

# Design At Home

## Concrete Countertops: A Unique Look for Less

(NAPSA)—Owing to its unique appearance, affordability and high durability, concrete countertops continue to gain popularity as the material of choice for kitchen and bath remodeling. In addition, concrete countertops can be customized to individual specifications with a variety of decorative colors, stains, finishes and optional features for far less cost than using stone or even hiring a professional.

For example, a concrete countertop that is 22 inches deep by 1 ½ inches thick can be completed in a weekend at a cost of \$15 to \$17 per foot. Conversely, a professionally installed concrete countertop can cost about \$65 to \$125 per foot, according to The Concrete Network.

To create a concrete countertop, homeowners will need QUIKRETE Precision Non-Shrink Grout, QUIKRETE Cement Colors, QUIKRETE Wet Look High Gloss Sealer, a drill with paddle mixer, trowel, wood float, two plastic buckets (5 gallon and 1 gallon), ¾-inch laminate wood board and wood strips, 1½-inch wood screws, form release agent, 2-inch paint brush, rubber mallet and 400 grit sandpaper.

### Here's how to do it:

- Construct the countertop form by securing the laminate strips to the laminate board with wood screws. In order to obtain the correct form angles, it is important to remember that the bottom of the pour will be the top of the counter.
- Apply a form release agent to the inside of the form. This allows for easy removal of the countertop once the concrete has cured.
- Mix the Precision Non-Shrink Grout to a flowable consistency using the drill with paddle mixer.
- For a decorative touch, add



**CONCRETE COUNTERTOPS offer a stylish surface alternative.**

Liquid Cement Color (available in red, brown, buff, charcoal, terra cotta) to the mixing water.

- Pour the completed mixture into the preconstructed forms and spread evenly using a wood float. Level the grout to the top of the form using the wood float.

- Tap the sides of the form with a rubber mallet before finishing the countertop to reduce air pockets that could leave voids in the surface.

- A steel trowel finish can be applied to the bottom surface of the countertop once the surface is “thumbprint hard.”

- Remove the form after the countertop has set for 24 to 48 hours.

- Lightly sand the countertop including the corners to remove imperfections and residual form release. Thoroughly rinse with clean water.

- Allow the countertop to dry before applying the Wet Look High Gloss Sealer. Refer to packaging for specific application instructions.

- Secure the concrete countertop to the vanity or cabinetry using silicon sealant.

For more information, visit [www.quikrete.com](http://www.quikrete.com).