

Oil Stains

Here are some tips on cleaning up oil stains on concrete driveways. I tested these tips on an oil stain that has been soaking in for over 10 years. Your stains may react differently. Another option, of course, is to hire a professional if you don't want to try it yourself.

1. Scrape off any excess buildup of old grease and oil. Using a putty knife works well.
2. Wet the area with a garden hose and spread out some laundry detergent over the stain. Powdered detergent seems to work best, but liquid detergent is fine if that's what you have. (Some people suggest dishwasher soap.)
3. Scrub the stain and detergent with a stiff bristled nylon brush. A hand scrub brush is fine, or you can use a brush on a pole for bigger jobs. Adding a little bleach while scrubbing may also help. You can use a putty knife more at this point if needed.
4. Like it always says on the shampoo bottles, you should rinse and repeat. For tougher stains you may need to repeat a few more times.

This may be enough for new stains, but concrete is very porous and oil soaks in. If the stain is still too dark, you can try one or both of the following.

1. After the concrete dries, spread out kitty litter over the stain. Then grind it in with the bottom of your shoes. (Note: If you have fairly smooth concrete, this could scratch up the surface.)
2. You should leave the kitty litter on the stain for several days, spreading it around and grinding it in a few times a day or whenever you can.
3. After a few days, sweep off the kitty litter. The gray color of the kitty litter that has been ground in blends in with the concrete and disguises the oil stain. The problem is, that when it rains or you wash off the kitty litter, the "disguise" washes away, too. However, it usually takes up some of the stain as well, so that may be all you need.

If the stain is still too dark and you don't want to keep disguising it with kitty litter, you can try a commercial product like Pour-N-Restore or eXIMO.

1. To use Pour-N-Restore, let the concrete dry thoroughly after washing it as described above. If you washed the stain in the morning, wait until the evening or the next day. If you washed it in the evening, wait until the next day.
2. Once the concrete is thoroughly dry, coat the stain with Pour-N-Restore. Make sure to really shake up the bottle before you use it. Leave it on thick and let it self-level if you can. It's best not to spread out the product, but if you need to spread it, you can use a 1/4" V notched tile trowel. (Note: I could always see trowel marks afterward any time I used a trowel.)
3. Leave the Pour-N-Restore on the stain over night or until it's completely dry, then sweep it up. If it still has dark areas, let it dry for a few more days to see if the blotches lighten up. For a tough stain, you may need to repeat with another coat of Pour-N-Restore, or try the kitty litter step again.

The closest place I've found to get Pour-N-Restore is at the Ace Hardware on Cortaro just a few blocks west of I-10. It costs about \$15 per bottle and covers a few square feet. www.pour-n-restore.com

Another product available online at www.mycaf.com is eXIMO. I haven't used it, but it gets good reviews.

Notice: We in no way guarantee the quality of the products or processes described here or accept any liability for them not working or possibly causing damage to a concrete slab.

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