

Gypsol screed offers benefits to all types of construction project



Gypsol screed is a high quality free flowing, self compacting anhydrite floor screed which offers huge benefits to all aspects of a construction project, including screed installers, builders, underfloor heating designers, main contractors and clients. Our aim is to make it easy for specifiers to select Gypsol screed as their flooring screed of choice.

It is important to pay attention to the treatment of the Gypsol screed after it has been installed in order to ensure that the maximum benefits can be extracted. It is equally important that follow-on trades understand the material and how it should be treated in order to ensure that subsequent floor coverings remain trouble free.



Post installation up to 48 hours

Gypsol screed, having been installed into a suitably sealed building envelope, should be protected from ingress of water and extremes of temperature. External windows and door openings should remain closed in order to allow the screed to set. The screed may be trafficked by light foot traffic after 24 to 48 hours from installation. Gypsol screed is self curing and therefore does not require a curing membrane. The finished screed should not be excessively heated during this period, although keeping the environment at or around 20°C is beneficial. Significant air movement across the screed should be avoided in order to reduce the risk of plastic shrinkage cracking.

48 hours to 7 days

After 48 hours the Gypsol screed is ready to begin drying. It is of significant benefit at this stage to provide as much ventilation as is reasonably practicable, whilst maintaining protection for the screed from ingress of external water. Windows and doors can remain open for as long as possible, assuming conditions allow, during the working day. This will help to provide good air exchange to remove moisture from the air above the screed, and allow the residual moisture to escape. After 72 hours dehumidifiers may be introduced to assist the drying process if desired. Between 72 hours and 7 days any loose or friable surface laitance may be removed by lightly sanding with a rotary floor sander and a medium grit sanding disc or other suitable means of removal. Foot traffic can continue during this period.

After 7 days

The Gypsol screed can now be loaded and the work area returned to full service. Underfloor heating can be commissioned and run and unlike cement based screeds which cannot be heated for 28 days or force dried at all, Gypsol screeds can be force dried either using the underfloor heating, or using space heaters and fans. In either case it is important to remove the moisture from the air above the screed either by ventilation, extraction or dehumidification in order to allow the screed to dry properly. This assists greatly with early preparation for floor coverings. If space heaters are used these should not be of the fossil fuel variety e.g. gas burners as the burning of gas emits moisture back into the air reducing the benefit of heating significantly. Electrical or forced air movement heaters are suitable. Protection during the remainder of the construction period should continue in order to protect the Gypsol screed from re-wetting which could delay the drying period. It is not however desirable that the screed should be covered with impervious sheeting during construction.

Prior to floor covering installation

In accordance with the relevant national standards for floor coverings the surface of the screed should be inspected and should satisfy the following:

1. It should be clean and free from chemicals likely to interfere with adhesion
2. It should be sound, hard and free from fractures other than planned joints
3. It should be free from loose friable laitance, dust, construction debris and loose surface contamination e.g. mud, building adhesive and bricklaying mortar
4. It should be suitably dry or an approved method of moisture management such as a damp proof membrane or uncoupling technology employed (see additional notes)
5. Any underfloor heating must have been commissioned and run

Additional notes

Moisture testing is carried out using a suitable approved method such as a flooring hygrometer or carbide bomb test. Once dry the floor should be cleared of any gross debris and then thoroughly vacuumed to remove any small loose dust and debris. Damp proof membranes can be used on Gypsol screeds subject to them being unheated, below 1.5% moisture and them having achieved sufficient strength to satisfy the mechanical requirements of the application (minimum 28 days old). Due to the potential inaccuracies of using hygrometers at high humidity levels a direct measurement should be used such as Carbide Bomb or oven dried sample.

Where surface moisture levels are below 95% relative humidity and at least seven days old, the Norcross Pro-Gyp Fast Track System may be used in accordance with manufacturers instructions. If the floor requires priming any primer should be selected for its suitability for use with calcium sulphate or anhydrite screeds. If a smoothing compound is to be used it should ideally be one made using calcium sulphate although subject to suitable priming one based on Portland cement could be used. If a cement based smoothing compound is to be used it is often beneficial to select a water dispersible epoxy primer.

If the floor is to be tiled a flexible adhesive based on calcium sulphate is likely to offer the most robust combination. Again, subject to suitable priming, it is possible to use an adhesive based on Portland cement. Gypsol screeds are also suitable to receive epoxy resin toppings subject to suitable preparation and priming.

Alternatively it may be desirable to use a proprietary uncoupling membrane. These are available for both soft flooring such as vinyl or for tile surfaces. It is a recommendation of BS 5385 that natural stone tiles should be uncoupled from heated screeds. The manufacturers of Gypsol screeds do not generally manufacture or supply primers, adhesives, damp proofing membranes or uncoupling technology. Whilst advice is based on sound principals and qualified expertise it is recommended that in all instances the relevant manufacturer's advice should be followed in order to ensure suitable warranties are in place.

