

Installation ♦ Warranty ♦ Care & Maintenance

ROUTINE CARE AND MAINTENANCE - CERAMIC TILE

Glazed Tile is generally easier to clean than other unglazed and natural stone surfaces. Tiled surfaces should be wiped periodically with a non-oil based household or commercial cleaner using a damp cloth or sponge. Before wiping, be sure to vacuum/sweep tiled surface to remove any dust, dirt, and other loose particles. Selected cleaner should also be grout cleaning compatible and should not contain harmful chemicals, acids, or ammonia. Acidic cleaners can compromise the surface of glazed tile and ammonia can discolor grout joints.

Unglazed Tile should be cleaned in a similar fashion using a damp cloth and solution of water and neutral detergent after removing loose dust particles. Again, make sure selected cleaner is compatible with grout cleaning.

Heavier duty cleaning may call for a scouring powder such as Poultice or an all-purpose cleaner applied to a nonmetallic brush. Apply paste/cleaner to area with warm water and let sit for five minutes then scrub. Rinse with clean water and wipe dry. Remember to test scouring powders on small inconspicuous areas before applying to full surface area.

Glass Tile can be cleaned similar to other glass surfaces using any non-abrasive house cleaner.

Metal/Stainless Steel Tile also calls of a liquid non-abrasive household cleaner. Unlike other ceramic surface, DO NOT use scouring pads, steel wool, sandpaper, or other abrasive products. Avoid cleaners containing ammonia, bleach, or other acidic compounds. As with other material, be sure to test cleaning products in small areas first.

GROUT CARE AND MAINTENANCE

The emergence of new grout products and technology has somewhat changed the traditional view towards treating grout installations. These new products include polymer enriched grouts, epoxy grouts, polyurethane based grouts, and micro particle/glass sphere based grouts. Because of this we strongly recommend testing grouts in small areas of application before grouting the full job. If the testing areas shows evidence of staining or difficulty of removing film, we strongly recommend using an impregnating sealer/grout release to preserve appearance of the tile.

Some Portland cement grouts may require sealer to prevent staining and/or color loss and the contractor should refer to and follow manufacturers' instructions to ensure a quality installation. Sealers can usually be applied 72 hours after installation and should only be applied to the grout joints and not glazed surface of the tile. Generally, epoxy grouts by nature do not require sealant.

Regardless of using epoxy grouts or sealers, some periodic cleaning is recommended to prevent surface build up or discoloration. Routine cleaning can be done with all-purpose household or commercial cleaner and water. For heavy duty cleaning, higher strength professional grade Tile & Grout cleaners can be purchased from most home improvement store or through your local floor covering dealer.

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NEW INSTALLATIONS

Immediately following a new installation, properly cleaning construction dirt and grout haze is key to ensuring the intended look of the tile and ease of future daily maintenance. In most cases the installation can be cleaned using a neutral detergent and warm water; however, if grout haze still remains, more extensive cleaning is required.

Cementitious grout haze can be removed using a diluted mixture of sulfamic acid. Sulfamic acid can be found as the active ingredient in most haze removers as well as in powder form to be mixed with water according to manufacturers' instructions. All grout joints should be fully saturated with water before applying the acid wash. Sulfamic acid or grout removers should never be used on natural stone surfaces.

Grouts with latex additives or polymer modified grouts should not be cleaned with acids. The chemical compounds in these grouts can bond more strongly to the surface when combined with acid. Similarly, epoxy grouts also will require specific haze removers which can be recommended by the manufacturer.

When applying acidic haze removers, contractors should wait until the grout joints have fully cured which can be 7 to 10 days.

DO'S & DON'TS

Do:

- Follow all manufacturers' directions for laying, grouting, and cleaning installations.
- Test grout in a small area before grouting entire job as well as any scouring powders and cleaning products.
- Use sealer when necessary to prevent discoloration or staining of grout joints.

Don't:

- Use strong acidic cleaners for routine cleaning and maintenance. This can damage the surface of the tile and make the surface more vulnerable to staining.
- Use oil-based detergents, wax cleaners, or sealants to preserve the tile. (Sealants on grout joints only, when appropriate)
- Use steel wool or metallic scouring pads to clean the surface of the tile
- Use colored cleaning agents on unglazed porcelain