

Fresh Concrete Screeding and Bull Floating JHA

Worked instructional example

Work and worksite

A finishing crew will manually strike off and bull float plastic concrete on an outdoor building slab on grade after the placing crew's handover. The crew uses supported routes, coordinated straightedge handling and the selected float's instructions; the operation ends at controlled handover for the later finish and curing work. This fictional learning example describes planned controls; it records no actual inspection or work authorization.

- The placement lead and finisher agree on the work front, specified level and finish sequence; pressure to keep pace must not replace safe access or relief.
- The complete reach of long handles, nearby energized conductors, surrounding traffic and washing facilities are checked before finishing starts.
- This is partial coverage of concrete placement and finishing. It excludes pumping, consolidation, power trowels, elevated slabs, cosmetic cured-wall patching and later surface grinding.

Questions before work

- How will finishers reach the advancing work front without walking unstable forms or stepping on loose reinforcement?
- What electrical boundary applies to the full travel and storage reach of the assembled bull-float handle?
- Who coordinates the straightedge movements and pauses work when worker footing or recovery becomes inadequate?

Task Hazard Control

1 Receive the finishing work front

Hazard: An unclear handover can put finishers among moving discharge hoses or onto an unsupported route.

Control: Finishing lead agrees with the placing lead on the released work front, required level and finishing progression. Separate hose and placing activity from the finishing positions and identify where workers can stand, turn and leave the slab area.

Verification: Leads confirm the work boundary and walk the planned finishing routes.

Reasoning: Manual finishing begins with access and coordination, not just concrete timing.

2 Check tools reach and electrical clearance

Hazard: A loose handle joint can fail; a long float handle can contact an energized conductor.

Control: Inspect the straightedge, float, handle sections and connections against their instructions. Check the full handle sweep and storage positions against electrical hazards. Apply required nonconductive-handle protection where contact is possible and obtain the employer's electrical safeguards; a handle material does not justify reaching into a power-line hazard.

Verification: Finishing lead verifies tool condition and the electrical boundary before assembly and use.

Reasoning: The hazard follows the whole handle through every push, return and carry movement.

3 Establish footing and exposure protection

Hazard: Slip-prone footing and wet concrete inside boots or gloves can injure workers during sustained work.

Control: Provide supported work positions and clear transitions around the advancing slab. Select cement-resistant gloves, footwear and clothing with eye protection; make clean water and contamination response available. Replace contaminated equipment and wash exposed skin promptly without waiting for pain.

Verification: Crew lead checks footing and confirms workers can access washing and replacement protection.

Reasoning: Cement trapped against skin can continue damaging it during a routine finishing pass.

Complete the work and hand over

4 Strike off with coordinated movements

Hazard: Unequal straightedge pulls and repeated deep reach can strain workers or pull one off balance.

Control: Assigned workers coordinate the manual screed's start, direction and repositioning from the agreed stable positions. Use manageable reaches and mechanical handling assistance for awkward tools where needed; schedule relief and pause rather than chasing an inaccessible work front.

Verification: Finishing lead observes a pass and corrects footing, coordination or excessive reach before continuing.

Reasoning: The work method should match the available stance and worker capacity.

5 Bull float from the released positions

Hazard: The extended handle can strike a coworker or tempt a worker to cross fresh concrete and obstacles.

Control: Operator uses the selected float in the specified finishing sequence from stable positions, with the handle travel area kept clear. Reposition tools and workers deliberately; retain electrical separation and avoid improvised handle extensions or unsupported shortcuts.

Verification: Operator checks the next handle sweep; lead confirms separation and safe repositioning.

Reasoning: A long reach must remain controlled when the work front or nearby crew moves.

6 Clean tools and hand over the slab

Hazard: Uncontrolled washout, abandoned long handles or early access can create later slip and contact hazards.

Control: Clean tools at the designated contained location using the planned method and suitable splash protection. Store handle sections securely outside routes. Protect the slab and brief the later finish/curing crew on access, condition and outstanding actions; do not treat this stage as a release for powered finishing.

Verification: Lead checks tool storage, collected wash waste and the receiving crew's handover.

Reasoning: The manual pass ends with protected access and a clear next-operation boundary.

Pause and reassess

- A work-front change removes supported footing or brings the discharge operation into finishing positions.
- The long-handle electrical boundary, tool connections or handle travel area cannot be maintained.
- Wet cement reaches skin, worker fatigue impairs coordinated movement or timely relief is unavailable.

Improve the controls

Needs improvement: Use good lifting technique and work fast.

More useful: Finishing lead selects manageable straightedge reaches, coordinates movement from stable positions and arranges relief before sustained effort degrades control.

Needs improvement: Use an insulated handle.

More useful: Lead checks the full handle travel and storage envelope, required nonconductive protection and the employer's electrical safeguards before use.

Decisions that change the analysis

Does this duplicate the existing concrete finishing or power-trowel example?

No. The current concrete finishing example patches and sacks a cured wall, while the power-trowel example uses a powered rotating machine. This resource covers the manual straightedge and long-handle workflow on fresh ground-slab concrete.

What must the crew record for actual use?

Record the placement-to-finishing boundary, access and electrical findings, selected tool identities and handle condition, crew coordination and relief arrangements, cement-protection and washing provisions, actual checks and the later finishing/curing handover.

Training needs

- Instruction in the selected straightedge and bull-float operation, coordinated handling, stable work positions and the employer's electrical separation arrangements.
- Wet-cement skin and eye protection, contamination removal and symptom reporting, together with work rotation and relief for sustained manual finishing.

Confirm applicable qualifications and actual training evidence for the people assigned. Related toolbox talks support discussion; they do not establish competence.

References and adaptation

OSHA 1926.702(h) Bull-float handle protection

<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.702>

OSHA 1926.416 Electrical safeguards

<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.416>

OSHA Preventing Skin Problems from Working with Portland Cement

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA-3351-portland-cement.pdf>

References reviewed October 9, 2026. Use actual equipment and product instructions, project design and site requirements. This original draft supplies no fabricated inspection, signature or approval.