

CONCRETE CARE

Sealing Your New Concrete

General requirements for penetrating concrete sealers

READ THIS FIRST. This sheet summarizes the general requirements manufacturers commonly publish for penetrating concrete sealers. It is general information, not instructions for your specific slab or product. **THE LABEL AND TECHNICAL DATA SHEET FOR THE PRODUCT YOU CHOOSE GOVERN IN EVERY CASE.** Where they differ from this sheet, follow the manufacturer. For general further reading, the American Concrete Institute (ACI) and the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) publish industry guidance on concrete care. Sealing is a homeowner maintenance task; Tuck GC does not select, supply, apply, or supervise sealers.

1 WHAT SEALING IS

Sealing is optional. Concrete does not need a sealer to be structurally sound. A sealer reduces water and salt absorption and slows staining; it does not make concrete stain-proof or salt-proof. There are two basic product types, and they do not mix:

TYPE	HOW IT WORKS	NOTES
Penetrating (silane/siloxane)	Soaks into the pores and repels water from inside the slab	Keeps the natural matte look. This is the type Section 7 of the Tuck Standard refers to.
Film-forming (acrylic, "wet look," "cure and seal")	Leaves a coating on the surface	Changes the look and wears under traffic. Once applied, a penetrating sealer generally cannot be used until the film is removed.

Commonly referenced penetrating products include Foundation Armor SX5000 and Prosoco Siloxane PD. These are examples of the category, not endorsements.

2 REQUIREMENTS BEFORE YOU APPLY

Confirm every item below against your product's label. If any one is not met, do not apply.

REQUIREMENT	WHAT MANUFACTURERS COMMONLY REQUIRE
Concrete age	After the slab has fully cured, commonly about 28 days. It does not have to be exactly day 28 if the weather is not cooperating. If the label's minimum is longer, follow the label.
Surface condition	Clean, visibly dry, and absorbent. Excess moisture prevents the sealer from penetrating.
Temperature	Air and surface within the label's range, both during application and for the period after that the label states. Ideal air and surface temperatures are roughly 50 to 80°F, within the label's range.
Weather	No rain, dew, frost, or freezing during application and for the protection period the label states. Plan for roughly 48 hours with no rain beforehand and a dry window afterward.
Absorbency check	Sprinkle a little water on the slab. If it darkens and soaks in, the surface is absorbent. If it beads, a curing compound or residue is still present; the sealer will not penetrate.

3 PREPARATION

- [ ] **Read the label and data sheet** in full before buying or starting.
- [ ] **Clean** the surface of leaves, dirt, and debris, using the method the label allows. Allow full drying time after any washing.
- [ ] **Protect the surroundings.** Cover plants and mask siding, garage doors, glass, and adjacent asphalt as the label directs.
- [ ] **Test a small area** first and let it dry to confirm the appearance.
- [ ] **Buy enough** for the number of coats the label calls for at its stated coverage rate.

4 APPLICATION

Follow the label's method. Penetrating sealers are typically applied as follows:

1. Apply with a low-pressure pump sprayer in even passes, keeping a wet edge.
2. Do not allow puddles; spread them out with a soft broom or roller.
3. Apply any second coat within the label's recoat window. Many products require it "wet on wet," before the first coat dries.
4. Clean equipment and remove overspray from adjacent surfaces right away.

5 AFTER APPLICATION

ITEM	REQUIREMENT
Traffic	Keep foot and vehicle traffic off for the times the label states
Protection	Protect from rain and freezing for the period the label states
Reapplication	Typically cited at roughly every 5 to 10 years, depending on porosity, exposure and traffic. Follow the label's interval. When water no longer beads on the surface, the treatment is wearing.

FIRST-WINTER REQUIREMENTS APPLY WHETHER OR NOT THE SLAB IS SEALED

No de-icers of any kind on concrete less than one year old: no salt, calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, ‘pet safe’ melt or any other de-icing compound. Clear snow and ice within about 24 hours of a storm, and never pile snow on the slab and leave it there.

6 WARRANTY NOTE

Sealing does not affect structural coverage. Because Tuck GC does not control the product or the conditions, an aftermarket sealer ends the aesthetic and surface coverage category of the one-year workmanship warranty (discoloration, sheen, and trapped-moisture issues). Settlement and major cracking remain covered for the full term. Governing terms are in Section 7 of the Tuck Standard at tuckgc.com/standards and in your contract.

7 TIMING CONSIDERATIONS: LATE-SEASON SEALING

Background only. This section explains a common tradeoff; it does not change any requirement above.

- **Why people want to seal before winter.** New concrete is most vulnerable to water and salt during its first freeze-thaw season.
- **Why late-season sealing often fails.** In late fall, the problem is usually moisture more than cold. A young slab still holds water, cool air slows drying, and overnight dew or frost re-wets the surface. Sealer applied to a damp surface does not penetrate properly.
- **What that means in practice.** Late-season application is possible only when every label requirement in Section 2 is met at the same time. If the weather does not provide that window, the label-compliant choice is to wait until conditions meet the label. In the meantime, the first-winter requirements above remain the primary protection.
- **Questions about a specific product or day** are best directed to that manufacturer's technical support line, listed on the label or data sheet.

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