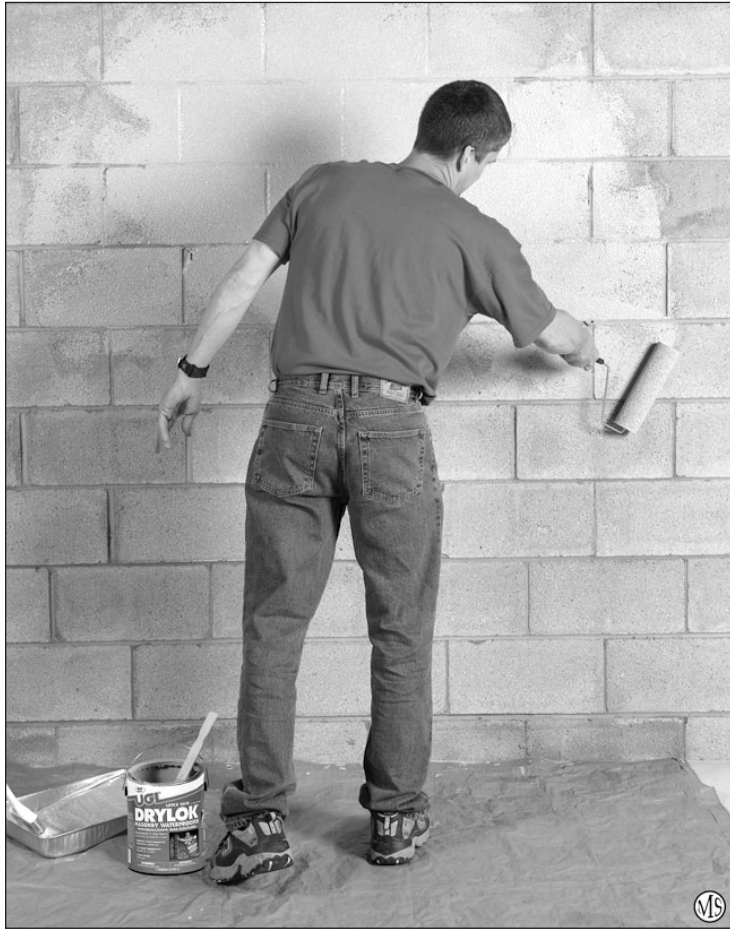


Banish Basement Dampness In a Single Weekend



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METROCREATIVE SERVICES
Applying a waterproofing solution is one way homeowners can transform their basement from a damp storage unit into a bright and livable room everyone can enjoy.

(MS) — Water entering a home's basement is very unpredictable. One minute the basement could be dry and the next there could be a river running through it. For homeowners, ignoring a water problem could prove costly and rob its residents of an otherwise enjoyable place to spend their time.

For concerned homeowners, protecting the basement from potential water damage is easier than you might think. Waterproofing a basement is a simple job that beautifies a space while protecting it against future damage from water. First, know what properties to look for in a waterproofer. The property that is the most important to look for in a masonry waterproofing paint is the ability to hold back hydrostatic pressure, which makes a waterproofer different than a water sealer and an ordinary house paint. Ordinary house paints merely adhere to the wall surface while masonry waterproofer penetrates the pores of the masonry to become part of the wall.

Most waterproofing paints will go through pressure tests that will determine the Pounds Per Square Inch (PSI) the coating will hold back. It is also important that the coating be tested to withstand wind-driven rain.

The makers of DRYLOK Masonry Waterproofer developed the specs for hydrostatic testing. They state the PSI should be at a minimum of 4 psi, which is a wall of water 9 feet high. Look for products that have been tested independently on standard grade building materials. Be leery of products that say they will withstand above 15 psi (which is a wall of water higher than 33 feet), as a standard grade building block could never withstand that much pressure. In fact, independent testing facilities will not test products to over 15 psi.

Once you have selected your waterproofer, it is time for surface preparation. Examine the surface for loose or broken mortar or any holes or cracks in the surface. The surface should be clean and patched with a hydraulic cement, such as DRYLOK Fast Plug. Be sure there are no signs of efflorescence, which are natural salts leaching from the masonry surface. These salts should be cleaned with an etching solution or DRYLOK Etch, which is a safer alternative than Muriatic Acid. After cleansing, rinse the surface thoroughly.

A waterproofing paint is thicker than house paint, so it will take longer to apply, but its application is just as simple. Most waterproofing paints can be applied with a stiff bristle brush or a roller. Simply work the product into the surface of the masonry, filling the texture with the coating. The thing to remember is that this coating needs to perform a task, so it is important to follow the label instructions. The experts at UGL recommend applying the first coat with a nylon or polyester bristle brush for best results. The second coat can be applied with a brush or masonry roller. Follow directions for application carefully. If the area covered is more than the recommendation on the label, you're spreading the paint too thin. Two coats are usually sufficient to stop seepage. However, if seepage is still present after several days, an additional coat may be necessary.

Whether your plans are for a basement pantry, woodshop, laundry room or even a living room or play room, you have to start with a dry space and the best start is with a reliable, reputable waterproofing paint. Simple step by step instructions on waterproofing your basement can be found at www.ugl.com.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METROCREATIVE SERVICES
Using the right tools makes gutter cleaning faster and easier.

Make Gutter Cleaning Safer, Easier

(MS) — Nobody enjoys gutter cleaning. Yet it's much more important than many homeowners think. Rain flowing over windows, doors, and siding can rot fascia as well as door and window framing. It can erode the soil around your home and damage its foundation, and also cause a wet basement, mold, and mildew. To help keep gutters operating properly and to protect your investment, try these tips:

1. Think Safety First. Always use a solid, quality ladder to reach your gutters. Safety glasses and gloves are a good idea, too. And watch out for power lines.
2. Use the Right Tools for the Job. In addition to needing something to contain gutter debris, you'll also need a tool to scoop it out. The Gutter Getter Scoop from Working Products, Inc. is a good option. It's the only flexible scoop shaped to fit all gutters, plus it will keep your hands

3. Don't Over-reach. Over-reaching can destabilize your ladder and cause you to fall. Instead, consider using a special tool to extend your reach. The Gutter Grabber is a cleaning tool on an extension pole that lets you clean up to 18 feet of gutter without moving your ladder.
4. Check the Downspouts, Too. If the spout is clogged, a coat hanger or the handle of your Gutter Grabber can help get the debris out of the spout. Then, use a garden hose to flush out any remaining debris. For stubborn clogs, it may be necessary to remove the downspout and back flush it with the hose. Covering your downspout with a strainer such as the Gutter Getter Big Top Downspout Strainer will help reduce future clogging, too.
5. Clean Gutters Anytime They Need It. Most homeowners know they need to clean their gutters in the fall. But once you understand the importance of gutters, you'll know why its vital to clean them out anytime they get full. To protect the value of your home, keep your gutters clean throughout the year.

Gutter Getter products are available at ACE Hardware. For more information, call (800) 582-9491 or visit www.guttergetter.com.

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