

HOW TO DO IT YOURSELF

These simple steps will make your project easier and more enjoyable. The end result will be trouble free for years to come.

1. Site Prep and Forms

This is one of the most important steps in your project. Be careful to not over excavate your area. It is very easy to dig the middle too deep and your eye won't be able to see it.

Using a tape measure and a level, lay out your forms with support stakes every 2' along the outside. With your forms in place lay a straight edge such as your screed board across the forms and measure the depth of your excavation in several places, especially in the middle. A minor difference in depth could equal a large difference in the amount of U-cart concrete you will need.

2. Calculate the Volume

A 4" thickness is sufficient for most projects. To calculate for a 4" rectangular slab measure the length and width in feet. 1" is .0833 feet so a measurement of 10' 5" would be 10.4165' (.0833x5). Multiply your length by the width and divide the result by 81. This is the approximate yardage you will need. We can help you calculate odd shaped projects. Draw out your area with as many measurements as possible and bring it in to us.

3. Reinforcement and existing concrete

Expansion joints and reinforcement should be placed before picking up your U-cart concrete. If you are pouring against an existing concrete slab you need to use an expansion joint. Use reinforcement if the ground is unstable or extra strength is needed.

4. Tools

Have your tools ready ahead of time. Typical tools are: shovel, concrete rake, wheelbarrow, screed board, hand float and bull float, hand trowel and fresno, edger, groover, broom, and water hose. Most of these tools are available for rent from us at very reasonable rates.

5. Get Help

While your U-cart project may not be complicated you should have help available to lighten the work load and prevent being rushed. You should have at least 1 extra person for each yard of your pour.

6. Dampen Subgrade

Your forms and subgrade should be damp, not wet, before you pour. This helps ensure a good cure and prevents a dry subgrade forms from drawing moisture out of the concrete.

7. Pick Up Your U-Cart Concrete

Bring an adequately sized vehicle with a secure hitch to pick up your U-Cart concrete. A $\frac{3}{4}$ ton pickup with a properly installed class 3 receiver hitch can tow any of our trailers. For smaller vehicles please call and we can help determine how much your vehicle can tow.

8. Pour Your Concrete

Starting from the far end of your forms, pour your concrete quickly and spread it towards you. Overlap wheelbarrow loads and work towards the trailer.

9. Screeding

A 2x4 or other straight edge that overlaps your forms is used to level the concrete. Using a side to side sawing motion, work the screed board over the concrete. Fill any low spots that show up and re-screed until level.

10. Floating the Concrete

Float immediately after screeding to level high spots, fill voids, and work a cement and water paste to the surface. Use a bull float for large areas and a hand float for small areas. Use smooth overlapping strokes. After floating, round off the edges with an edger.

11. Wash and Return the Trailer

While you are waiting for the concrete to start to set up, thoroughly wash out the trailer making sure to remove all the fresh concrete and cement film. Don't leave water in the trailer. Return the trailer.

12. Finishing

The concrete is ready to finish when the water sheen is gone from the surface and you can press your thumb on the surface without leaving an indentation. Use a fresno for large areas and a hand trowel for small areas. Use firm even strokes to create a smooth finish. Drag a broom across the surface to texture it for better footing to prevent slipping.

13. Clean Up Tools

The wet concrete can be easily cleaned from the tools while it is still damp and fresh with a water hose. Make sure to wash off the tops and handles. Postponing cleanup will make the job tougher.

14. Curing

Your concrete project will gain over half its strength in the first week and reach full strength in 28 days. You should keep your project damp for 7 days in warm weather. Protect from frost by covering with sheeting in cold weather.