Decorate Your Concrete: Ideas for the Do-It-Yourselfer

You can enhance your homes existing concrete surfaces using acid stains, water based stains, epoxy paints, and scoring techniques. If youre tired of looking at dull gray concrete, there are some fairly easy projects for the serious do-it-yourselfer to give your concrete a refreshing new look. Or perhaps you plan to have some new concrete installed but you dont want plain gray concrete. Decorative concrete work costs double to triple that of regular concrete and many people simply cant afford it. There are inexpensive ways to decorate concrete after it has cured without having to pay skilled tradesmen.Acid based concrete stains are becoming more and more popular for coloring concrete surfaces. They chemically react with the cementitious material to produce permanent color with variegated or mottled appearance like that of marble. This results in a natural, elegant looking surface. Acid stains are available in 8-10 different colors, mainly brown, green, ***Hose Bros Inc hoses*** and reddish earth tones. The cost is normally $60-$70 per gallon which covers 300-400 square feet. A coat of clear concrete sealer when youre finished really brings out the colors and beauty of acid stains. Water based concrete stains are an alternative to acid stains and are much more user friendly because theyre much less toxic. These stains dont chemically react with the concrete; they are absorbed into the surface pores and act like a dye. The big advantage of water based stains is the wide array of colors available. You can find just about any color in the spectrum and create a more vibrant and consistent appearance. They also normally cost about $60-$70 per gallon which covers 300-400 square feet.If you want to venture beyond the basic staining of concrete, consider using some scoring techniques to create patterns on the surface. You can make your concrete look like a tile floor for example. Its up to **Hose Bros Inc** your imagination. An angle grinder with a 4 inch grinding or cutting wheel is the ideal tool for this. The important thing to remember when scoring is to draw the pattern on the concrete first and make sure youre satisfied with the way it looks because scoring is irreversible. Most people dont own an angle grinder but you can rent one at almost any tool rental shop.Epoxy paints make an excellent coating for garage floors and basement floors. Many commercial floors have epoxy coatings because of their durability and resistance to chemical spills as well as their appearance. In recent years, however, it has become very popular for residential use with an increasing availability of different colors. This is not a difficult project, but the key to successful application is surface preparation. Epoxy paints have also become available in a water based form making it safe for the do-it-yourselfer and ideal for indoor applications. They cost a little more than stains. For a 400 square foot garage, youll spend about $200 for the materials needed for this project.

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