

[How to Deco Gel Acid Stain](#)

Deco Gel is the newest addition to the Direct Colors Patina Acid Stain family. It can be applied in several ways depending on the project and/or surface to be colored. Below you will find the most effective way to Deco Gel for the majority of applications.

How Deco Gel Works

Deco Gel Acid Stain is an acid-based gel of minerals and acid designed to adhere without drips or runs to vertical surfaces and other projects such as garden décor. Deco Gel Acid Stain has been specifically designed for use on vertical applications, such as retaining walls and columns or garden décor, including statuary and cultured rocks. Deco Gel can be used in conjunction with our liquid acid stain for projects that have both vertical and horizontal surfaces. The acid mixes with the cement to force a chemical reaction, which changes the color of the cement similar to a forced rusting. When covered with the proper sealer and if required, wax, the acid stain produces a bright, variegated surface color unique to this process.

Surface Preparation

Surface preparation is one of the most important steps of the staining process. The concrete must be free of debris, dirt and oils, sealers or waterproofing agent. **If your concrete has been treated with a waterproofing agent or cleaned with muriatic acid, Deco Gel Acid Stain will not be able to penetrate the pores of your concrete. If you do not know the history of your surface, preparing a test patch or sample would be highly advisable.** For older or exposed concrete, the surface must be completely intact with no exposed aggregate. Deco Gel will only work on the cement portion of the concrete, and will not stain rocks and sand.

Warning!

Concrete that has been acid etched or washed with muriatic acid CANNOT be acid stained!

Deco Gel is not an over coat, but is an opaque, penetrating color that permanently changes the appearance of the concrete. Areas where debris, like tile or carpet adhesive, paint, drywall mud, or similar products, remains on the surface will not accept the stain leaving color imperfections on the wall. Use Bean-Ne-Doo, for removing mastics and adhesives and Soy Gel Professional Paint Stripper for epoxy, sealers, varnish or paint stains. A fine sanding pad will smooth the surface and re-open the pores of a distressed concrete. These types of distressed concrete will nearly always yield a varied character of finish with a high degree of color difference area to area across the surface, and the distressed sections lend character and depth to your concrete project.

Notice:

Be sure all soap and cleanser residue is removed from concrete before staining and that the surface is adequately dried.

Applying the Stain

Safety while applying Deco Gel is very important. Remember to use gloves and a mask while working with the gel. The appearance of the finished product is influenced by the manner in which it is applied. The application of the stain will vary according to size, design, and desired effect. The most common tools used to apply Deco Gel Patina Stain are foam brushes, paint pads or foam rollers. Avoid nap rollers as they apply the gel too thickly on the surface. For a more variegated effect, use a plastic dry wall trowel for application. Artist's brushes can also be used to apply the gel particularly in hard-to-reaches crevices, particularly on concrete statuary. When applying stain to the surface, you should notice a light "fizzing" reaction with the concrete. There is no need to rinse surface between coats. After the final coat of your stain has been applied and completely dried, remove the white salty residue by mopping or spraying the surface with a solution of sodium bicarbonate and water to neutralize the surface. Scrubbing with a nylon brush and soapy water may be necessary to remove stubborn debris. No two projects are the same as acid staining is an artistic process. Whenever possible, complete small test patches on your surface or prepare sample boards to practice. As the Gel dries and processes, an alkali and minerals residue will form on the surface. This is completely normal and is part of the reaction process. Each stain needs different times to activate and fully color the concrete, generally from two to eight hours. However, the stains can be left on for longer if a darker color is desired. After the gel dries a flaky crust will form on the surface and can be wiped off. If you'd like a darker color, apply a second coat of Deco Gel to your wall or siding. Repeat this process until you reach the desired color, but keep in mind that once you seal your surface, the final appearance will be slightly darker. To see the true color of your stain, dampen the surface with water. The water will help simulate the color you can expect to achieve after your project has been properly sealed. Below is a list of activation times for your stain.

Color	1st Appearance of Color	Final appearance	Minimum Time Required on Surface
Azure Blue	Light Blue	Medium Blue	2 hours
Coffee Brown	Greenish Brown	Dark Brown	2 hours
Cola	Greenish Brown	Brownish Red	2 hours
Avocado	Greenish Brown	Greenish Yellow	2 hours
Black	Dark Brown	Black	3-4 hours
Malayan Buff	Greenish Black	Golden Tan	8 hours
English Red	Greenish Brown	Reddish Brown	4 hours
Desert Amber	Greenish Brown	Straw Color/Tan	6-7 hours
Shifting Sand	Greenish Brown	Greenish Tan	2-3 hours
Sea Grass	Greenish Brown	Greenish Brown	2-3 hours

Notice:

Check your stain's activation time before beginning the job. Stains can be left on the surface for longer but not less than the activation time. If you are working on a

countertop project, use a timer to insure the same activation time for each of the countertop sections.

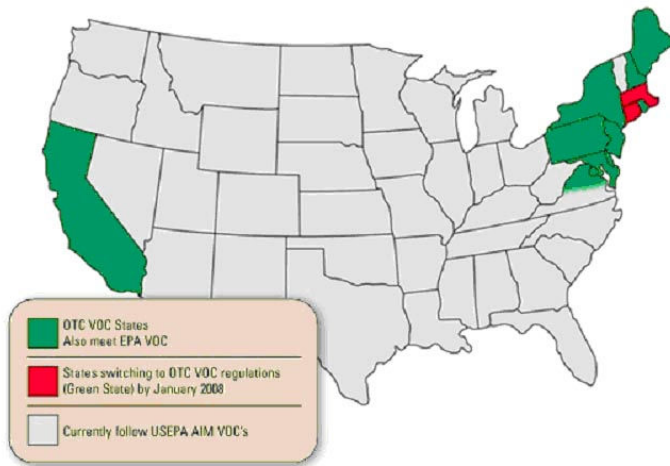
Neutralizing the Surface and Removing the Residue

Once the residue has dried and the stain has been given at least the recommended minimum time to react, the residue should be neutralized and all debris or extra stain removed in the following manner:

1. Prepare a base solution using baking soda at a ratio of 1-2 tablespoons of soda per gallon of water. Slosh the solution on to your surface and clean with a mop. A shop vacuum can be used to remove the residue.
2. Repeat the process, using clean water. After this step, all but a light residue should have been removed. For stubborn residue or porous surfaces, use a floor soap or organic degreaser with a brush to aid in removal. The clean wet surface will be the approximate color of the final sealed surface.
3. Apply a clean, damp mop to the surface, wiping away any remaining trace of residue. Leave to dry. After the surface has completely dried, it should be ready to seal.

Sealing Your Surface

After the surface has been neutralized and has thoroughly dried, the acid stained project must be sealed with an appropriate concrete sealer. Direct Colors offers both solvent and water-based sealers suitable for any concrete project. Sealers can be applied with either an applicator or a sprayer; however, some solvent-based sealers cannot be used in all US states.



US Environmental/VOC Regulations

GRAY states can purchase all of our sealer products.

RED states adopted the new Environmental/VOC regulations in January 2008. Customers living in these states **cannot** purchase the Sprayable Satin Finish or High Gloss (AC 1315) sealers.

GREEN states - **California, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania,**

Rhode Island, and Virginia. Customers living in these states also **cannot** purchase the Sprayable Satin Finish or High Gloss (AC 1315) sealers. DCI's WR Meadows solvent-based sealer, water-based sealer and Krystal Kote sealer can all be used in the red and green states.

The method used to apply sealer depends on the type of surface and the variety of sealer used. Our solvent-based non-sprayable sealers can be used in most states (See map above) and are appropriate for both indoor and outdoor applications; however, we

recommend using a water-based sealer for occupied indoor applications and for basements. If you are sealing a wall, statuary or a similar project, DCI Sprayable Satin Sealer is by far the easiest sealer to use as it requires no applicator and can be sprayed on. Use caution in applying solvent-based sealers, particularly during indoor applications. Wear a mask while applying the sealer and make certain the area is well ventilated to the outside.

Textured or broom finished surfaces sealed with a non-sprayable solvent and water-based sealers should be rolled on using a short-nap roller (approximately 1/8") or less. For best results with a roller, use the pan grid to purge the roller of all excess sealer and apply with slow, even strokes. Sealer bubbles, should they occur, can be removed with a hair dryer set to cool or a clean leaf blower set to low speed. SSB can be either sprayed or rolled on a textured/broom-finished surface.

Generally, the thinner the application, the stronger and more durable the sealer will become. Applying a thick coat will result in an inconsistent finish with tacky areas that may not set-up correctly. Depending on the sealer selected, leave the solvent-based sealers to dry for at **least** 4-6 hours between coats. The DCI sprayable satin finish sealer has the shortest drying time between coats and the water-based sealers the longest. **Water-based sealers should be given at a minimum 24 hours to set-up between coats.** The surface should be completely clear and dry before applying an additional coat. If you live in a humid climate or the weather conditions are damp and overcast, give the surface additional time to dry.

*****Cold Temperature Warning**

Water-based sealers and all DCI waxes **must be applied to surfaces at temperatures greater than 60F. Indoor floors can be heated to the correct temperature but caution and careful attention should be given during the application and drying time for both products.**

If you have any questions or would like more information on our products, please visit www.DirectColors.com or contact our Decorative Concrete Specialists at **1-877-All Colors.**