

Euromix Concrete Ltd Some Concrete Do's and Don'ts

Access: **Do** read our Truck Dimensions/Weights sheet in the Documents Store section of our website and **Don't** forget to check the access to your project!

Alkali: Concrete is highly alkaline and contact with skin can produce burns. **Do** download a copy of our COSHH datasheet and read it before you use concrete and **Don't** use concrete unless you have suitable clothing and PPE.

Cement: Concrete is made with different cementitious types for various reasons. Strength gain, sulfate resistance, environmental attack, CO₂ reduction.

Do make sure you have the right cement for the job and **Don't** be afraid to ask for technical help.

Compaction is vital to promote strength gain and long term durability. **Do** compact your concrete with a poker vibrator or wooden tamp (for slabs).

Consistence: (How wet the concrete is) S1 dry, S2 and S3 wet and S4 very wet (usually used for Piling).

Do order the correct consistence for your application and **Don't** add water to a dry concrete to make it wetter as this reduces strength and could lead to cracking, dusting and reduced life expectancy of your concrete.

Curing is vital to promote strength gain and long term durability. **Do** protect your concrete for as long as possible after it has hardened by covering with polythene or using a sprayed curing membrane. **Don't** use your concrete until it has gained enough strength.

Drying out: **Don't** allow concrete to do this, see Curing.

Finishing: concrete must be levelled, compacted and then finished to seal the surface. **Do** use wooden floats, metal floats followed by brushes (for slabs).

Don't over work the surface if using metal floats as this can weaken the surface.

Formwork: concrete is plastic when it is delivered at a consistence in excess of S1 and therefore needs to be restrained by formwork to form its final shape.

Do ensure the formwork can support it while it sets. **Don't** remove the formwork until the concrete is strong enough to do so.

Manpower: **Do** ensure you have enough of this to handle your quantity of concrete. **Don't** assume that 1 person is enough, 2-3 is usually the minimum number needed for successful concrete operations. Remember there are 27 wheel barrow loads in 1 cubic metre of concrete!

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Part Load Charges: **Do** expect to pay a part load charge if you do not take at least one full load. This covers capacity not carried in the truck mixer.

Placing: **Do** this by direct discharge, by pump, skip, dumper or other machine or at a push a wheelbarrow. **Don't** allow concrete to drop more than about 1 metre.

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment): Contact with skin can lead to an alkali burn. **Do** wear appropriate PPE when you handle concrete and **Don't** forget to read our COSHH data sheet before you use or handle concrete.

Quality: Always buy your concrete from a quality assured (QSRMC or BSI) company producing concrete conforming to BS8500-2.

Setting time: Concrete will progressively lose workability once it comes out of the mixer drum and you should allow about an hour to place, compact and finish your concrete. **Do** get on with these operations quickly. **Don't** dally or delay as this could prove costly. In hot weather, setting takes place faster, in cold weather slower!

Specification: If you have been given a specification by an engineer or building control, **Do** pass this information to us. We need to supply concrete in accordance with the specification. **Don't** keep this information to yourself.

Strength gain: This takes place in reality after about 18 hours and we consider it complete at 28 days. **Do** protect your concrete from the elements and traffic until it has gained enough strength to resist the forces applied. **Don't** assume its ok to access your concrete the next day, check first!

Waiting time: **Do** take into account that you are allowed a small amount of time to discharge concrete on site (refer to our terms and conditions). After that time, the driver will expect to offload the remaining concrete and leave site. A charge is made for time spent waiting on site after the allowed period.