



Jennifer's Mosaics

Outdoor Cement Q&A's

Q: How should you prepare the stepping stone mold/s?

A: Prepare mold/s by lightly coating the inner sides and bottom with a lubricant such as petroleum jelly or a cooking spray.

Q: Is my outdoor cement ready to use right out of the box?

A: Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement is a dry mix; as a result, some settling may occur in transit. This means the coarse grains of sand will filter to the bottom and the fine cement particles will come to the top. It is essential, to mix cement in the plastic bag to insure a proper distribution of sand and cement. Proper distribution will result in the correct consistency and stone strength.

Q: How do I know when Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement is mixed properly?

Properly mixing of the cement is essential to a good sturdy stone. Refer to the mixing chart on the side of the outdoor cement packaging. Liquid measurements are approximate. Should your mixture be dry, continue to add water 2 ounces at a time until your mixture is smooth and pourable. Drying time ranges from 5-24 hours. If too much water is used, the following may occur:

1. Mix will be too runny.
2. Water rises to the back of your stone when setting.
3. Stone may crumble when removed from the mold.
4. Stone may break after being outdoors for a period of time.

Place mold on a flat level surface where it will not be moved while drying. Slowly and evenly pour cement into the mold, approximately 7/8 full.

Q: Why do bubbles appear after I pour the Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement in the mold?

A: Bubbles result from trapped air in the cement mixture. It is important to help release trapped air to prevent unsightly air bubble from ruining your stone. To do so, lightly tap the sides of the mold for 1-2 minutes. DO NOT MOVE MOLD WHILE CEMENT IS DRYING. Doing so may cause the cement to seep under the glass or lead to the cracking of the stone.

Q: When will I know it is safe to remove my stone from the mold?

A: When the stone is hardened, it can be removed from the mold. If you place your hand close to the surface, you may feel heat coming from the stone. This indicates the mixture is not ready to be removed. Test periodically and when heat is gone, it should be ready to be removed from the mold. Drying time ranges from 5-24 hours. Larger stones, benches and birdbaths may take longer. However, drying time may vary depending on temperature of the room, relative humidity, altitude and the precise amount of water added to the mix.

Q: Is there a way to repair air holes in a stone once it has set?

A: Should holes occur due to air bubbles, simply mix a small amount of Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement into a paste and press the mixture into the holes. If your glass pieces have lifted or recessed slightly, use a sharp craft blade or knife to scrape away excess cement.

Q: Does Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement have to cure as other cements do?

A: Yes, to quicken the curing time place finished stone on several dowels or pencils, which will allow air to pass underneath the stone. Stone should cure for 28 days in a controlled environment. Do not cure stones outdoors and don't wet stones as they cure.

Q: Do stones made with Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement need reinforcement?

A: Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement needs no reinforcement.

Q: Is there any special care and maintenance for the stone?

A: Extreme temperature changes may cause the glass in the stone to crack. Avoid taking the finished stone from a warm environment to a cold one or vice versa. Never let a stone freeze before curing! If possible store stones inside during the winter months when the temperatures drop below freezing.

Q: Is there a special way to store Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement when it is not in use?

A: When not in use, store Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement in an air tight container to avoid moisture and hardening of cement.

Q: What causes the stepping stone to crack?

A: Too much water during the mixing process will cause a stone to crumble or appear to dissolve. It is very important that you follow the mixing directions for the particular size and shape of mold being used. It is best to add the water a little at a time while mixing. As the mixture becomes stiff continue to add small amounts of water until it is the consistency of pancake batter. If you reach this state before all the water is used, discontinue adding more water.

Moving the stone while in its "green" stage will cause unseen fracturing within the body of the stone which will become evident as the stone ages. If the stone cracks coming out of the mold, try leaving it in the mold longer the next time.

Extreme cold/freezing temperatures can cause rapid expansion and contraction not only of the stone but of the glass embedded in the stone which will result in a cracked stone. Always allow the stone to cure in approximately a 70° room environment for 28 days to insure all the water has evaporated from the stone. Then seal stone using two coats of a good concrete/masonry or tile sealer.

Q: What causes a hazy stone?

A: Haze occasionally forms on stepping stones from salts and minerals deposits from evaporating water. To remove use a tile cleaner or masonry cleaner (follow the manufacturer's instructions for mixing and applying).

Q: Something has stained my stone, how do I remove the stain?

A: Concrete of any kind is porous and must be sealed to prevent stains from penetrating the stone. If a stain has occurred, it may be removed by using a tile or masonry cleaner such as a phosphoric acid cleaner (follow the instructions on the bottle) or Muriatic acid diluted with water. Remember to reseal your stone before placing outside or on a tabletop.

Q: Do I need to seal my garden stone?

A: It is recommended that you seal your stone to protect it from stains and water being reabsorbed. A good Tile & Stone Penetrating Sealer, which is not water-based, last the longest in extremely damp/wet climate. A water-based concrete and masonry sealer may be used, but you may need to reseal the stones each year depending on your climate. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and seal all sides of the stone completely. Two coats will insure a better seal. Be sure you have properly cured the stone for the amount of time required before you seal it.

Q: Our water has a lot of minerals and/or salt in it. What should I do to prevent efflorescent (the white frost) from appearing on the stone?

A: Efflorescent can appear when the stone is in the setup stage or during the curing stage or even after it is in use. You may use distilled or bottled water to mix with the Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement to prevent this problem during the set up and early curing stages. A concrete/masonry or tile sealer will prevent the efflorescent from appearing after the stone has cured and you have it in the yard. A good sealer will cause any water to run off the stone and not leave the minerals behind.

Q: I noticed a light froth or bubbly layer on my stone as it was setting up. What caused this and will it harm the stone?

A: The light froth or bubbly layer is a result of too much water in the mix, which may also weaken the stone. Be sure to completely cure the stone in a warm environment for 28 days and give it two coats of a good sealer. This will protect the stone. Perhaps consider using it as a tabletop where it will not be subjected to as much moisture as it would laying on the ground. Next time, make sure you mix the Jennifer's Mosaics™ Outdoor Cement to a pancake batter consistency.