



# How to Apply DCI Concrete Dye

DCI Concrete Dye is an indoor/outdoor topical dye primarily intended for concrete floor or similar applications. The product must be applied with either an aerosol or acetone sprayer and cannot be applied with a brush, roller or similar applicator. DCI Concrete Dye is an excellent choice as secondary accents on tinted concrete sealer and acid stain finishes, stenciling, design work, and borders.



## NOTICE

Standard pump-up deck and fence sprayers cannot be used to spray DCI Concrete Dye. An acetone sprayer must be used for application of this product. 3-gallon or similar large acetone sprayers should never be carried by the pump handle while spraying. Most sprayers are bottom discharge units and any sediment will go directly into the strainers causing blockages. The sprayer should be carried by the strap at a 30 to 45 degree angle. Carefully read the acetone sprayer instruction booklet before proceeding with any application.

## What is Concrete Dye?

DCI Concrete Dye is an acetone-based topical colorant. The acetone mixes with the coloring agent and bonds to the surface of the concrete. Concrete dye provides a permanent color when properly sealed and maintained with a high quality concrete sealer. When properly sealed, the dye produces a bright, variegated surface color unique to this process. DCI Concrete Dye can also be used in conjunction with concrete acid stain to enhance color and texture. Concrete dye is ideal for commercial jobs where turnaround time is a factor as well as for stenciling and vertical projects where fast drying time and ease of application is a necessity.

## Surface Preparation

Surface preparation is one of the most important steps of the dyeing process. The concrete must be free of debris, dirt and oils, sealers, adhesives or anything that might prevent the color from bonding with your surface.

Often, surfaces inside an existing house will have dry wall mud, paint, wood stains, tile adhesives, carpet adhesives, grease, pet stains or other contaminants on the concrete. Areas where debris remains on the surface may prevent the dye from adhering properly leaving color imperfections on the floor. Use Bean-e-Do, for removing carpet or tile adhesive and Soy Gel Professional Paint Stripper to remove epoxy, sealers, varnish or paint stains. For the complete application instructions and more information on surface preparation products, visit [www.directcolors.com](http://www.directcolors.com). Soap and water or an orange degreaser can be used to remove stubborn dirt or similar stains from your slab. Use an organic degreaser at a medium concentration, scrub the surface



thoroughly with a nylon brush and rinse with clear water. For an interior project where water run-off is not possible, use a shop vacuum, mop and/or squeegee to contain the water and aid in drying. The floor should be completely dry before beginning the coloring process. DCI Concrete Dye will cover up some minor imperfections, but to insure a consistent color, you will want your concrete as clean as possible. DCI Concrete Dye performs best on hand-troweled or relatively smooth surfaces.

**For best results,** apply a thin layer of sealer to the surface prior to applying the concrete dye. Because the dye particles are finely milled, most surfaces, especially porous and exterior concrete, should be sealed first before applying the dye. If the concrete has been ground or has a rougher texture, a second coat of sealer may be necessary.



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## Mixing the Dye

Because acetone is highly flammable, transportation restrictions prevent Direct Colors from shipping DCI Concrete Dye in liquid form. For every gallon of dye purchased, the customer needs to buy a gallon of acetone from their local hardware store. Acetone is readily available in most communities. Empty the dye packet into the acetone, tightly seal the lid and vigorously shake for at least a 1 minute turning the container side to side and upside down to ensure the mixture is thoroughly combined. **DO NOT MIX IN THE SPRAYER OR USE ANY TYPE OF ELECTRICAL MIXER.** Allow the concrete dye solution to dwell for a minimum of 1 hour before applying. Applying the concrete dye before the appropriate dwell time has passed can result in dye inconsistency and other significant mixture or spraying problems. After at least one hour, pour the solution into the acetone sprayer and apply. Shake the remaining solution each time before refilling the sprayer. Periodically shake the solution in the sprayer while applying. Direct Colors offers a 5oz. aerosol sprayer for samples or accent applications, a 1.5 liter sprayer for jobs 200- 500 sq. ft. and a 3-gallon sprayer for larger projects.



## Applying the Dye

Safety while applying dye is important. Remember to extinguish all pilot lights before use and do not smoke during the application. Use goggles and gloves while working with the concrete dye. Air pressure is essential to a successful concrete dye application. Pump up the sprayer to the highest point possible. The concrete dye should spray as a mist and not in the form of droplets. If the sprayer begins to drip and dye droplets form, stop and pump up the sprayer again. Frequently pumping the sprayer to maintain consistently high pressure will produce the best application results. Clean with acetone and store for reuse.

The appearance of the finished product is very much influenced by the manner in which the dye is applied. Shake the mixture in the sprayer frequently to ensure an even, consistent color during the application. The dye should be sprayed going right to left, then north to south. Try not to spray on too thick. The dye will dry almost instantly. The more layers you apply the darker the color will become. Apply as thin a coat as possible to ensure color quality and appearance. Generally, 3 or more coats of dye should be sufficient for most applications, but additional dye can be applied to make the surface darker. Do not let the dye pool up in any area, so mop up these spots with a disposable rag. Allow product to dry thoroughly. Carefully use soft cloth or clean dust mop to remove excess colorant or surface residue from the application before sealing.

## Sealing the Surface

For best results, seal the concrete immediately after cleaning. Remove shoes and work in sock feet on dyed surfaces. Sprayable sealers are preferred for use with DCI Concrete Dye. Both Solvent Based Sprayable Satin Finish and AC1315 High Gloss Sealers can be sprayed from a pump-up deck sprayer or HPLV sprayer. DCI Water-based concrete sealer using a 3/8" in. nap roller,



Floor Trim Pad, Floor Coater, HPLV sprayer or pump-up sprayer. If applying with a pump-up sprayer, backroll with a 3/8 in. or less nap roller for even coats. 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. Water-based sealers are highly recommended for basements applications. For complete concrete sealer application instructions, visit <http://www.directcolors.com/resources/how-to-videos-and-guides/>.

## Maintenance

Sealers applied to outdoor concrete should be re-applied every 2 to 3 years, depending on traffic and weathering. Indoor floors sealed with an acrylic sealer should be waxed with a Concrete Floor Wax and Polish routinely. Spot sealing or waxing can be utilized in the event of uneven wearing. For a waxed surface, re-apply wax every 3-6 months depending on traffic.