



CEMENT TILE **INSTALLATION GUIDE**

1 - INSTALLATION EQUIPMENTS AND MATERIALS:

- Thinset Mortar (For light colored tiles, use white color thin-set and for darker colored tiles, use gray color thin set material.) Do not use ceramic tile adhesive.
- Tile Spacers (1/16")
- Trowel with 1/2" with semicircular notches - Sponge - Bucket
- Wet Tile Saw with Diamond Blade
- Grout
- Grout Float
- Penetrating Sealer for Cement / Concrete
(One of the best sealers is Dry-Treat STAIN-PROOF)

2 - FLOOR AND WALL PREPARATION:

A. Prepare a perfectly level, clean, dry, slightly rough surface in concrete 3/4" below the desired finished floor height (5/8" for the tiles and 1/8" for mortar).

B. Let the concrete slab surface dry completely before installing the cement tiles, otherwise the moisture in the concrete will evaporate through the tiles, resulting in powdery white limestone deposits (efflorescence). Do not lay cement tiles directly onto fresh (uncured) concrete.

IMPORTANT: Some slabs may continue to release moisture on the surface even after fully cured. Test your slab by taping a small piece of plastic (polyethylene film) to the area to be tiled. Make sure all edges are thoroughly taped down. If moisture accumulates on the underside of the plastic, you should apply a waterproofing membrane before proceeding with the installation.

C. To prevent cracking or fracturing from the movement of the substrate and ultimately the earth itself, be sure to include expansion, construction, and isolation, contraction, generic and perimeter joints where appropriate. Consult your architect or engineer.

D. Wall tile can be installed over drywall, plaster, cement block, cement backer board (for moist areas). The surface should be flat, smooth, and dry and any loose paint or cracked surface should be scraped off and patched. Be sure to use thinset behind the backer board, not to adhere the backer board but rather to fill voids beneath the backer board.

3 - TILE SETTING:

E. Decide on the layout of the tiles and put them in position to ensure the result before installing them. If you choose a traditional carpet style pattern, start with the center pattern, then lay down the border tiles. Finally, lay down the outside tiles and cut them to fit using a wet saw with a diamond blade.

F. Using a sponge, wet the back of the tile completely to enable the thin set to adhere to the tile. For more complete instructions, follow the thinset manufacturer's guidelines for laying floor tile.

G. Evenly apply the adhesive mixture to the floor subsurface, using a trowel with 1/2" with semicircular notches. Then, cover the entire back of the tile with thin set material. Always brush the adhesive in the same direction, otherwise air will be trapped and the tiles may lift up.

H. Lay the tiles, and press them into place with the palm of your hand, ensuring that they are perfectly level with each other. (Don't beat the tiles with a tool, such as a rubber hammer, or micro-cracks will begin to appear in the tile over time.) Be sure that that the tiles are perfectly level throughout the installation, as they cannot be polished down like marble or granite.

I. Use the 1/16" tile spacers to separate each tile.

J. Move the tile back and forth so that the new tile is leveled with the first tile you installed. Bring the tiles together to a grout joint of 1/16th of an inch and continue laying them until all tiles are set in place.

K. Immediately clean thinset or mortar off the face of the tiles. The longer you leave it, the harder it will be to clean it off.

***Do not let thinset or mortar dry on the face of the tiles or it will be very difficult to remove without damaging the tiles.**

L. Let the thinset mortar dry completely, usually 2 - 4 days, before grouting. IV. GROUTING:

M. Although the tiles are pre-sealed, you would still need to seal them first with penetrating sealer as per the manufacturer's instructions. This will help to protect the tiles from being stained by the grout.

DO NOT USE DARK COLORED GROUTS because they are composed of fine carbon and it is known that this type of color in grouts is very invasive and can cause staining on the lighter portion of the tile, even though is pre-sealed or grout release is applied. Instead, use a simple cement based non sanded grout light in color such as white, bone, light grey. **EPOXY GROUT** is **NOT** recommended and will cause irreversible damage to you cement tiles.

N. Fill the small gaps between the tiles with grout, using a rubber float.

O. Immediately remove any excess grout with a clean damp cloth or sponge. As you clean the tiles of any grout, you will also be removing the Grout Release.

***Do not let any excess grout dry on the surface as it may be difficult to remove and may stain the tiles.**

4 - SEALING

R. Cement tile surfaces must be cleaned, free of grease, oil, dirt, wax or any other foreign matter including grout release material.

S. Apply a high quality penetrating sealer for cement and concrete tiles and carefully follow the sealer manufacturer's instructions. Do not place anything on the tile until the sealer is completely dried per manufacturer's instructions. Tiles need to be sealed before and after grout application.

T. If desired, buff the tiles with the floor polisher and white pad using a back and forth motion. This will give your tiles the shine desired. Do this step as long as you like.

GENERAL NOTE ABOUT SEALERS: Like natural stones, cement tiles are porous in nature and therefore need to be sealed to avoid staining. Penetrating sealers coat the cement particles in the tile making it less likely they will retain stains.

Topical sealers create a barrier on the surface of the tile so that stains do not reach the cement. Topical sealers have different finishes: shiny and matte. According to Desert Brand, matte topical sealers are produced by adding a chemical that cuts the shine, but also weakens the sealer.

Topical sealers are not generally recommended for exterior applications as the sun may deteriorate them quickly, as well as wet areas because it also adds more slipperiness to the tile.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

The cleaning and maintenance instructions are very simple. For daily cleaning, you can use Hanafinn Rejuvenata™ ACTIVE or, other suitable pH neutral soap (such as clear liquid dish washing soap) and warm water. Avoid using any acids or bleach on the tiles since they may react with the concrete and damage the surface of the tiles. Also avoid cleaners with detergents because they can leave a residue which is difficult to rinse off and collects dirt.

Avoid spilling acids on the tile, or if accidents happen, clean them up promptly. The longer the spill stays on the tile, the more likely it will leave a lasting mark.

Depending on the sealer and the use, the tiles will need to be re-sealed every couple of years.

NOTE: This installation instructions are offered as guidelines only. Cemento Collection will not be held responsible for any installation errors.