



TREADWELL™

Homeowner's Guide to Garage Epoxy Flooring

Comparing hiring a professional contractor vs DIY

Introduction

You have wanted to get your garage floor coated for months now, but you are unsure whether you should spend the money to hire a professional contractor or get a DIY garage coating kit. This guide is designed to give you, the homeowner, a comparison between the two so you know precisely what to expect and can make an informed decision about which option is right for you.

When taking on any home improvement project, including coating your garage floor, it is tempting to try to tackle it yourself. Many different DIY kits are available to homeowners, and “How To” videos and other DIY information flood online sites. All provide a step-by-step process to make coating that garage floor look easy and hassle free. How hard can it be, right? Isn't one garage floor coating the same as the next?

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Sometimes the deciding factor between hiring a professional and taking on a DIY project is much more than how difficult a task it is. It is about the results you expect to get.

With our extensive experience, we are confident we know the differences between a DIY garage floor coating kit and what a professional, like us, can bring to the equation.

If you want your garage floor coating to last, take a few minutes to learn the critical differences between a professional garage floor coating and a DIY kit.

Difference #1: The Prep Work

Whether the concrete is new or decades old, the longevity of any coating system begins with the preparation of the concrete surface prior to the application of the actual chemicals. Acid etching is a common technique included in DIY kits, but it lacks the ability to properly prepare tightly troweled surfaces. It also cannot remove many of the substances that already have tarnished your concrete – such as existing paint, concrete sealers, or motor oil and other contaminants. All of these substances will decrease or alleviate the ability of the DIY coating to stick to the concrete.

As a result, the homeowner will quickly notice pot marks or chips in their newly coated surface – many of which could have been prevented by properly preparing the concrete.

Conversely, the preparation of your concrete floor by a professional is going to be much more thorough because professionals have the tools to get it done right. It is our goal to ensure that the coating actually adheres to the concrete. In fact, the coating's bond should be so strong to the concrete that if you pull hard enough on the coating, the concrete should break away!

A professional will use a mechanical preparation method, such as diamond grinding or abrasive blasting. This opens the top surface of the concrete floor – removing any substances or sealants – and makes the concrete porous again. This process allows the coating to properly adhere to the concrete – and not simply lay over the top of it.

We attach HEPA filtered vacuums to our grinders so that the dust and any contaminants are contained and don't become airborne. Our prep work also includes filling in any cracks and fixing any areas that need addressed.

The result is preparation that will allow a coating that won't peel, crack or chip away from your concrete floor.

Difference #2: The Materials

Many paints are available for garage floors, but they will not hold up to the wear and tear of hot tires and chemicals that are bound to test the durability of your coating. The coatings found in DIY kits are actually quite inferior to the products we use. Professionals use a coating system that is made from epoxies, urethanes or hybrids of the two, while the substance found in a DIY kit is more like a fortified latex paint. It just will not hold up over time.

The garage floor coating we apply in your home is true, industrial-strength epoxy – not paint that's been fortified with epoxy. This is the same coating we've used in airplane hangers, heavy trucking facilities and fire stations. If it can hold up to those heavy vehicles, it can certainly handle anything you drive on it.

A professional coating system will feature multiple layers. The first layer – the “base coat” – is designed for high adhesion to the concrete and may also be the binder for decorative chips.

The second layer – the “top coat” – is a clear coating. It is formulated for UV stability, abrasion resistance and high chemical resistance. It will keep the coating looking good year after year, ensuring that it does not discolor from exposure to direct sunlight, weather and chemicals.

Difference #3: Minimal Maintenance Required

Unless you never use your garage floor, you can expect that your DIY garage floor coating will chip and peel. This means

year after year you'll spend a weekend patching your garage floor. Unfortunately, the patching actually compounds the potential for problems down the road. Reapplying a coating on top of the existing DIY coating will only enhance the probability of chipping or peeling again, because the top-most layer will not stick as well as that applied directly on top of the concrete. The bottom line is this: A DIY kit will never adhere to the concrete like a professional coating. The product will only coat the top, just like paint would. The maintenance is a tireless cycle.

Meanwhile, because a professional coating is properly prepared, is built on a strong epoxy and has a scratch-resistant clear coat, it is going to last. It will hold up well with normal vehicle traffic and use, and sweeping stones and other road debris on a regular basis will greatly extend the life of your coating system. In fact, the only "call back" you may want to consider is rejuvenating the shine and protection by applying a new clear top coat every 12 to 15 years.

DIY Epoxy Kit vs Treadwel Epoxy Flooring

	DIY Epoxy Kit	Treadwell Epoxy Flooring
Beautiful concrete floors	✓	✓
Variety of colors	✓	✓
Preparation of concrete	Acid etching, which lacks the ability to remove existing paint, sealers and contaminants	Mechanical preparation; can include diamond grinding and/or abrasive blasting
Coating bond to concrete		✓
Number of layers	1	Multiple layers make our garage floor coatings strong
Coating materials used	A paint fortified with epoxy	Commercial-strength epoxy coating
UV coating		✓
Anti-skid protection	The pretty acrylic flakes add a bit of texture to the coating	Crushed quartz or other texturizing material can be added to the top coat for premium anti-skid protection
Durability - Traffic	Many DIY floor coatings do not hold up against “hot tires” peel	Holds up to normal traffic with minimal maintenance (sweeping and mopping up spills)
Durability - Chemical spills	Many DIY floor coatings will stain from gasoline, anti-freeze and even road salt	Simply mop up any spills and debris to restore the clean luster of your garage floor
Longevity	Regular patching of chips and peel marks is often necessary	Homeowners report an average of 12-15+ years before wanting to restore their floor’s shine with a new clear coat, but the epoxy coat is still strong
Initial price of investment	\$60-\$160+ per kit	Yes, it is more than a DIY kit, but not nearly as expensive as you’d think; typically \$4-\$7 per square foot
Price over 12 years	\$720-\$1,920 plus 12 weekends (3 months) of your time for maintenance	No additional investment of money or your time required; the project is done, beautiful and long-lasting
Install Time	2-3 days	2.5 days
Thickness (mils DFT)	2-5 mils	20 - 35 mils
Time of year to install	Late Spring - Early Fall	Year Round



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Contact us today for a professional installation quote!