

The logo for ARMCON, featuring the word "ARMCON" in white, bold, uppercase letters inside a blue rectangular box with a white border.

ARMCON

Using the correct release agent with the correct mould

*– Precast Concrete which one is
right for me?*

The ARMCON logo, consisting of the word "ARMCON" in white, bold, uppercase letters.

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Which one? – Release Agents

A release agent is the material that ensures your concrete demoulds with ease out of your mould.

There are two types of release agent – Barrier and Chemical.

Simply put Barrier release agent like baking a cake is like the butter on your tin. It ensures that there is a layer between your tin and your cake that ensures you can slip it out easily. Usually you need to put a large amount of barrier release agent to ensure the concrete comes out.

Chemical Release agent (CRA3) is a bit more complicated. It produces a chemical barrier between the mould (or whatever you are protecting) and the concrete – to be precise the fat of the concrete. It ensures that the cement cannot set on the mould. When you demould using the chemical release agent look at what is left when you demould – a light powder should be visible. This is where the release agent has effectively stopped the concrete from setting at the sides of the mould.

So which one is right for me?

This depends on which material your mould is made out of.

Here is a rough guide:

Mould Material	Release Agent
Latex	None or CRA3 (depending on the latex grade)
ABS	CRA3
Polypropylene	CRA3
Polyurethane	CRA3
Timber	Depends on the finish you want to achieve
Steel	Depends on the finish you want to achieve
Concrete	Barrier

- Latex can take some release agent, but a lot of precasters use no release agent, also because the material is so delicate some grades of latex suffer even using a non hazardous material.
- ABS – Like all plastics you must not use a solvent so CRA3 will ensure that you get a great finish product
- Polypropylene (PP) – Just as above.
- Polyurethane (PU) – Just as above.
- Timber – If you want a great finish use CRA3 if the finish is not important then use a barrier release agent CRA3
- Steel – Just as above
- Concrete – You need a barrier release agent as CRA3 will not work well on a concrete to concrete casting.