



# Installation & Care Guide: Cement Tiles

By Opia Design

## Prepare your Layout:

- Always verify the conformity of the tiles before laying; verify the beginning of the work and its evolution.
- Before installing the tiles, batch mix them from multiple boxes to achieve a layout with pleasing colour variation.

## Preliminary Cleaning & Sealing:

The tiles have been pre-washed and pre-sealed -TFC Sealant for Cement tiles- with an initial coat of penetrating sealant to help protect them during installation.

## Laying the Tiles:

- Prepare your surface: make sure it's properly levelled and waterproofed where needed.
- Work in small areas of just 0.5 sqm at a time so that the tiles can be cleaned properly as they are installed.
- Patterns look best with small grout joints (about 1 mm)
- Cement tiles should be installed with thin-set mortar, using a double adhesive process, whereby the mortar is applied to a clean, level substrate as well as to the back of the tile using a trowel or wire brush.
- If setting the tiles on a concrete slab on grade, provide a moisture barrier, and if not on grade, be certain the concrete substrate is fully cured to prevent efflorescence from showing on the tile after installation.
- Submerge the tiles in clean water before they are laid to remove any dust from the back of the tile.
- During installation, tiles should be gently pressed into place by hand; never strike the tiles with a hammer (even a rubber hammer) as this will cause cracking.
- Be sure to clean off any of the mortar from the face of the tiles as you work using a sponge and clean water. If the mortar is left on the tiles, it may adhere to the surface, causing white stains.

## Laying the Tiles in Wet Areas:

- Make sure the area is entirely waterproof by covering it with a permanent coating.
- The mortar used is highly water-resistant.
- The gradient to the drain hole must be sufficient in shower floors, and the walls of the shower tray are also made waterproof.

## Grouting the Tiles:

- Tiles should be allowed to set for 24 hours before applying grout to the joints with a trowel or sponge.
- Use a non-pigmented, flexible, cementitious grout.
- Carefully clean the tile's surface as it is grouted to keep the grout from setting in the porous surface. (Even with a pre-sealed tile, it is important to clean the tiles during the various phases of the installation.)
- If any cement residue remains on the face of the tile, a Scotch-Brite pad or fine-grained sandpaper can gently remove the residue. Much care should be taken if doing this, as it is easy to damage the seal on the tiles and the actual surface of the tile. If the tiles are being cleaned properly as you work, you should not have this issue

## Secondary Cleaning & Sealing:

- Once the tiles have been grouted and properly cleaned, leave them until completely dry.
- Apply 1-2 coats of sealant, allowing it to dry a minimum of 3 hours between coats. Make sure the tile is completely clean; otherwise, you will be sealing in any stains.

## Care & Maintenance

- One of the attributes of cement tiles is that they improve with age and wear and cleaning. The tiles should be regularly washed with mild soap and water.
- Never use bleach or acidic products to clean the tiles.
- Depending on the level of lustre you desire, additional coats of sealant or wax can be applied.
- When the sealants are rubbed into the tiles and polished, a lovely lustrous patina can be achieved. The type of sealant or wax, as well as the number of coats, will impact the look of the tiles, which naturally have a matte finish. Depending on the traffic on the floor, the sealant should be re-applied once every five years.

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