

Concreter interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for concreters focus on whether you can be trusted on site from day one: safe with plant and formwork, accurate with mixes and finishes, and calm when a pour doesn't go to plan. Expect a mix of practical process questions and situational ones about managing time-sensitive pours.

- **Process:** Questions checking you know the correct sequence and technique for core tasks like mixing, formwork and finishing.
- **Safety:** Questions on WHS awareness around plant, manual handling and site hazards specific to concreting.
- **Scenario:** Situational questions testing judgement when a pour is under time pressure or something goes wrong mid-job.
- **Behavioural:** Questions asking for real past examples of problem solving or handling a difficult finish or defect.
- **Technical:** Questions on curing times, weather effects and mix specifications that test underlying trade knowledge.
- **Client-facing:** Questions on handling a dissatisfied client or homeowner, common on residential jobs.

Most concreting interviews start with a quick run-through of your ticket, licences and site experience, move into practical process and safety questions, then test judgement with one or two scenario questions before wrapping up with availability and physical capacity for the work.

1. Walk me through how you check a concrete mix is ready to pour.

Why they ask

This checks you understand mix consistency and strength requirements before committing to a pour, which is central to the job.

How to structure your answer

Walk-through: describe the steps in order, from checking the specification through to the on-site slump or consistency check and what you do if it's off.

Example answer

"I start by confirming the strength grade and mix design against the plans, then check the slump on site to make sure the consistency matches what's needed for the pour, whether that's a slab, path or driveway. I look at weather conditions too, because heat or wind changes how the mix behaves. If the mix is too wet or too dry I'll flag it straight away and get it corrected before it goes into the formwork, rather than trying to fix it after it's poured."

2. What safety checks do you do before setting up formwork on a sloped or uneven site?

Why they ask

Formwork failure or an unstable site is a real safety risk, so this tests your WHS awareness in a concreting-specific context.

How to structure your answer

Hazard-control-follow-up: name the hazard, explain the control you'd put in place, then how you'd confirm it's holding before proceeding.

Example answer

"On a sloped site I'll check the ground is compacted and stable before any formwork goes in, and make sure bracing and stakes are angled and spaced to handle the extra lateral load from the slope. I'll also check drainage so water doesn't undermine the formwork before the pour. Once it's set up I walk the whole run and put pressure on key points to check nothing's moved before we call the pump."

3. The concrete pump breaks down halfway through a large slab pour on a hot day. What do you do?

Why they ask

This is a realistic pressure scenario given the role involves coordinating pours and managing curing conditions, and shows how you think under time pressure.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: state the immediate priority, the practical steps you'd take, and how you'd manage the outcome even if it's not ideal.

Example answer

"My first priority is protecting the concrete already poured, so I'd get the crew finishing and working that section while the issue with the pump gets sorted, using wet hessian or a curing compound if there's a delay to stop it drying out too fast in the heat. I'd get onto the supervisor and pump operator straight away to find out the likely downtime, and if it's going to be a long delay I'd talk through whether we need a construction joint rather than pushing on and risking a poor bond or inconsistent finish."

4. Tell me about a time you had to fix a finishing defect after the pour had already started curing.

Why they ask

Finishing under a curing timeline is a core skill, and this behavioural question checks how you handle mistakes or unexpected issues once concrete is already down.

How to structure your answer

STAR: situation, task, action, result.

Example answer

"On one job the surface started setting faster than expected because of the heat, and a section wasn't getting the finish we needed with the power trowel. I picked it up early in the set and worked that area first with hand floats to get the surface right before it went too far to correct. I also let the crew know to speed up the sequence on the rest of the slab so we didn't get the same problem elsewhere. We got a consistent finish across the whole pour and avoided having to grind or patch it afterwards."

5. How do you adjust curing time and treatment for different weather conditions?

Why they ask

Curing knowledge directly affects strength and cracking, and this tests underlying trade knowledge rather than just following a checklist.

How to structure your answer

Technical explanation: state the general principle, then how you adjust it for specific conditions.

Example answer

"Curing time depends on temperature, humidity and wind as much as the mix itself. In hot, dry or windy conditions I'll apply a curing compound or keep the surface damp for longer, because the concrete can lose moisture too fast and crack. In cooler conditions I'll allow more time before removing formwork or opening a slab to traffic, since strength develops more slowly. I always treat the manufacturer's or engineer's minimum curing period as a starting point, not a fixed rule, and adjust

based on what I'm seeing on site."

6. A client is unhappy with the surface finish on their new driveway. How do you handle that conversation?

Why they ask

Concreters often deal directly with homeowners on residential jobs, so this checks how you manage a difficult client interaction without it turning into a dispute.

How to structure your answer

Listen, explain, resolve: acknowledge their concern first, explain the situation clearly, then set out how it will be fixed.

Example answer

"I'd start by listening properly to what they're unhappy with rather than getting defensive, then go and look at the actual area with them so we're both talking about the same thing. If it's a genuine defect I'll explain plainly what happened and what we'll do to fix it, whether that's grinding back a section or another treatment. If it's something that's within normal tolerance for a broom or exposed finish, I'll explain why it looks the way it does rather than just saying no, so they understand the reasoning."