



Installation Guide for Encaustic Tiles

This document is designed as a guidance note for certified trade professionals. We guarantee the quality of our products from manufacturing to delivery. We recommend working with an experienced craftsman. When selecting a qualified tiler, please ensure they have a proven track record of experience installing encaustic tiles.

CUTTING

Please note that it is essential to wear suitable protective eyewear and clothing when cutting or drilling encaustic tiles. We recommend that either a diamond cutter or an angle grinder is used to cut encaustic tiles. Whilst cutting or drilling tiles, the surface of the tile may become wet and/or dirty. Wipe the tile clean immediately after cutting.

PRE-INSTALLATION PREPARATION

Bert & May recommends that the tiles are the last material to be installed during a building project. Please store your untreated cement tiles in a clean and dry place before laying.

We advise you to plan the layout of your tiles by dry laying a harmonious overall pattern, using tiles from different cardboard boxes. This is very important if you have chosen a pattern in which several tiles make a motif.

The face of your encaustic tiles is very delicate and should be handled with care. Please handle tiles in pairs facing each other, this to protect the design and motifs.

At this stage you may find necessary to smooth out the rough edges of your tiles. Please use a Diamond Sanding Pad of 180 to 200 grit.

INSTALLATION

Before installing encaustic tiles, the floor must be clean, free from dust and moisture. Ensure new floor screeds are thoroughly dry as any residual moisture will be absorbed by the tiles and shown as stains or dark patches.

Clean the back of the tiles by submerging them briefly in water (in pairs facing each other), this will remove any dust gathered on the tiles and improve adherence. Apply encaustic/cement tile adhesive to the floor using a notched trowel, working in small areas in parallel lines, Spread only enough adhesive that remains workable. Then, apply the adhesive in the same method to the back of the tile. We recommend using grout spacers with minimum 1mm between tiles, although the tiles can be butt jointed if required. However, if the tiles are being installed outdoors, we would recommend a minimum spacing of 2mm between tiles. Ensure the tiles are level by using a spirit level. Refrain from using a rubber mallet or similar hard tools to level your tiles. Tap the tiles only with the palm of your hand. Excessive impact can cause fine cracks. Do not step on the tiles for a least 6hrs (if using rapid set adhesive) or preferably overnight. Make sure that any tile adhesive residue is swiftly removed with a sponge. Do not wipe or rub off the residue, at this stage your tiles are still untreated (open-pored) and these actions could cause staining on your tiles.

Wash the tiles with Lithofin MN Power Clean, which should be diluted with water as per the instructions on the bottle. After this, all moisture must be released from the body and surface of the tile prior to sealing. We recommend that they are left to dry for a minimum of 7 days. The longer you can leave the tiles, the greater assurance you have that they have dried out, that the adhesive liquid has evaporated out through them and they are acclimatized to your home. Please remember to protect your tiles from liquids and heavy foot traffic, covering them with a dust sheet may be necessary.

PRE-IMPREGNATION

Once the tiles have dried impregnate with Lithofin MN Stain Stop, according to the instructions on the bottle x 1 coat. The first coat should be applied using very little sealant at a time but really working it into the surface of the tile using a clean and dry foam paint roller. This prevents streaks being left on the surface of the tile once the coat is dry. Any excess sealant should be immediately absorbed with a clean sponge. Do not leave any sealant residue on the tiles, as it will not evaporate, instead it will dry on the surface of the tile creating streaks or colour patches. Once finished, leave the tiles to cure for at least 12 hours.

GROUTING

We recommend using white or undyed grout. Point grouting is recommended as spread grouting is likely to soak into the tiles. Ensure the surface of the tiles are free from dust and adhesive before you begin the grouting process. Sponge the area to be grouted with clean water before applying the grout. Work in sections. Replace the water when needed, it is essential that the water and sponge is always clean. The tiles must be kept clean throughout the process. Any grout residue must be removed of the tile immediately, using water, to avoid any staining or marks on the tile face. The grout should be left to dry fully. Remember to protect the surface from liquids and heavy foot traffic.

However, with all due care, it is possible that remnants of grout or other materials may have stained your tiles, for example, if not worked in sections with continuous cleaning. If this is the case, please do not move on to the next step, instead use Lithofin MN Power Clean to remove any stubborn stains. After the treatment, your tiles may have a temporary dull appearance. To improve this condition, thoroughly clean your tiles using plenty of water and neutral floor cleaner. Apply generously with a mop. Neutral soap will naturally hydrate the tiles, improving their natural colour pigmentation.

Alternatively you may also consider using Diamond Polishing Pads. Please get in touch and we will be happy to advise which grit level to use.

Please note that encaustic tiles must never be cleaned with acid-based products. These can cause permanent damage on the tiles.

IMPREGNATION

There should be a final coat of Lithofin MN Stain Stop sealant applied once the grout has dried to complete the process. The sealant will penetrate deep into the tile, protecting it from moisture and dirt. Please ensure that the surface is completely dry again (we recommend about four to seven days).

Before applying the sealant, thoroughly and carefully dry clean the tiles with a vacuum cleaner. Work in sections, using a clean foam paint roller, applying as much sealant as needed but without leaving excess residue on the tiles. Any excess sealant should be immediately absorbed with a clean sponge. Once finished, leave the tiles to cure for at least 24 hours.

An easy test to see if the floor is fully protected after sealing is to place a few drops of water on the tiles, if it forms a bead then it has worked, if the tiles absorb the water then the sealing process needs to be repeated.

If you choose to add a satin finish to your tiles, you can use Lithofin MN Multi Seal to do so and as a final step. Please wait for at least 24 hours after you have applied Lithofin MN Stain Stop. Please follow the same application guidelines as above and note that Lithofin Multi Seal should always be used when installing kitchen splashback but should not be used in a bathroom environment.

MAINTENANCE

If you have chosen to seal your encaustic tiles with Lithofin MN Impregnator/Stain Stop for a matt finish, we recommend you reapply this sealant every six months for the first few years.

Regular maintenance, cleaning and mopping should be carried out using Neutral Floor Cleaner. Never use acidic detergents.

Note: The Lithofin products mentioned on this guide are a recommendation only, should you need further advise on how to use them, please contact Lithofin.com directly. Alternative makes and products are available to treat encaustic tiles, please use them only on the recommendation of a qualified and experienced tiler.

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