Estimating delivery space for residential concrete projects

When you order concrete delivered to site for a residential project, the delivery itself is a process that needs room to work. A mixer truck is a large, heavy vehicle that must get close enough to the pour area to discharge its load. The space it needs is not just a spot to park; it includes the route the truck takes to reach that spot and the area around the discharge point where the concrete can be placed. Getting this space right from the start can make the difference between a smooth pour and a costly delay.

What a mixer truck needs

A standard mixer truck is around 8 to 9 metres long and about 2.5 metres wide, and when fully loaded it can weigh over 30 tonnes. It needs a firm, level surface to operate on, and the ground must be able to support that weight without sinking or rutting. The truck also needs a turning circle wide enough to manoeuvre into position, especially on a narrow residential street or down a long driveway. If the site access is tight, the driver may have to reverse some distance, which adds time and requires a clear path with no low branches, narrow gates or sharp corners.

The discharge point is where the concrete comes out of the truck's chute. The chute can reach a few metres from the back of the truck, but for most pours the truck must park within about 3 to 5 metres of the pour area. If the pour area is further away, you may need a concrete pump or a wheelbarrow run, and both add labour and cost. For a standard driveway or a small foundation, the truck can often discharge directly into the forms. For larger slabs or deeper footings, you might need a longer chute or a pump truck, and that changes the space requirements.

Site access and delivery window

The delivery window is the time slot during which the concrete must be poured. Concrete begins to set soon after it is mixed, so the truck cannot wait around. If access is blocked or the space is not ready, the load may be wasted. Before ordering concrete delivered to site, check the route the truck will take. Look for low-hanging power lines, narrow bridges, tight corners or steep slopes that could stop the truck or make it unsafe. If the road is very narrow, you may need a permit to park on the street, or you may have to arrange for the truck to park on the road and pump the concrete to the pour area.



For a domestic project, the driver will usually need to see the pour area before they commit to the position. They will check the ground is firm and that the chute can reach. If the ground is soft after rain, or if there are obstacles like stored materials or parked cars, the delivery may be delayed or cancelled. It is wise to clear the area of anything that is not needed for the pour, and to have a plan for where the truck will park and how it will leave.

Measuring the space you have

To estimate whether your site can take a concrete delivery, measure the width of your driveway or access path. A standard driveway is about 3 metres wide, which is just enough for a mixer truck, but there must be no obstacles on either side. If the driveway has a sharp bend, measure the turning radius. A truck needs a turning circle of about 12 to 15 metres, so a tight 90-degree turn may be impossible. If the driveway is long and straight, the truck can drive in and reverse out, but it needs a clear run with no cars or bins in the way.

The discharge point itself should be level and firm. If the pour area is on a slope, the truck can park on the flat and use a longer chute, but the concrete may flow unevenly. In that case, you might need to pour in sections or use a pump. The distance from the truck to the furthest

corner of the pour area should be less than the reach of the chute, which is typically about 4 to 5 metres. If the pour is larger than that, you may need to move the truck during the pour, or use a concrete pump.

Wheelbarrow runs and pour sequences

If the truck cannot get close enough, the concrete can be discharged into a wheelbarrow and moved to the pour area. This is common on sites with narrow access or where the pour area is behind a house. A wheelbarrow run needs a firm, smooth path, and the concrete must be moved quickly before it starts to set. A single mixer truck can discharge about 6 to 8 cubic metres of concrete, and moving that much by wheelbarrow is hard work. You will need several people and a plan to keep the pour moving.

The pour sequence is the order in which the concrete is placed. For a floor slab or a driveway, you usually pour in sections, starting at the far end and working back towards the truck. This avoids stepping in fresh concrete and makes it easier to finish the surface. If the truck can only reach one side of the pour area, you may need to pour that side first and then move the truck, or use a pump to reach the other side. Planning the sequence in advance helps you estimate how much space the truck needs for each part of the pour.

Site preparation and safety

Before the truck arrives, prepare the site. Mark the route with cones or barriers if needed, and make sure the ground is compacted and level. If the driveway is gravel, it may need to be rolled or wetted to prevent the truck from sinking. For a concrete slab, the forms must be staked firmly to hold the concrete, and the sub-base should be compacted and damp. The delivery area around the discharge point should be clear of tools, wires and debris.



Safety is a key concern. A mixer truck has blind spots, and the driver cannot see directly behind the truck. Make sure everyone on site stays well away from the truck while it is moving and while it is discharging. The chute is heavy and can swing, so no one should stand under it. If the concrete is being pumped, the hose can whip if it is not properly secured. Keep children and pets off the site during the delivery. The driver will usually ask for a clear space around the truck, and it is wise to have a banksman to guide the reversing if visibility is limited.

If you are unsure about the access or the ground conditions, it is worth getting advice from a supplier who knows the local area. A company like staceyconcrete.co.uk can help you assess whether your site is suitable for a standard delivery or whether you need a pump or a smaller truck. They will ask about the access width, the distance from the road to the pour area, and the condition of the ground. Giving them accurate information helps them plan the delivery and avoid problems on the day.

Estimating the space you need

To put it all together, here is a simple way to estimate the delivery space for a residential concrete project. Start by measuring the width and height of the access route from the road to

the pour area. Check for any tight turns or steep slopes. Then measure the distance from where the truck will park to the furthest corner of the pour area. If that distance is more than 5 metres, you will need a pump or a wheelbarrow run. Check that the parking spot is level and firm enough to support the truck's weight. If the ground is soft, you may need to lay temporary track mats or gravel.

Also consider the time of year. In winter, the ground may be frozen or muddy, and in summer, the concrete will set faster. The delivery window is typically around 20 to 30 minutes for a standard load, so the pour must start as soon as the truck is in position. If you are using a pump, the pump truck also needs space to park and set up. A pump truck is similar in size to a mixer truck, and it needs a firm, level area near the pour.

If the site is very tight, a smaller mixer truck may be available. Some suppliers have trucks with a shorter wheelbase or a rear-mounted discharge that can fit into narrower spaces. But these trucks carry less concrete, so you may need multiple loads for a large pour. It is always better to overestimate the space you need than to find on the day that the truck cannot reach the pour area.

For most domestic projects, the key factors are the driveway width, the turning radius, and the distance from the road to the pour area. If these are adequate, a standard delivery is straightforward. If not, you may need to plan for a pump or a wheelbarrow run, and that takes extra labour and time. A good rule of thumb is to have at least 3 metres of clear width for the truck, and a straight run of at least 10 metres from the road to the parking spot. If the access is curved, allow extra width and check the turning radius.



Finally, remember that the delivery space is not just about the truck. It is also about the area where the concrete will be poured, and the space needed for finishing tools, for the finishers to work, and for the concrete to be cured. If the pour area is cramped, the work will be harder and the result may not be as good. Plan for enough room around the forms to move and work comfortably. If you are unsure, a supplier like staceyconcrete.co.uk can give you guidance based on the dimensions of your site. They see many different sites and can tell you what has worked for similar projects.

In short, estimating delivery space for a residential concrete project comes down to measuring the access, the discharge distance, and the ground conditions. With a clear plan and a realistic assessment of the space, you can avoid the common problems that turn a concrete delivery into a headache. The key is to check everything before the truck arrives, and to have a backup plan if something is not right. That way, the pour goes smoothly, and the concrete sets where it should.