

GOLDEN RULE HOME INSPECTIONS

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Home Maintenance Tips

How To Repair Cracks in Concrete

Repairing cracks in concrete is an easy project any Do-It-Yourselfer can do. The concrete will look better and the repair will extend the life of the concrete floor by keeping out the elements. Follow the steps below to repair your concrete:

■ *Clean The Floor.*

Before using any concrete filler, make sure there's no oil or dirt on the floor. If there is, use a cleaner that cuts grease. This will help the filler bond to the cement. Home Depot and Lowe's sell concrete fillers that won't shrink.

■ *Chisel The Crack Clean.*

Use a cold chisel and a hammer to get rid of any large pieces in the crack. Hold the chisel at an angle and pound with the hammer to chisel out the crack. This is called "keying" the hole to make the base or inside of the crack bigger than it is at the surface. Keying helps the new patching material bond with the old crack.

■ *Brush and Vacuum.*

After keying the crack it is important to clean up and get rid of dust and debris. Use a whisk broom then vacuum the crack thoroughly.

■ *Spread The Concrete Filler or Patch.*

Home Depot and Lowe's sell crack fillers specifically made for this purpose. Slowly fill the cracks with the filler using the nozzle of the filler tube. Check the cracks in a few minutes to see whether the filler has settled. Add some more if it doesn't look tight and use a trowel to smooth out the cracks.

■ *Allow it to Cure.*

Allow the filler to cure overnight or the duration recommended by the manufacturer. Check again to see if any additional patch is needed.

■ *Seal The Patch and Concrete.*

After patching the concrete, it is a good idea to seal it. Concrete easily absorbs stains and sealing will prevent that. A heavy-duty water based polyurethane is a good choice - it dries quickly so you can put on a second coat just a few hours after the first. You should apply three or four coats. Use a broom or brush to apply the seal to floors with a rough finish. With a smooth surface use a roller.

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