The idea of used concrete probably surfaced because of the need for architects to come up with low cost floorings that would stand high on the artistic quotient. Today, the demand for stamped concrete floors has quadrupled from the time of its inception. Concrete floorings are a win-win for both- consumers and architects. While consumers get to save anywhere from 40-70 per cent of costs ideally incurred on bricks, cobblestones and tiles, architects can make more profit with this method. Here are a few basics that you ought to know about stamped concrete:

What is stamped concrete:

Concrete that is placed, colored, and stamped with various patterns to achieve near perfect lookalikes of natural floorings such as wood, tiles and natural stones is often referred to stamped concrete.

Where are these used:

You can use these indoors or outdoors on walkways, outdoor kitchens, pool-decks etc. In fact stamped concrete patios are very popular. Theyâ€™re also popularly used in high traffic areas like hospitals, hotels, office floors, and other areas that are high maintenance. Itâ€™s a common myth that concrete floorings cannot be used in mild climates. But concrete floorings have been successfully installed in several mild climate areas like Denver, Chicago, New York, etc. A special coating of wax ensures that water does not penetrate the slabs of concrete, thereby reducing the potential for damage due to the freeze and thaw process.

The cost of stamped concrete floorings:

As earlier said, theyâ€™re affordable when compared to the cost of installing natural floorings. The costs would largely depend on the area to be covered and the impression that is to be etched on the concrete. It also depends on the number of workmen employed, the number of tools used, weather conditions and also the experience of the crew. Generally, it is believed that with a crew of three finishers and two laborers, an area of about 1000 square feet can be done in a day. Sometimes, the same crew with experience and little more tools can cover an area of about 3000 square feet in a single day. The costs are usually decided on the basis of square feet per man hour, besides the time taken for coloring and finishing. You would also have to pay separately for stain concrete. Maintenance is also cost friendly, because unlike natural stone floorings, these are a monolith cast and hence there are no chances of moisture entering through the crevices and cracks.

Can you do it at home:

Yes, there are several DIY kits that come with handy tips and techniques. But then laying stamped concrete is an art in itself, and its best to leave the job to professionals.

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The author of this article is experienced in commercial concrete creations and has written several

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