

Floor shows

A great garage starts with the right surface. BY KEN GROSS



UCoat It
800-826-2848
ucoatit.com

EpoxyMaster
888-376-9954
epoxymaster.com

Ultimate Garage Floors
877-549-8614
ultimategaragefloors.com

Rhino Home Pro
800-957-1533
rhinohomepro.com

Swisstrax
866-748-7940
swisstrax.com

G-Floor
913-894-0403
ext. 21
g-floor.com

TAKE A LOOK at your garage floor. If a bare concrete surface soaked with grease and oil stains is staring up at you, we need to talk.

Besides simply looking good, an epoxy-finished, interlocking-tiled or matted garage floor surface hides a multitude of ugliness, ensures a clean workspace, reduces noise, resists oil and chemical spills and guarantees a moisture and vapor barrier. It also preserves the concrete base, yields stable even-cushioned footing, makes it easier to find lost parts and helps protect your car.

Poured concrete surfaces are semi-porous — they'll partially absorb but not hide annoying oil drips and chemical spills. I've not found a single-stage garage floor paint that will remain chip-free for years. Over time, the sheer weight, heat and filth of stationary car tires will lift up thinly painted floor sections, harsh chemicals can dissolve basic floor paint, dropped tools can chip the thin surface, and bare concrete's adhesive qualities retain unwanted dust, sand and salt.

One thing's certain: You've got to cover your garage floor. Here's how:

A long-lasting garage floor surface can be as simple as a correctly applied multi-stage epoxy coating. Or you can install attractive interconnected tiles or use a roll-out mat surface. With the increased popularity of home garages, the companies we're discussing offer affordable options that will brighten up your floor, while ensuring you have the surface protection you need.

EpoxyMaster and UCoat It both sell commercial-grade epoxy coating kits for do-it-yourselfers; they will also recommend a professional local installer. EpoxyMaster's high-performance industrial three-gallon kits include a floor prep and cleaning solution along with everything you will need for a high-gloss showroom finish without the need of a clear coat. Unlike other epoxy concrete floor paints, EpoxyMaster is not a water- or solvent-based epoxy, which means that when you apply the coating there is no product shrinkage due to evaporation. The cost is \$.61/sq.ft. and the application process can be completed in one day.

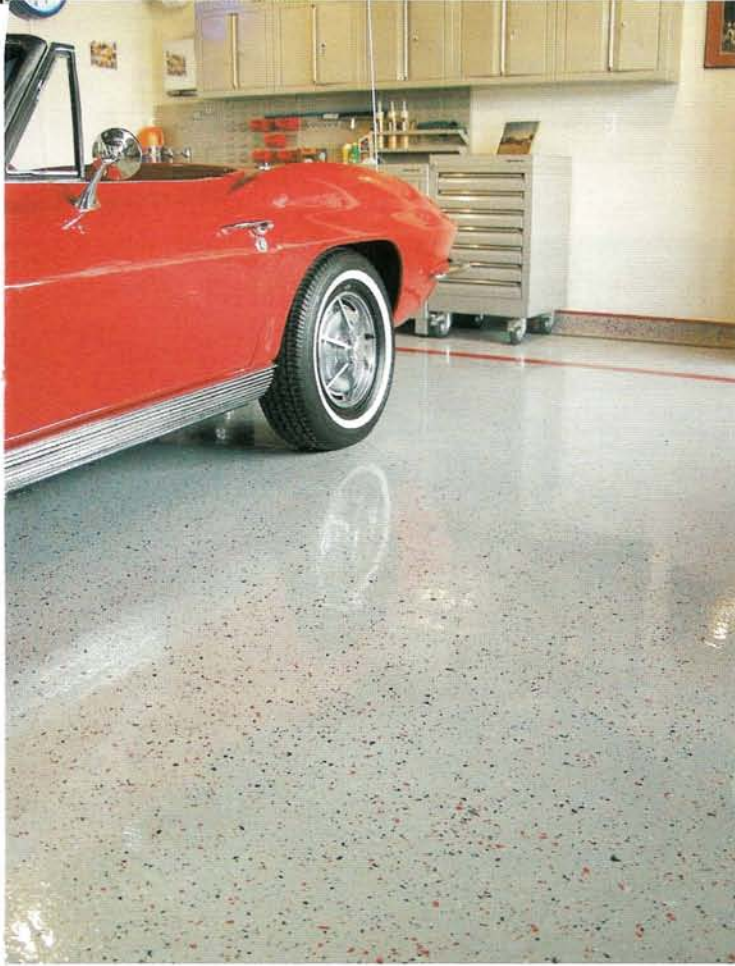
UCoat It also offers a shiny, more expensive UGloss-AF finish that runs about \$.73/sq.ft. Jay Leno uses UCoat It in sections of his garage. The resulting glass-like surface looks terrific, but it won't hide pre-existing imperfections in the concrete.

Ultimate Garage Floors offers a seamless-surface polyaspartic chemical-resistant epoxy system that yields a beautiful

finish. The company insists on diamond grinding to smooth out the existing concrete surface. Professional installers will fill floor joints and cracks before applying a special penetrating primer. Prices for a standard flake, quartz or terrazzo-finished 24' X 24' floor start at \$400, but may vary by area. Ultimate's more expensive (\$650-to-\$800) metallic, 100-percent resin upgrade can be applied with custom inlaid logos or a checkerboard pattern. Approved installers cover six Western states at present and an East Coast expansion is under way. Rhino Home Pro professionally applied floor coatings are worth consideration. Both companies offer one-day service.

Opposite: Floor coverings dress up and protect concrete. At right, from top: A wide range of garage floor covering options are available, including mats that roll out and stay flat from G-Floor, do-it-yourself epoxy coatings from EpoxyMaster, interlocking non-slip tiles from Swisstrax and decorative flake high-gloss epoxy finishes from UCoat It.





“ One thing’s certain: You’ve got to cover your **garage floor.**”

Swisstrax sells attractive, interlocking non-slip tiles in a variety of colors and styles. The self-styled “Ferrari of Modular Floors,” Swisstrax’s tiles offer a superior locking system, they’re warranted for 12 years and they resist fluids and hot tire pickup. Tiles can be installed as a car pad, with snap-on access ramps (available for \$2–\$3 each), or they can be cut to fit right to the garage walls. Prices begin at \$4.95/sq. ft. for a 500-sq.-ft. application.

G-Floor® roll-out vinyl flooring from Better Life Technology is an attractively patterned flooring product that’s delivered ready for immediate installation. No surface prep is needed. G-Floor mats are designed to roll out flat and stay flat. Depending upon patterns and thicknesses, prices range from \$.95/sq.ft. to \$3.00/sq.ft. Founder/CEO Brett Sneed insists, “G-Floor is the most cost effective and easiest floor covering to use. You don’t have to glue it, and you can drive a car on it instantly.”

The G-Floor installation in my garage looks great; I can wipe it clean, and, if I ever move, I can take it with me.

With so many great garage floor options — and we’ve only just scratched the surface — it’s a good idea to first check each company’s Web site, call their information hot lines with specific questions, then make the flooring choice that suits your space and your budget.



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