

Use

Not all tiles can be used for every purpose. To determine appropriate uses of the product, carefully inspect the specifications section of the product page on Home Depot. Pay extra attention to the following factors:

Every tile has a P.E.I. rating that indicates how wear-resistant a tile is on a scale of 0 to 5. The higher the rating, the more durable the tile is. For example, a PEI rating of Class 0 shouldn't have any foot traffic at all; it's strictly for wall installations. A tile with a Class 5 rating, however, can be used in pretty much any setting, commercial and residential alike. It would then follow that a Class 3 rating is somewhere in between: walls, countertops, and floors with normal foot traffic.

Though ceramic and porcelain can have the same P.E.I. ratings, there are other factors that differentiate the two materials. Porcelain tile is fired in a kiln at a higher temperature and greater pressure than ceramic tile, so it's denser and more water-resistant. This makes it ideal for exterior applications in harsher climates that see a lot of frost and colder weather. In milder climates, either material is suitable.

The C.O.F. rating (coefficient of friction) is a value assigned to each floor tile designating its slip resistance in both wet and dry conditions. A lower combined C.O.F. rating (.4) means it is less skid resistant; any combined rating above .6 complies with OSHA and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

Any tile can be used as a wall tile.

Water absorption is an indicator of whether a tile can be used inside or outside. If a tile has a low water absorption, that means it is highly water and frost resistant. If a tile has a high water absorption, it is less frost resistant and more porous, which means it should only be used inside. This is because if a tile absorbs water, and then the surrounding temperature drops to below freezing level, the absorbed water will freeze and the tile will crack. However, in temperate climates, this is not an issue. The most important thing to consider is the use and location of the tile you're considering.

Care

Tile is a low-maintenance surface choice for your home. Its care is simple and cost-effective and will keep tile looking brand new, lustrous and scratch-free. Here are some tips on how to maintain a tile installation:

Regular cleaning: Sweep the tile free of dirt and dust (or in the case of backsplashes/wall installations, wiping with a dry cloth) at least twice a week.

Deeper cleaning: Use soap and warm water- other products can dull the glaze! Make sure to use non-abrasive materials, like cloth rather than the rough side of a sponge.

For grout lines: Use warm soap and water with a stiff-bristled toothbrush. For particularly stubborn mold, mildew, or soap scum, use watered-down distilled white vinegar. We recommend one part vinegar and one part water, contained in a spray bottle. If need be, briefly leave the mixture on the grout line before cleaning.