

Application Guide

A premium, pre-blended mix of dry aggregate, graded sands and cement, Easy Mix Beachcrete is specially designed to reveal an attractive, smooth, textured aggregate surface that is gentle on bare feet. It is perfect as a conventional concrete mix for paths and slabs and can also be used as a feature topping mix to create interesting effects or for landscaping elements such as pavers or garden edging.

➤ Before you start

Before you start, you'll need to work out how many bags you need. Start by measuring up the pre-prepared formwork that you will be using and calculate how many cubic metres (m³) you require. $H (m) \times W (m) \times D (m) = m^3$. Use the guide below to calculate out how many bags of Easy Mix Beachcrete are needed to complete your project.

1 x 20kg bag = 0.0096m³

104 x 20kg bags = 1.0m³

➤ Equipment

To make sure your project runs smoothly and you don't find yourself hunting for tools at the last minute, make sure you lay out everything you need before you begin. It's important to have everything ready so you can concentrate on the most important part – creating your Easy Mix Beachcrete finish.



To mix your Easy Mix Beachcrete in you will need one of the following:

- **20lt bucket** or
- **Wheelbarrow** or
- **Powered concrete mixer**

Equipment check list

- Shovel**
- Measuring jug**
- Concrete screed**
- Concrete float**
- Large dense 10mm nap foam roller** (approximately 230mm)
- Extension handle** for larger jobs.
- Drill with a mixer attachment** (if you are using a bucket to mix in)

- Small dense 10mm nap foam roller** (approximately 75mm – 100mm)
- Paint roller tray** (450mm deep tray is ideal)
- Rubber mallet**
- Broom**
- Hydrochloric (HCl) acid 20%** (1 part hydrochloric acid to 4 parts water (1:4)).
- Rubber or latex gloves** when working with acid.
- Safety goggles** when working with acid.

Optional

- Concrete edging tool.** While not essential, taking the time to round your edges will really enhance the final look.
- Concrete grooving tool** (15mm) for jointing if you are working on long sections such as paths and driveways.
- Large plastic sheet.** Lay this over the top of your freshly laid Easy Mix Beachcrete for 7 days to assist in curing.



Mixing

➤ Mixing – Wheel Barrow

Start by wiping the inside of the wheelbarrow with a damp rag so the surface is moist.

Then pour the contents of either one or two bags of Easy Mix Beachcrete into the wheelbarrow.

Use a shovel to make a small well in the centre of the dry mix in the wheelbarrow.

Measure out **1.6-1.8 litres of water for each bag** in the wheelbarrow and carefully pour it into the well you created, ready for mixing.

Mix the concrete and water together with a shovel. The best technique is to push the shovel under the mix and then fold it over into the centre to make a mound. Follow this by using the shovel to break up the mix with a series of downward chopping motions. This will allow the water to spread through the mix nice and evenly.

We recommend a mixing time of about 4 minutes for a single bag and 7 minutes when a 2 bag mix is being used. This will make sure you get an even consistency. It is important to have an even Easy Mix Beachcrete mix as this makes sure the final surface has an even and consistent look.

➤ Mixing – Bucket

Pour half the recommended water (850ml) into the bucket before adding the dry mix.

Then add about half a bag of Easy Mix Beachcrete dry mix to the bucket and mix thoroughly until you achieve a consistent mix. A drill with a mixing attachment is ideal for when working in a bucket.

Add the rest of the bag on top of your wet mix.

Add the remaining water (850ml) on top.

Mix thoroughly until your mix is consistent and there is no free water visible.

To achieve a good even mixture, you should spend about 3 minutes mixing every half bag of Easy Mix Beachcrete. It is important to have an even Easy Mix Beachcrete mix as this makes sure the final surface has an even and consistent look.

➤ Mixing – Powered Concrete Mixer

Pour the amount of Easy Mix Beachcrete required into the concrete mixer drum.

Measure the amount of water you will need. One 20kg bag requires 1.6-1.8 litres of water depending on how workable you want the concrete.

Then add the water to the mixer gradually, allowing water to be distributed evenly into Easy Mix Beachcrete. Mix for 3 minutes after the water is added. You don't want to add too much water as excess moisture can ruin good concrete. It's important not to add water after the concrete has been mixed, as this reduces the strength of the concrete and may affect the final colour consistency.



Make a well in the dry mix.



Add 1.6-1.8 litres of water per bag of mix.



Mix thoroughly.



The correct consistency should look like this. If you find your mix is a little dry, you may add a small amount of water. Avoid adding too much as the mixture becomes runny and difficult to work with.

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Mixing with an electric drill mixer.



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Place contents of bag into mixer.



Add 1.6-1.8 litres of water per bag.

Note: You should not prepare more Easy Mix Beachcrete mix than you are able to mix, apply and expose within 1 hour 45 minutes. Any excess may become unusable.



Placing and exposing

➤ Placing

Before you start, pre-moisten or make a plastic sheet base for the formwork you will be placing your Easy Mix Beachcrete into. This helps prevent moisture loss and increases the strength of your slab during the curing process.

Once the mixture has been mixed thoroughly, pour it into the centre of your pre-prepared formwork carefully. Use a shovel to distribute the mixture to the edges of the area making sure the entire area is filled evenly. Gently tap the sides of the formwork to bring any unwanted air pockets to the surface.

Use a straight-edge screed or board to evenly spread the mix using the top of your formwork as a guide. Work the screed across the slab from one end to the other in a sawing motion to even up and level the slab. If you find too much Easy Mix Beachcrete is building up in front of the screed, you can clear it away with a shovel.

Once you are satisfied that you have a nice level top on the Easy Mix Beachcrete after using the screed, you need to “float” the surface with a steel trowel. This will ensure you have a smooth, even surface.

To complete this stage, you may now use rounding or grooving tools to place any edge bevels or joints where you wish. While not essential, rounding edges looks attractive and gives your job a professional finish.

➤ Finishing

Continue to trowel the Easy Mix Beachcrete every 20 to 30 minutes for the first hour and 45 minutes after first mixing or until the surface is ready for exposure. Water will rise to the top as the mixture starts to set, and this process helps to densify the Easy Mix Beachcrete surface.

➤ Exposing the ‘Beachcrete’

Getting the timing right for the exposure of your Easy Mix Beachcrete is critical. Depending on ambient temperature and depth of slab the Easy Mix Beachcrete will generally be ready for exposure after about 1 hour 45 minutes from the time water was first added to the mix.

It is important that the mixture has set to just the right stage when you start exposing it – too late and it won’t reveal the aggregate properly, and too early means you risk an uneven finish.

To determine the correct time to expose the Easy Mix Beachcrete, use your index finger to firmly press into the slab. The slab is ready when the surface does not indent but still shows a slight fingerprint mark afterwards. You will also find that when you rub the area you have just pressed with your finger, a thin layer of gritty sand and cement paste will come off.



Evenly spread mix in formwork.



Gently tap the sides.



Even the surface with the screed.



Screed until the surface is level.



Use the float to smooth the surface



Use a jointing tool to smooth the edges.



Trowel every 20 to 30 minutes for 1 hour 45 minutes.



Press firmly and look for a slight fingerprint afterwards. The concrete should not indent – the mark should be barely visible.

This surface is ready to be exposed.



This surface is too moist and NOT ready to be exposed.



Exposing

Start off by working the outermost edges of the slab using a small dense foam roller. This area will dry quicker than the centre, so it's important to begin here. Wet the foam roller in a container of water and then squeeze about half of the water out of the roller.

Begin by rolling the full length of all the edges around the slab, applying steady pressure to the roller. Make sure you rinse the roller with clean water every few minutes or when excess sediment and cement paste build-up appears on the roller.

Make sure you don't use too much water on the roller when exposing the edges as this can cause crumbling and cracking.

Once you have rolled around all the edges the first time, continue to roll the edges carefully to get the amount of exposure you wish. This may take several goes. Be patient, don't rush it and try work evenly on all the edges.

When you have completed the edges, use the same fingerprint method you used to check the edges earlier to see whether the centre of the slab is ready to be exposed.

The length of time will depend on the weather conditions on the day and the depth of the slab. Generally you will find that the slab will be ready around 2 to 2.5 hours after mixing.

When the slab is ready to expose, get a large dense foam roller and saturate it with clean water. Squeeze approximately half of the water out of the roller before you begin.

Roll across the unexposed area of the slab applying steady pressure with the roller.

Change the direction of your rolling so that it is 90 degrees to your initial rolling direction to make sure you get a nice uniform result.

Continue to roll over the surface until you achieve the level of exposure you wish, remembering to rinse the roller with clean water every few minutes or when excess sediment and cement paste build-up appears on the roller.

Once you are happy with the appearance, evenness and level of exposure of the surface, rinse the roller with water and squeeze the water out so that the foam roller is as dry as possible. Proceed to roll the surface of the slab from one edge to the next, applying pressure evenly. This removes any excess water from the surface of the slab.

You now need to leave the Easy Mix Beachcrete to **cure for 24 hours.**



Wet the small roller.



Squeeze out half of the water.



Do a single roll around all edges.



Continue to roll back over the edges.



Continue gently rolling until you are happy with the exposure.



Use a paint tray to wet the large roller.



Squeeze half the water out of the roller.



Roll over the centre of the surface in an even pattern.



Roll in the opposite direction.



Continue rolling until the surface exposure matches the edges.



Cleaning and finishing

➤ Cleaning and finishing

Once your slab has been cured for 24 hours, use a broom to sweep any dust and loose sediment from the surface.

To complete your Easy Mix Beachcrete slab you now need to acid wash the surface. Pour a diluted hydrochloric acid mixture onto the slab and evenly spread it over the area using a roller with an extension handle or a suitable broom. The acid mixture should be 20% or 1 part hydrochloric acid (HCl) to 4 parts of water.

Be extremely careful when using hydrochloric acid as it is a dangerous substance. Make sure you wear gloves and protective eyewear and the area you are working in is well ventilated. If the area is confined, you should wear a respirator mask with a vapour cartridge to avoid breathing the acid fumes.

It is very important that you **pour the acid into the water** and not the water into the acid as the chemical reaction can become volatile. Use a broom to make sure the acid completely covers the area.

Allow the acid to sit on the surface of the slab for 5 minutes and then wash off with plenty of clean water.

➤ Curing

To maximise the strength of your new Easy Mix Beachcrete slab, you need to keep it moist while curing it for 7 days. An effective way to prevent the slab from drying out during this period is to place plastic sheets over it.

➤ Sealing

Once your Easy Mix Beachcrete slab has cured for 7 days, you need to seal it with a quality sealer which will ensure it retains its fresh appearance for years to come. We recommend you use a concrete sealer.

➤ Clean Up

When cleaning all surrounding areas and surfaces with water ensure no waste or contaminated water ends up in drains or waterways.

➤ Storage

Easy Mix Beachcrete will keep for up to six months when it is kept in a dry store, up off the ground. The bags must remain sealed. High temperature and high humidity conditions may reduce the storage life of this product.



Sweep debris from surface.



IMPORTANT: Acid must be added to the water. Do not add water to acid.



Pour acid mix onto surface.



Spread the acid mix with a broom.



Wash away the acid after 5 minutes.

➤ Health and Safety

Easy Mix Beachcrete contains cement powders which can be harmful to the skin. Avoid inhaling dust and contact with the skin and eyes when working with this product. Wear suitable clothing, gloves, eye protection and respiratory protective equipment.

If contact with the skin occurs, thoroughly clean the area with plenty of fresh water and soap.

In case of contact with the eyes rinse with plenty of fresh water and seek medical advice.

If swallowed, seek medical attention immediately – **Do not** induce vomiting.

For further information consult the Safety Data Sheet and read the product label carefully before use. **Safety Data Sheets** are available by phoning **1800 077 744** or online at **www.easymixsales.com.au**.



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