

"FYI"

Does fertilizer stain concrete? You bet it does.

Those rust stains are caused by the iron in your lawn fertilizer. Plant food and fertilizers all contain metals and minerals such as magnesium, iron, copper, and zinc.

When fertilizer granules stray from the lawn onto concrete surfaces and then get hit by water from your sprinkler, iron seeps out and stains your concrete.

The minerals penetrate the concrete, causing a permanent color change.

Will Fertilizer Stains Go Away?

Fertilizer stains on concrete are really tough to remove. The reacted minerals aren't water-soluble, which means water and scrubbing won't remove them. They're only soluble in a mild acid solution.

How to Remove Fertilizer Stains from Concrete

Start with clear white vinegar diluted 50:50 with water and see if that removes the stains. Hang in there — you'll need to apply the vinegar solution on the stain multiple times, scrub lightly, and then rinse. Test it on a small area first to see if it works.

Removing Fertilizer Stains, Part 2

If the vinegar doesn't work, you may need to try a stronger acid, such as muriatic acid. Dilute this stronger acid 40:1 with water.

Safety warning: Muriatic acid emits strong fumes that can burn the lungs if inhaled. It can also burn your skin. Be sure to put on safety equipment — a mask, gloves, and thick clothing.

Also, be aware that this acid may etch the concrete in the areas you clean.