

3. Cleaning & Surface Preparation of Older / Existing Concrete and Cement Screed Floors

Surface Condition and Assessment Prior to Floor Painting:

When applying floor paint on existing concrete floors or on existing cement screed floors, the same requirements exist as outlined above for new floors. However, it is likely that the original concrete mix water will have dried out, that any cement laitance layer could have been removed by dusting in use and under traffic, plus any residual curing agents could also have been removed by the traffic, or have naturally degraded (as they are designed to do). To be certain of the condition of your existing floor then the same tests and recommendations given above can still be carried out – Please see our '[Floor Substrate Testing](#)' section below. Also it is important to remember that the floor's surface condition may not be the same everywhere on your floor, i.e. the perimeter edges and central areas or traffic aisles are likely to be less worn. Therefore several different locations should be tested and assessed to determine what additional preparatory works need to be carried out.

Surface Cleaning Prior to Floor Painting:

The more obvious requirements for existing concrete and cement screed floors are all concerned with cleaning and possibly also in the need for repairing any surface damage such as cracks etc., prior to applying the appropriate new floor paint.

On any older concrete floor surface that has been used and contaminated this normally always involves a selection or combination of thorough detergent cleaning, followed by rinsing with clean water, or by using any combination of floor cleaning equipment, steam cleaning equipment, or simply brushing off the surface. – This should obviously include whatever is appropriate to removing the dirt and contamination that exists. Rinsing thoroughly with clean water is essential after any necessary cleaning is completed, preferably immediately followed by wet vacuuming the residue to ensure the removal of all of the dirt and cleaning materials. This is also important to reduce the amount of water remaining in the concrete floor that has to be allowed to evaporate prior to the floor paint application.

The floors must then be allowed to dry for a minimum of at least 2 days in most instances, the necessary time allowed for this drying should be appropriate to the amount of cleaning water used and the ambient temperatures in the area. If there is excessive dirt and contamination remaining after the first cleaning routine, then the cleaning procedure should be repeated.

If the contamination is heavy, or there are residual oils or grease in the floor, then there are special solutions and techniques that can remove these – For specific advice in these situations please call any of our offices and one of our flooring specialists will be happy to assist you. If you can have them available, then photographs of your existing floor problems will often enable us to fully assess your situation and requirements -more quickly and make proposals to solve them. -Photographs should be emailed to us at technical@nccinaction.co.uk together with a few details of the problem and your requirements for the area in the future.

After cleaning it is quite common for other existing surface defects to become apparent. So if there is any surface damage, cracks or joints with damaged arises (joint edges), in the floor areas to be treated, then these must also be repaired appropriately prior to the application of any floor paint. Please refer to

[BuyFloorPaints Preparation and Cleaning Guide for Successful Floor Painting](#)
[the 'Damage Repair, Cracks and Joints' section below.](#)

Summary of Floor Cleaning and Surface Preparation for Floor Painting: In summary, the principle cleaning and surface preparations requirements for successfully applying a floor paint on a concrete or cement screed floor are to achieve: a sound, clean, dry, open-textured concrete or cement screed surface that will allow the floor paint to appropriately penetrate and / or bond to its surface.