

Do it yourself stepping stones

Maryanne's recipe:

2 parts sand to 1 part Portland cement
or pre-mix cement

water

molds: "Stepping stone mold" (found at craft stores), cake pans, rubber forms, animal water bowls (work great and are cheap)

Vegetable oil

A flat piece of wood to make the mold on so that it can moved while drying.

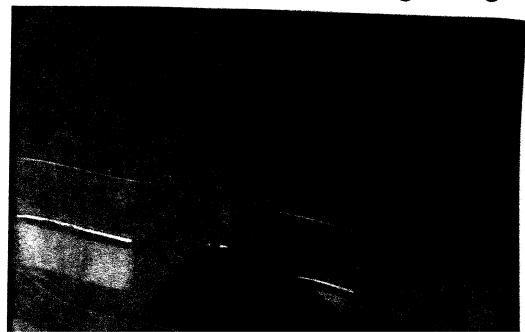
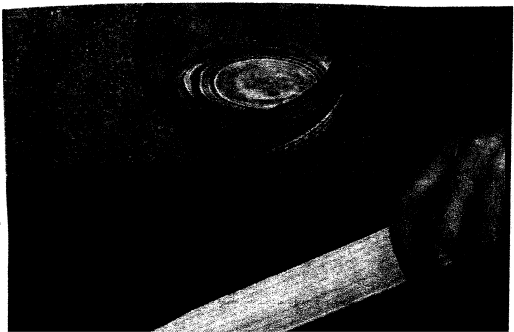
Decorative items: broken ceramics, small ceramic tiles, glass stones that are flat on one side, decorative ceramic items, metal items such as a chime that is taken apart or any other item of interest. (remember the decorative item needs to be able to stand up to weather and be flat)

Steps:

1. Pour cement into a bucket or large bowl. Make a well in the center and pour in enough water to make a "brownie-like" mixture. (stir with a paint stick and I also use a rubber spatula to help get all the cement out) If stiff, add 1 tablespoon of water at a time until the right consistency.
2. Make sure mold is clean and wipe mold with vegetable oil (not Pam). Just a light coat.
3. Pour mixture into mold, about 1 1/2 to 2 inches thick.
4. Shake, vibrate or gently shake mold to remove air bubbles. If using pre-mix concrete, use a trowel or rubber spatula to smooth top. (This pushes any rocks down to have a smooth top.) This is also a time to clean up tools and container with water before residue has time to harden. NEVER RINSE RESIDUE DOWN THE SINK – IT CAN BUILD UP AND CLOG THE DRAIN.
5. Press decorations lightly into the wet cement until the top is level with the surface of the stone, so it will stay. If putting hand prints, wait a few minutes until cement starts to harden then press hands into cement. (You may spray your hands with cooking spray to ensure cement does not cling.) To write, let cement almost congeal, then use a stick, toothpick, ice pick or metal wire. If cement is too soft, the writing will just disappear and smooth out.
6. As concrete sets, a film of water may appear on the surface. Use a paper towel to pull the water off carefully.
7. Allow concrete to set for at least 24 hours. Then remove from mold.

Note: Portland cement makes the stone white, but is not as strong a pre-mix cement. Craft stores sell a box with a strong cement but it is pricey compared to the pre-mix. I use half and half to get a light gray.

step #1 →



Brownie-like mixture ←