

# VERSA ETCH USER GUIDE

Versa Etch Decorative System



## Versa Etch Overview

Versa Etch Surface Retarder is designed to expose a wide range of aggregate sizes on the surface of concrete for horizontal surfaces.

Versa Etch Surface Retarder comes in a range of 9 different depths of etches giving the architect, owners, and contractors a wide range of exposed aggregate finishes.

- 1 (white) - Zero (Very light acid etch)
- 3 (purple) - Micro Etch (1/32" - 1/16")
- 5 (light blue) - Sandblast (1/16" - 1/8")
- 15 (yellow) - Light Etch (1/16" - 1/4")
- 25 (beige) - Fine (1/8" - 1/4")
- 50 (green) - Medium (1/8" - 3/8")
- 75 (blue) - Medium (1/8" - 3/8")
- 100 (Gray) - Coarse (3/8" - 1/2")
- 125 (pink) - Coarse (3/8" - 5/8")

Versa Etch Surface Retarder is a part of the Versa Etch Decorative System.

- Versa Etch Surface Retarder
- Versa Etch Extender
- SpecShield WB (Penetrating Non-Glossy Sealer)  
or
- AquaShine/CrystalShine/Deco Shine (Glossy Sealer)

## Mix Design Recommendations

When using Versa Etch Surface Retarder, a minimum 3,500 psi concrete mix design with a 4" - 5" slump should be used to achieve the best results. Mixes with more or less cement could yield different results.

It is recommended to consult with a local ready mix company to help select the proper mix design to achieved the desired look and strength of the concrete.

**Mock-up installations in similar conditions are always recommended. This will help determine removal time for desired results.**

For finer etches, mix designs should be heavy on sand contents (60% sand / 40% coarse). Coarse aggregate should be 3/4" in size if possible. For coarse etches, a 50%/50% aggregate gradation is suggested. The larger the aggregate, the easier it is to work the stone down from the surface.



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## Preparation

- 1) Prepare Versa Etch for use prior to pour  
Agitate well to thoroughly disperse pigment
- 2) Place concrete at 4-5 inch maximum slump.
- 3) Screed flat
- 4) Bull float in both directions
- 5) Wait until bleed water has dissipated  
Type 1L mixes may show little if any bleed
- 6) Complete edge work, edge the slab with metal edger then float the surface open.
- 7) Begin the finish of slab, typically with a fresno.

It is important to make sure there is no puddled water or dips in the final surface. The intention is to get a tightly finished FLAT surface.

***Timing is Everything!***



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www.specchem.com 816.968.5600

## Versa Etch Application

Apply Versa Etch Surface Retarder with a commercial grade, high volume, low pressure sprayer such as Hudson or Chapin. The sprayer nozzle should be a round adjustable nozzle or a fan type with (.3 or .5 GPM). Apply Versa Etch with a sprayer at the rate of 200-300 sq ft per gallon until the surface has a complete hiding coat.

### You can't overapply Versa Etch but you can underapply!

Versa Etch Surface Retarder will dry on the surface in the approximately 1-2 hours depending on ambient temperature and humidity.

To extend the wash-off window, apply Versa Etch Extender on top of the dried Versa Etch Surface Retarder.

Versa Etch Extender will help Versa Etch Surface Retarder provide a more consistent, uniform finish as well as extend the wash off time up to 48 hours. This will allow more time in-between placement and removal of the surface retarder.

## Versa Etch Removal

Removal of the Versa Etch Surface Retarder can begin in as little as 4 hour. The concrete surface must be hard enough to resist the cleaning process.

Versa Etch can be removed 12 to 16 hours later depending upon mix design, ambient temperature, job site conditions and washing procedures used.

Use a power washer with 3000 psi and a 25 degree fan nozzle. Do not get too close to the slab as you will leave deeper marks the closer the wand gets to the slab. Try washing from about 6 to 10 inches away. A short stiff nylon broom or an acid wash brush can be used to aid in removal.

Early removal of Versa Etch can be accomplished by the use of a stiff bristle broom and a garden hose. Wash until clear water runs from the surface.

The most recent preferred method of removing Versa Etch is using a buffer with an 80 grit carbide bristle brush with water. Follow up with a power washer to rinse. This method is the highly recommended for the lighter etches of Versa Etch.



## Rain & Weather Exposure

Versa Etch, once dry will resist light rain. Plastic Sheeting can be used to protect from heavy rain once the Versa Etch has completely dried. Lay plastic as smooth as possible to avoid a marbling appearance.

In cooler temperatures you may also place tarps over the slab to maintain heat in addition to protection from standing rainwater. If you plan on using insulated tarps, cover the concrete with plastic first to protect from drag marks.

## Mock Up's

Prior to the project starting, sample installations in similar conditions, with similar mix designs are highly recommended. These samples help determine project timing and to ensure you achieve the desired look of the concrete.

During the project, sample installation are also recommended. Typically 2'x 2' mock up panels that are later easily broken and removed should be placed, finished, and applied Versa Etch in a similar manner to the main concrete on the project. This sample will assist with gauging wash time without disturbing the main concrete installation.

## Limitations/Precautions

- Jobsite conditions to consider
  - High temperatures/High winds/Direct sun exposure
- Applying Versa Etch too late without sufficient moisture being present on the surface.
- Under application of Versa Etch.
- Poor mix designs (inadequate cement content/poor gradation)
- Not have enough manpower to complete the finishing process in time to apply Versa Etch.
- Removal issues are commonly caused by late application or waiting too long to remove. Versa Etch Extender helps prevent this issue.



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