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Choosing MMA Flooring for Retail Fit-Out & Refurbishment Projects

Operating in a retail environment requires speed, agility and a proactive approach. Opening new stores or refurbishing existing units can prove a challenging undertaking for retailers looking to provide customers and stakeholders with an effective, safe and efficient interior space - all without impacting on trading requirements.

The prospect of overhauling an existing floor finish within a live trading environment or to a tight opening deadline can often seem a daunting prospect and a speedy solution is almost always sought in order to allow follow on trades' access to the site as quickly as possible and deliver the retail outlet to the client in a timely manner.

Seamless Methyl Methacrylate (MMA) flooring solutions are increasingly popular on retail fit-out and refurbishment projects, providing a hygienic, attractive and wear resistant surface, which is fully trafficable just hours after installation.

What are the Benefits of MMA Flooring to Retail Clients?

MMA flooring offers clients a wide range of advantages when compared to alternative hard floor covering materials including ceramic tiles, vinyls and natural stones as well as polyurethane and epoxy resin floor systems.

Speed of Installation & Cure

The greatest advantage of MMA flooring over epoxy or polyurethane alternatives is the material's speed of installation and cure. This minimises any downtime or operational loss to the client, which can often be a costly exercise.

Typically MMA flooring reaches full physical and chemical cure within one to two hours of

installation, meaning that the surface can be subject to full operational use under an extremely tight turnaround.

Unlike labour intensive trowel applied resin systems, MMA flooring can be flow applied allowing large areas to be installed at a significantly faster rate whilst at the same time ensuring a quality finish free of trowel marks.

MMA flooring can be installed within a wide temperature range and in conditions as low as -30°C, which makes it an ideal choice for unheated construction sites or alternatively supermarkets using back-of-house cold stores, coolers and blast freezers to store food produce.

Hard Floor Coverings: Speed of Cure Comparison Diagram

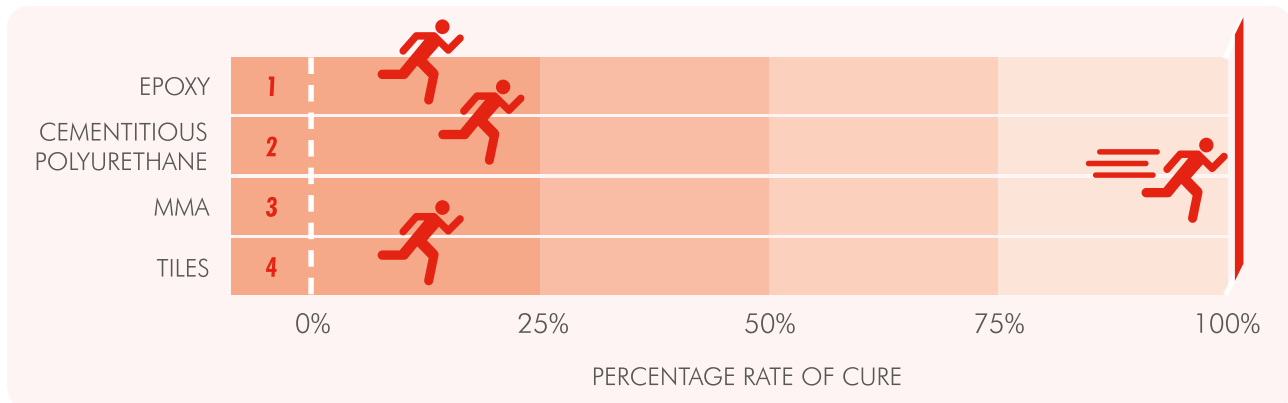


FIGURE 1: *Hard Floor Coverings: Speed of Cure Comparison Diagram*, Flowcrete Group Ltd, 2013.

Controlled tests demonstrated that 100m² of MMA flooring took just 8 hours from preparation to full chemical cure and operational use compared to epoxy: 72 hours, Cementitious Polyurethane: 48 hours and Tiles: 72 hours.

Slip Resistance

In commercial situations an anti-slip flooring system, which will continue to remain slip resistant under high traffic conditions for the long-term, is required for the safety and wellbeing of staff and customers alike.

Customers may bring remnants of bad weather into the store underfoot or the area may be subject to spillages – both of which can result in the floor becoming slippery, increasing the risk of trips and as such any liability to the retailer.

MMA flooring is available in both non-slip or smooth textures to meet changing slip resistance requirements.

Where an excellent slip and skid-resistant profile is critical, coloured quartz aggregates can be broadcast over the MMA material to deliver a positively textured finish that will help to prevent slips and trips where an enhanced anti-slip profile is required.

Chemical & Stain Resistance

MMA floors offer good resistance to a wide range of substances and chemicals including most organic and mineral acids, alkalis, salt solutions, natural oils and

fats, disinfectants and cleansers as well as caustic soda.

The material is not susceptible to staining or discolouration, making it an ideal choice for supermarkets and grocery stores where spillages are commonplace.

Easily Maintained

Maintenance costs are a big factor for retail clients when selecting a floor finish. Not only does the initial material price and installation cost need to be considered but also the material longevity and maintenance expense. MMA systems are laid in situ to deliver a seamless finish that is impermeable to liquids and will not suffer from pinholes, which can harbour dirt and spores. MMA resins exhibit high UV resistance and will not become brittle with age, as is the case with epoxies.

An MMA surface can be easily cleaned with a damp mop with no requirement for labour intensive and costly steam cleaning methods. In turn, this ensures low long-term lifecycle costs to the client through a reduced maintenance and care programme.

**TIP:**

Glitter flakes can be used in the resin mix for a floor that sparkles underfoot.

Easily Refurbished

A major benefit of MMA flooring is that end of life MMA floors can be easily and quickly refurbished with another MMA floor finish.

In these instances each additional MMA layer chemically fuses to the previous layer creating a monolithic system that will not delaminate.

This unique technology allows for rapid, permanent upgrades and repairs at a fraction of the cost of replacing the floor with an alternative floor covering and with very little preparation required.

In contrast, end-of-life polyurethane or epoxy systems have to be extensively prepared in order to be overcoated with a new resin system. Additionally, the bond between coatings is purely mechanical, which increases the risk of delamination during use and the early onset of floor failure.

Aesthetics

Retailing is all about image and nothing sets the tone of a store or brand quite like the interior design scheme and presentation of a retail outlet. After walls, the floor is the largest area in any retail space and serves as a highly visual backdrop for the sale of commercial merchandise or groceries.

MMA flooring is available in a wide range of colours and appearances, with a creative mix of coloured, glitter or metallic flakes or quartz beads that can be used to compliment surrounding interiors.

The material can also be installed in bespoke patterns or in custom colour schemes to align with corporate branding.

What is Methyl Methacrylate Flooring?

Methyl Methacrylate derives from the petrochemical industry and is used in an assortment of applications including bone surgeries, dentistry, road marking and Plexiglas manufacture as well as flooring.

MMA flooring offers rapid installation and cure times, incredible bond strength and high compressive strengths as well a wide installation temperature range.

MMA flooring is 100% non-porous and monolithic creating an impervious, pin-hole free surface offering a high level of protection against chemical attack.

Because of the fast cure time of the material, MMA flooring offers clients a reduction in downtime and minimal loss to operations. MMA flooring is non-toxic and extremely low in VOC.

MMA flooring can be installed on a host of substrates including concrete, steel, tiles, other resin materials and marine ply.

The material does exhibit a distinct odour during installation yet this is entirely harmless and disappears once curing has taken place. The longevity of MMA floors results from deep penetrating primers that create a strong chemical and mechanical bond to the substrate - with MMA installations lasting in excess of 15 years under the correct care regime.

This guide has been produced to provide an overview of the use of Methyl Methacrylate flooring within a commercial retail setting.

Detailed recommendations and advice is available from our dedicated network of regional technical and sales representatives.

For more information on Flowcrete's specialist flooring solutions, get in touch with the team today...


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