

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Do-It-Yourself Concrete Countertops

(NAPSA)—If you're cooking up a do-it-yourself project that can improve the look of your kitchen or bath, you may want to check out concrete countertops. The counters have become popular with professionals and do-it-yourselfers because of their unique appearance, low price, high durability and—perhaps equally important—they're easy to build and install.

If you want concrete countertops in your home try these tips:

Start by getting Precision Non-Shrink Grout, a product called Cement Colors and a product called Cure & Seal—all of which are made by Quikrete. You'll also need a drill with a paddle mixer, trowel, cement float, 5-gallon bucket, 1-gallon bucket, 3/4-inch laminate wood board, 3/4-inch laminate wood strips, 1 1/2-inch wood screws, caulk and caulk gun, form release agent, 2-inch paint brush, rubber mallet and sandpaper.

- Construct the countertop form by securing the laminate strips to the laminate board with the wood screws.

- Run a small bead of caulk into the joint and let it dry.

- Apply a form release agent to the inside of the form for easy removal of the countertop, once the concrete has cured.

- Mix the Non-Shrink Precision Grout to a plastic yet flowable consistency using the drill with the paddle mixer.

- For a decorative touch, add the Liquid Cement Color (available in red, brown, buff, charcoal, terra cotta) to the mixing water.

- Pour the completed mixture into the pre-constructed forms



Making stylish concrete countertops can be an easy and inexpensive do-it-yourself project

and spread evenly using a cement float. Level the grout to the top of the form using a wood float or steel trowel.

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

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

- Remove the form from the concrete countertops after setting for 24 to 48 hours. If necessary, the countertop edges can be touched up with fine sandpaper.

- Clean the countertops with Concrete and Asphalt Cleaner and then apply Acrylic Concrete Cure & Seal.

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

For more tips visit the Web site www.quikrete.com.