

Sealing a Garage Floor

My garage floor needs sealing # but how do I do that? The floor of your garage is regularly exposed to intense corrosion and deterioration due to road salt, oils, and other auto fluids. Sealing your garage floor reduces dust and makes sweeping and cleaning easier. A clear acrylic concrete sealer protects the concrete in your garage from damage and stains. Also, these same sealers can be used on concrete walks, driveways, or as a primer under acrylic and polyurethane floor paints. You should use caution when and where you apply a sealer, because they can not be applied over paint or other coatings.

In order to do the sealing yourself you will need several tools and materials: protective clothing, goggles, neoprene rubber gloves, a stiff brush and a bucket, a paintbrush, a cartridge-style respirator with organic-vapor and small-particle filters, a paint roller with extension handle and tray, medium nap roller cover, a concrete degreaser, and, of course, some concrete sealer. Usually 1/2 gallon of sealer covers approximately 100 square feet.

Before sealing, you must clean the floor, as it must be free of dirt, grease, and oil. To do this you should use a stiff scrub brush to apply cleaner and concrete degreaser according to the instructions on the labels of those products. Allow the solution to lie on the floor for 15 to 20 minutes (more for stubborn stains) after you finish scrubbing. After this, you should rinse the floor thoroughly with clear water. You may need more than one application # possibly several.

Some concrete sealers contain hazardous chemicals that are harmful to the skin and eyes and the vapors are not safe to breathe. The vast majority, however, are acrylic. The best way to avoid damage to your eyes, skin, and lungs is to wear protective equipment including goggles, neoprene rubber gloves, and a respirator with both organic-vapor and solid-particle filter cartridges. During the process of sealing the floor you must continuously ventilate the garage. Open all doors and windows # using a fan would also be a great idea.

After cleaning and drying the concrete, it's time to apply the sealer. You should test the sealer in an inconspicuous area before applying it. If there is any uneven density in the concrete, it may result in a light/dark appearance that you may or may not find objectionable. Using the medium-nap paint roller with the extension handle is the easiest way to apply the sealer. Start in a rear corner, and continue to work your way out of the garage. Before doing anything else, you must allow the sealer to dry as indicated by the instructions on the sealer bottle, usually for a few hours. For a driveway, the procedure is essentially the same, but it is quicker to use a garden sprayer to apply the sealer if you are applying it to a large driveway. You should act with extreme caution not to over-spray onto other material due to the high risk of staining.