



## *Care of paving stones and slabs*

A correctly laid surface of paving stones or slabs can give many years of pleasure. The surface is largely maintenance-free. However, owing to the outdoor climate, the surface gradually becomes dirty. This is the result of contaminants in the air and from traffic. To help keep your surface in good condition, we give a few tips and pieces of care advice below.

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### Cleaning

Dirt from air and traffic contaminants are most easily removed using water and a brush. Where the dirt is more severe, add a cleaning agent.

### Topping up joint filler

Essentially, joints are a part of each paving stone/slab. To prevent surfaces becoming unstable, it is important to keep joints topped-up throughout use. Furthermore, a good and well-filled joint makes it more difficult for weeds to take root.

Wind and weather can remove joint filler. This is why supplementing using Benders' joint filler (recommended grain size, 0 – 2 mm) may be necessary.

### Moss, fungus, algae

The paving of patios, paths and garage drives can, in certain cases, acquire a covering of algae, fungus or moss. If necessary, this covering can be removed using a 10% ammonia solution, weed killer, a 1:1 chlorine solution or Benders' roof and stone/slab cleaner.

### Oil

Oil stains can be removed using a scouring agent and hot water. Various types of degreaser can also be used. Fresh oil stains should be soaked up using paper, rags or sawdust. Oil does not damage the stones/slabs.

### Paint

To soak up solvent-based paint, use a rag and then cover the surface with sawdust for around 24 hours. Water-based paints are also to be soaked up with a rag. However, then use water to wash the surface clean. Paint that has dried can be scrubbed away using a scouring agent or a cellulose thinner.

### Rust stains

Rust stains can be removed by washing with a brush and water.

### Lime precipitation (bloom)

Lime precipitation may occur. It is a natural part of

concrete's hardening process and is thus not the basis for a claim. It does not impair the product's durability. As a rule the bloom (precipitation) wears away after a while. Where the bloom is severe, hydrochloric acid (a 1:5 mix) can be used followed by washing. Care should be taken in the vicinity of plants.

### Winter maintenance

Unfortunately, winter and snow are not just glittering landscapes and cups of hot chocolate! They also bring ice and slippery conditions, both visible and hidden. Whether these lay in wait on a garden path or on the road where you drive, they are an annoyance. Salting is a popular method of combating them. The results are often good, but not particularly gentle to the treated surface or the surrounding environment.

This is why we had the idea of giving a few tips on what to think about when maintaining your paving stones/slabs in a way that is kind to the concrete surface and the environment.

- Never use salt on your paving stones or slabs. It can result in corrosion of concrete surfaces. The stones/slabs are then more porous and brittle. Newly laid concrete products are particularly sensitive to salt.
- Instead, shovel away the snow and then, to give a better grip, sprinkle sand or grit.
- It is a good idea to rinse surfaces where cars are frequently parked, especially if they use the same place every day. The slush in the wheel arches often has high concentrations of salt. Over time, these can erode the concrete surface.

### Weeds

A number of methods besides weed killers can be used to keep weeds down. For small areas, mechanical weeding is both good and efficient. Another environment-friendly method that is suitable for lar-

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ger surfaces is burning with liquefied petroleum gas. However, using this method too harshly can damage the concrete.

### **Tumbled finishes**

Our Landscaping range has a number of stones that we call “Antik” (e.g. Labyrinth Antik, Troja Antik, etc.). Unlike a “sharp” stone, an Antik stone has been worked to give a worn or antique appearance. We use two methods to achieve this, tumbling and hammering. Both these take place after the stone has been shaped and hardened. At first sight, they may seem less than gentle.

In tumbling, the stones are tumbled around in a gi-

gantic cylinder. They bang into each other and, consequently, smaller and larger pieces may be chipped off. In hammering, the stones are run through a hammer mill. This can leave marks similar to those left when a car that has snow chains on its wheels is driven across a surface. The processes do not affect stone strength. They simply give an attractive finish.

Thus, achieving an antique appearance requires somewhat rough treatments. Nonetheless, these give stones that, although they are worn, are within process parameters. Consequently, the inherent slight variations (size, finish, etc.) are not the basis for a claim.