

# FAQ

## Frequently Asked Questions



Makers of NuCrete™  
The World's Only Stainless Concrete



### *Q: Do you pour-in-place or is it Pre-Cast?*

A: Our concrete slabs are all pre-cast at our state of the art facility in Petaluma, CA. We have found that concrete poured-in-place can not be properly cured and will eventually crack. We carefully control the batch mix, the curing atmosphere and time and the finishing in a factory controlled environment. This is the only way that we can control the precision making and curing of concrete and the only way that we can assure our 30-year warranty against structural cracking.

### *Q: How do you reinforce your products?*

A: Our products are steel bar reinforced, (a painstaking process and the best reinforcement that is offered on the market today). We guarantee against structural cracking (when properly installed) for 30 years. Hairline cracks may occur and are considered superficial character marks, not defects. Hairline cracking can occur while the slab cures, when the slab is being handled, or years after installation. They are absolutely non-structural and actually add to the enduring patina that all concrete slabs exhibit with time. Hairline cracking, when it appears, will NOT worsen over time, but will remain stable.

### *Q: How much does concrete weigh?*

A: A 2" thick concrete counter weighs about 23 pounds per square foot. Conventional cabinetry will support these slabs eliminating the need for any special substrate considerations. The weight is distributed over a great area and should not be a concern. For cantilevered or unique applications, contact our offices for technical assistance in engineering the necessary support structure.

### *Q: Will there be Seams?*

A: Solid concrete slabs, up to 7.5 feet can be cast without a seam, unless the counter depth is beyond the standard 25.5 due to weight. If there is a sink void, we may place a seam around the opening. Seams can either be celebrated with a grout line or diminished with a simple bead of silicon. Seams are viewed as a kind of "control joint" that relieves pressure caused by the countertop weight. It is common with pour-in-place counters for structural cracking to occur because there is no "relief" from the pressure of the weight as the substrate settles over time.

### *Q: What is the maximum length of a countertop I can order?*

A: In general, we have found that a maximum length of 7' is ideal for most applications. Beyond this the slabs are difficult to handle safely and install without damage. Sink voids and certain radius designs require seams to protect the structural integrity of the slab. Our estimating department places seams where necessary in keeping with the overall harmony of the design.

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**Q: *How thick are your countertops and sinks?***

A: Standard thickness for custom sinks and countertops is 2". Custom detailing, such as a drop apron, can make countertops appear to be massively thick. Many edge details are available to conceal custom bowls or mounting hardware.

**Q: *Does concrete crack or chip?***

A: It can, yes. Concrete is a rigid material and if impacted with a heavy object concrete can chip. We have custom color repair kits available along with technical advice should repair be required.

**Q: *How thick are your tiles and pavers?***

A: Thickness varies between 0.5" to 2.0" according to size of tile - generally the larger the tile the thicker it needs to be to perform over time. Please refer to our website for a listing of the sizes and thickness of each style.

**Q: *How can I get samples?***

A: You may order both Classic Concrete and NuCrete™ samples through our web site: [www.sonomastone.com](http://www.sonomastone.com) If you would like a special finish such as Mold Release (for tiles/pavers) or Acid Etch, (for some fireplace or hood surrounds) or Rustic Acid Etch (air holes not filled) please call us: 877.939.9929.

**Q: *How many colors do you have to choose from?***

A: We have a palette of 24 colors; 12 Natural colors and 12 Designer colors. These colors may be seen in our catalog or on the website. Almost any color can be made in Classic concrete or NuCrete™ as a custom color at a slight premium.

**Q: *Can I get custom colors?***

A: Absolutely! Sonoma Cast Stone has a large palette of standard colors. If the color you envision for your concrete product is not a part of our existing palette of colors mail us a solid color swatch. This must be a solid color swatch similar to what you would get at a paint store. Please indicate which finish you are most interested in. Choices are Classic Concrete (bath or kitchen), NuCrete™ (kitchen) Mold Release (Tiles), Acid Etch (fireplace or hood surround) or Rustic Acid Etch (fireplace or hood surround). For a fee of \$350, Sonoma Cast Stone will create three 3x6" concrete color samples for your review. We save these formulas and create your Sonoma Cast Stone product utilizing your selection from the custom made samples. Please keep in mind that concrete is a natural product and colors vary. Your resulting product may not match exactly to your color sample, but it will be as close as we (and nature) can provide! All formulations are kept on file for future use.

Mail to: Suzanne Bambury Sonoma Cast Stone 133 Copeland Street Petaluma, CA 94952

**Q. How reliable are the concrete colors?**

A: Both Classic concrete and NuCrete™ are made primarily from natural materials. These basic materials such as various types of sand and aggregates often vary in color which makes the final product vary from a sample poured earlier. Over the years we have learned to control this variance by pigment and curing adjustments, however, there will often be slight differences in color that are beyond our control. Light reflection plays an important part in the perceived color. If possible, it is important to view samples of our product in the room where it will eventually be installed (in the case of remodel). Samples or products made from the exact same batch will appear considerably different if one has been diamond sanded, while another is mold released (products such as Tile & Pavers as they appear right out of the mold – no finishing, sanding, etc. is done) and even more if the sample has been acid etched. It is essential that the surface texture be considered when specifying a color.

**Q: What surface finishes are available?**

A: Sonoma Cast Stone has a variety of finishes available depending on the product in question:

1. **Classic Concrete** (diamond sanded, sealed and waxed)  
Typically used for bathroom products like sinks and countertops  
Surface will patina over time.  
Requires routine maintenance (cleaning, waxing and resealing).
2. **NuCrete™** (diamond sanded, sealed, waxed)  
Typically used for kitchen sinks and countertops - optional for bathroom products.  
Surface will not patina over time.  
Requires minimal maintenance, but never needs to be resealed.
3. **Acid Etch** (diamond sanded and etched with acid) Removes the upper “cream” layer of concrete to reveal a slightly rough surface  
Typically used for fireplace and hood surrounds.  
Surface will patina over time.
4. **Mold Released** (Classic concrete that is not diamond sanded sealed or waxed,  
Typically used for Tiles and Pavers.  
Surface will patina over time.  
Requires sealing on site according to interior or exterior application.)

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**Q: *How much do concrete products cost?***

A: Concrete varies in price from \$17 per s.f. (for tiles) to over \$180 per s.f. (for complex countertops). We make several types of concrete products:

1. “Standard Products” we utilize set sized molds to your color, finish and faucet hole specification (no variation on size and shape)
2. “Custom Products” we build one-off molds to site specific templates, which may include integral bath or kitchen sinks or voids for under mount sinks, any kind of edge detail desired, any shape counter, radius bows or angles as well as faucet holes.
3. “Commercial Products” ADA compliant sink units in single to multiple bowl configurations, custom countertops for retail, restaurant, bar, hotel and winery applications.

The size, the level of complexity and the cost of molds and forms are factors used in considering the price of our products.

**Q: *Why would I consider Standard Kitchen CounterTiles™?***

A: CounterTiles™ are a great lower cost alternative to custom made counter tops! The cost per square foot is less than half the cost of custom made counters. CounterTiles™ come standard in NuCrete™ (stainless concrete) that never needs to be resealed, and will not stain or etch like Classic concrete. If you are a talented do-it-yourselfer, this is your product!

Standard-sized tiles are countertop depth 25.5” x 24” run length x 1.25” thick and come in any of our standard 24 NuCrete™ colors Each tile is finished on all four sides and surface. With a cut or two to fit to length (accomplished by using a diamond blade or wet saw - to be done on site), CounterTiles™ fit into most kitchen schemes. We have optional back & side splash plus three great sink options to choose from. You may use our CounterTiles™ with other manufacturer’s FarmSinks by simply butting

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them right up against each other. Please check out the CounterTile™ page on our web site that gives additional information on how to calculate your order needs and how to make cuts.

### *Q: What is the process to order custom products?*

A: A custom product can be made in about 11-12 weeks. Here are the steps:

1. Client or dealer faxes or emails Sonoma Cast Stone detailed project information: dimensional drawings or sketches, sink style, faucet or sink holes, ship to address etc.
2. Sonoma Cast Stone generates a complimentary custom estimate (can take up to a week).
3. If there is a dealer in your area, custom pricing is returned to them, and they contact you for review.
4. Dealer assists in color & finish selection, coordinating products etc.
5. Templates are made from existing cabinetry and sent with deposit.
6. Once received, shop drawings are produced for approval. Upon approval of all details, products are released to be scheduled for manufacture. (manufacturing time varies).
7. Finished product (sealed, waxed and ready for use) is shipped to project location for installation.
8. Aftercare: Care and Maintenance information for upkeep of product is sent to the buyer and is also available on our web site.
9. Please refer to our "Custom Estimate Information" located on our web site or contact your local dealer for assistance. (A map of dealers is available on our web site).

### *Q: May I buy direct?*

A: A: Sonoma Cast Stone has a national network of quality dealers. We recommend residential clients visit their local dealer to review our products on display for both texture and colors. If you are not located within a reasonable distance of one of our dealers (locations on our web site dealer page) or have a commercial project please contact us for direct pricing.

### *Q: How do I get pricing for commercial products?*

A: Please contact the Sonoma Cast Stone Sales Department for your commercial needs.  
877-283-2400 ext. 112 or email us at [sales@sonomastone.com](mailto:sales@sonomastone.com))

### *Q: How long before my order is shipped?*

A: All of these approximate lead times begin once we have confirmed all product specifications and have received a deposit (when applicable). Transit time varies from overnight to 5 to 7 days depending upon destination.  
Standard Products sometimes ship from available stock. (Check for availability)  
Cast-To-Order Products require 5-7 weeks  
Custom Products require 11-12 weeks.

### *Q: Who templates and installs this product?*

A: If within the Bay Area California, Sonoma Cast Stone offers these services. In addition, your contractor or any qualified installer who handles natural stone can reliably template and install our products. Feel free to have your contractor contact us for any needed guidelines.

**Q: *How is the product shipped?***

A: To protect your finished product while in transit, Sonoma Cast Stone's Shipping Department creates museum ventilated crating which are custom made crates that allow the product to breathe. (Even though your product is finished, concrete continues to cure over time, releasing moisture which needs to ventilate.) We utilize a common carrier to deliver to your location. Freight quotes are provided with each custom order estimate.

**Q: *Do I have to maintain my concrete?***

A: Yes and No. Classic concrete is porous and requires periodic waxing and resealing. Classic concrete will patina over time which adds character to your distinctive concrete piece. NuCrete™ on the other hand, never requires resealing and will not stain or etch. To clean concrete, avoid abrasive soaps or cleansers (i.e. no comet or scrub pads). We recommend a mild, non-abrasive, non ammoniated soap for daily cleaning. Simple Green or Dr. Bronner's liquid soap (diluted-about 2/3 water, 1/3 soap) Please refer to our Care and Maintenance guide on our web site at:

<http://www.sonomastone.com/pdf/care.pdf>

**Q: *Can I remove stains from Classic concrete?***

A: You may purchase one of our *Stain Reduction Kits*, but it's important to remember that Classic concrete is porous and will patina naturally over time. If you are concerned about staining or etching we recommend you consider NuCrete™ stainless concrete instead. NuCrete™ is available on Kitchen and Bath sinks and countertops.

**Q: *Can I cut on concrete?***

A: While our concrete surfaces are more durable than most, we do recommend that a cutting board be used on the countertop to avoid dulling your knives and scratching the surface of concrete. And while our concrete surfaces are impervious to heat, we also recommend the use of a trivet for hot pans, primarily for scratching from the pans. You won't hurt the concrete, but the sealer may discolor. Think of the old saying, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!"