

Why pay for home improvement when you can do it yourself?

There has been a decline in consumer confidence in the building and construction industry. This may be the same reason why many are now doing home improvements by themselves.

Why not? A little knowledge of the technical aspects combined with the eye for creativity is enough to do the home improvement on your own.

Why are people turning to do-it-yourself home improvements?

Many construction workers who do not have a lot of experience or expertise in construction or home maintenance are out there right now trying to work on these homes across the country.

As a result, homeowners are finding that the jobs are not being completed to their satisfaction. Sometimes they are even prepaying for services that do not get done or are not part of the plan.

You do not have to rely and pay someone to improve your home. Why not try to do it yourself?

You can enhance your home's existing concrete surfaces using acid stains, acrylic stains, epoxy paints, and scoring techniques.

If you are tired of looking at dreary gray concrete, there are some easy projects for the serious home improvement do-it-yourselfer to give your patio, driveway, garage, etc. a refreshing new look.

Decorative concrete work costs double or even triple that of regular concrete. This is why many people cannot 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.

Water based concrete stains are an alternative to acid stains and are much more user friendly because they're much less toxic. These stains do not 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.

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. It is up to 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 you are satisfied with the way it looks because scoring is irreversible.

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, you'll spend about \$200 for the materials needed for this project.

See? You do not have to spend money to have your home improved. You have the capability to do it yourself. With some instructions and a little bit of work, anyone can turn boring concrete into their own masterpiece.