter coat that instead of being applied at 100% coverage is applied at less than 5%. Because the initial skim/base coat is white, we recommend white as this highlight coat was well. The purpose of the highlight coat is to help hide inconsistencies in the first splatter texture application. You must wait until the first splatter texture coat is dry enough to walk on before applying the highlight coat.
22. Once the highlight coat is dry enough to walk on, you can now remove the design tape to expose your pattern.
23. Use a leaf blower or commercial vacuum if there is nowhere to blow the loose splatter particles to remove all loose debris.
24. Remove all masking tape, paper and plastic.
25. Mix CSS EMULSION™ according to the mixing instructions. In this case, the first coat was 1 part CSS EMULSION™ to 2 parts VOC compliant solvent. Apply with either a good roller cover or a pump-up type sprayer. Because parts of this job were confined, a roller was used to apply the CSS EMULSION™.
26. Once the first coat of sealer has dried, apply a second coat of CSS EMULSION™ but mix 1 part CSS EMULSION™ to 1 part VOC compliant solvent. This thicker second coat will better protect the finish from stain and wear.