

# Caring For Your Ceramic Tile

## NEWLY INSTALLED TILE SHOULD BE CLEANED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Remove loose dirt by sweeping or vacuuming.
2. Following directions, prepare a cleaning solution using a neutral pH cleaner designed specifically for ceramic tile. These types of cleaners are available from ceramic tile suppliers.
3. Thoroughly clean the ceramic tile, including the grout joints, following the manufacturer's instructions.
4. Rinse thoroughly with clean, warm water and allow to dry. A second rinsing with clean water may be necessary to completely remove all the cleaning solution. Tile sealers serve to protect and beautify your investment. Sealers may be applied when the installation is thoroughly dry. Sealers may adversely affect the static coefficient of friction of the tile surface resulting in slipperier conditions.
  - Consult with your sealer manufacturers to determine if the selected sealer is appropriate for the tile.
  - Sealing may be necessary for certain types of tile, such as some quarry tile, saltillo tile, or others. Ask your tile supplier or manufacturer if your specific tile requires sealing, stripping, and resealing.
  - For added protection of cement-based grout, a grout sealer may be applied in accordance to the grout manufacturer's instructions. Grout sealers are also available through your tile supplier.
  - Generally, grout sealers are not intended to change the appearance of the grout. Always test an inconspicuous area first to verify the desired appearance results. Tile and floor covering stores sell cleaning products developed specifically for cleaning tile and stone. These specialized cleaning products generally out perform products available in supermarkets or hardware stores.

## DAILY SERVICE:

- Remove soil with a broom, non-oily dust mop or vacuum. Use a scraper or putty knife to remove any stubborn surface debris.
- Damp mop or spot clean as necessary, using a pH neutral tile cleaner.
- Thoroughly rinse all areas with clean, warm water.
- Allow to dry before putting tile surface back into use.

## PERIODIC SERVICE:

- Use fiber or nylon scrubbing pads to assist in removing difficult stains.  
Do Not use steel wool Pads.
- Periodic maintenance does not differ from the routine maintenance unless a sealer has been applied to the tile. A stripping procedure may be desired. Choose a stripping product recommended by the sealer manufacturer and carefully follow directions.
- When desired, re-apply a recommended sealer.

## GROUT CARE AND MAINTENANCE:

- Routine maintenance of grout does not differ from tile care.
- For stubborn grout stains, agitation with a fiber or nylon-type scrubbing pad and a recommended grout cleaning solution will assist in the removal process.
  - If grout appearance becomes unacceptable, your tile distributor offers specialized products to address this problem. Follow specific product directions.

## RECONDITIONING CERAMIC TILE INSTALLATIONS

Begin the reconditioning process with a clean surface. Follow tile cleaning and stripping procedures previously mentioned, and always begin by testing an inconspicuous area first.

- Remove stubborn stains. There are four common types of stains: grease/oil, soap scum, hard water deposits, and rust. Contact your tile distributor for recommended specific cleaning products.
- Allow the tile installation to dry thoroughly and make sure its appearance is acceptable before you apply any sealers. Follow the sealer manufacturer's directions.

## COMMON PROBLEMS:

- You can avoid most problems by following manufacturer recommendations.
- If you use materials unsuitable for your tile and grout, the properties and/or appearance of your ceramic tile installation may be altered, and the installation may deteriorate. Check with your tile distributor and cleaning products manufacturer.
  - Ask your dealer for complete information about your ceramic tile and grout, because your ability to identify the type of tile and grout will reduce the likelihood that you will use the wrong product.
  - Always save a few extra tiles when your ceramic tile installation has been completed.
  - Always clean up spills as soon as possible. Materials left on your tile installation can be drawn or ground into your tile or grout, making cleanup more difficult.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Always test a product on your tile installation in an inconspicuous area before treating the entire tile installation.
- When using recommended products for tiled areas, protect surrounding non-tiled surfaces. Tile cleaning and maintenance products can adversely affect metals, glass, wood, etc.
- When in doubt, contact the tile distributor or product manufacturer. Choose and use properly designated maintenance products to enjoy the beauty and durability inherent in your ceramic tile installation.

\*Source: caring for your ceramic tile - tile council of America, Inc.



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