

Installation Guide

ENCAUSTIC & RECLAIMED TILES

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Installation Guide

ENCAUSTIC & RECLAIMED TILES

This document is designed as a guidance note for certified trade professionals. Please note that it is essential to wear suitable protective eyewear and clothing when cutting or drying tiles.

For *Encaustic and Reclaimed Tiles*, we recommend these are sealed.

Recommended Products:

PRW200 PRE-GROUTING PROTECTIVE AGENT
PS87 PRO DEGREASING CLEANING AGENT
MP90 ECO XTREME SEALER
FILA CLEANER PRO- FOR ONGOING GENERAL MAINTENANCE

The manufacturer of the installation products we recommend is **Fila**. We have worked closely with the **Fila Team** to develop our guide using their products and our tiles, and extensive testing on our tiles has been carried out.

Fila believes it is fundamentally important to ensure a constant commitment to ethically sustainable products, and they have been awarded the Eurofins Indoor Air Comfort Gold Award (low VOC emissions) for their MP90 Eco Xtreme product. All their packaging is also recyclable.

Any products that come into contact with the tiles i.e., other sealants, silicone, cleaning products, or even foods, can cause damage if acidic, pigmented or abrasive.

It is important that you choose a contractor that is experienced with the installation of these tiles and that they are given this information prior to proceeding with any work to ensure they are aware of the processes & timelines for each stage.

Please contact help@bertandmay.com if you would like us to send you a list of our recommended installers.

Installation Guide

1. **Prepare the surface/ tiles** ensure the tiles are clean and free from dust, and lightly sand any rough edges. As the tiles are handmade, there can be rough edges/burrs on the tiles, which can be easily removed with lightly sanding the edges with 180-200 grit sandpaper.

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2. **Lay the tiles** using a notched trowel apply flexible adhesive (we recommend Mapei Keraflex Low Dust Adhesive) ensuring the sub-surface is level & stable - then allow adhesive to dry for 24 hrs.

3. **Treat the tiles** with pre-grouting agent using a paintbrush (or fleece applicator for larger areas) apply a generous application of prw200 pre-grout protection, ensuring all surface is covered, leave for 10 minutes and then promptly remove any residue from the surface. Allow tiles to dry for 24 hours.

4. **Grout the tiles**
 - a. Please ensure point 3 has been completed.
 - b. Ensure you use point grout method of grouting (not slurry/spread method.)
 - c. We do not recommend the use of dark coloured grouts with light tiles. Dark coloured grouts should only be used on dark tiles.

Once grouted, allow to cure for 24 hrs – we recommend Mapei Ultra colour plus range of grouts.

5. **Clean the tiles** using PS87 cleaner & non-scratch white pad (diluted 1 part product/5 parts water) work the product into tiles in circular movements and leave to activate for 4-5 minutes & then remove residue with damp sponge, and rinse with clean water repeat as necessary until tiles clean. Allow tiles to dry for 24 hrs. please do not proceed to seal the tiles until tiles are fully clean & dry.

6. **Seal the tiles** using paint brush/fleece pad or other appropriate applicator, apply a generous application of MP90 eco xtreme sealant, ensuring surface of tiles & grout is fully covered. If product is quickly absorbed into tile, apply a 2nd coating (wet on wet) within 20 minutes of first application. after 10 minutes, remove any residue with a dry cloth, and leave to dry. Tiles can be walked on after 2 hours but product is not fully cured until 24 hours.

Cutting

We recommend that either a high-quality diamond cutter or an angle grinder is used to cut encaustic tiles. The cutting blade should be water suppressed to control dust and cool the blades. Whilst cutting or drilling tiles, the surface of the tile may become wet and/or dirty. Wipe the tile clean immediately after cutting.

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Pre-installation preparation

Bert & May recommends that the tiles are the last material to be installed during a building project. The top layer of encaustic tiles is very delicate and should be handled with care. Please handle tiles in pairs facing each other, to protect the design. Should you need to smooth the edge of your tiles before installation, please use a 180 – 200 grit sanding pad. Clean the tiles by wiping with a damp cloth to remove any dust gathered on the tiles and improve adherence. Before installing encaustic tiles, the floor must be solid, level, clean and free from dust and moisture. Please ensure new floor screeds are dry for a minimum of 6 weeks.

Installation

Apply adhesive to the floor using a notched trowel, working in small areas in parallel lines, spread only enough adhesive (we recommend Mapei Keraflex) 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 outside, we would recommend a minimum spacing of 2mm between tiles. Ensure the tiles are level by using a spirit level and do not step on the tiles for a least 6hrs (if using rapid set adhesive) or preferably overnight. After this, all moisture must be released from the body and surface of the tile prior to sealing. The ambient temperature does affect the drying and curing times. 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 acclimatised to your home. Please remember to protect your tiles from liquids and heavy foot traffic.

Pre-grout treating

It is important to protect the tiles before grouting. Ensure your tiles are clean and dust free before moving on to the next step. Should you need to wash the tiles, use PH neutral soap and water or PH neutral floor cleaner. Should you need to remove any stubborn building residues from the tiles, we recommend using FILAPS87 PRO, which should be diluted in a 1:5 ratio and applied as per point 5 above. Once tiles are clean, leave to dry.

Once the tiles are dry, apply a moderate application of Pre grout protector FILAPRW200. This should be applied with a paintbrush (or fleece applicator for larger areas) working in small areas (approx. 1-2m² stages at a time), ensuring surface of tiles are fully coated. Use a brush to apply the product to the edges of the tiles. Leave for 10 minutes, and then ensure you promptly wipe off any excess on the surface of the tiles with a clean cloth. This prevents streaks being left on the surface of the tile once the coat is dry. Once finished, leave the tiles to cure for at least 24 hours.

Grouting

Ensure PRW200 stage has been completed before proceeding on to grouting. We recommend using light coloured grout on light coloured tiles. We recommend that you avoid dark coloured

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grouts, unless on dark coloured tiles. If you do choose to use a dark grout, we recommend taking extra care to clean the surface of the tile throughout the grouting process, as the tiles are extremely porous. Ensure the surface of the tiles are free from dust and adhesive before you begin the grouting process. We recommend point grouting as spread/slurry method of grouting is likely to sit in the porous surface of an encaustic tile. A grouting gun can be used. Sponge the area to be grouted with clean water before applying the grout, working in small areas. Replace the water when needed, it is essential that the water and sponge is always clean. Allow the grout to dry for 24 hours.

Post grout cleaning

You must clean the tiles before proceeding on to the sealing process. Use the Fila PS87PRO diluted in water (1 part product:5 parts water) and distribute the diluted product evenly onto the surface of the tiles– working in small areas (approx. 1-2 metre areas at a time). With a white nylon abrasive pad (or a clean nylon floor brush for larger areas)

Please note *metal-based cleaning pads/tools must NOT be used*. Work the product into the tiles using circular movements with the pad. Leave to act for 4-5 minutes and then with a damp sponge (wet vacuum for larger areas) remove the residue. Repeat the process as necessary, until the tiles are clean and then rinse thoroughly with clean water. The tiles then must be left to dry out fully before proceeding to seal i.e., approx. 24 hours.

Sealing

Once happy with the look of your installed tiles, tiles should be sealed with Fila MP90 ECO XTREME. Start by ensuring the tiles are clean and dried. Apply MP90 ECO XTREME evenly, using a paintbrush (or fleece pad for larger areas), also soaking the grout lines well. If the product is quickly absorbed into the tiles, as tiles do absorb differently in different areas, we would recommend a secondary coat be applied, but this must be within a 20-minute period (i.e., apply wet on wet). Leave for 10 minutes and then promptly remove any excess sealant from the surface, using a clean dry microfibre cloth, to avoid any mottling on the surface. The tiles can be walked on after 2 hours but not fully cured until 24 hours. An easy test to see if the floor is fully dry after sealing is to place a few drops of water on the tiles, if the beads of water sit on top of the tiles for 2 hours, then the sealant has worked, if the tiles absorb the water before this time, then the sealing process needs to be repeated.

Please note the sealant is fully breathable and over time, any spillages will be absorbed into the tiles, therefore it is important that any spillages are wiped up immediately to prevent staining, and the tiles are cleaned regularly

Installation video

please find link below to our installation video, which may help you.

<https://www.bertandmay.com/Pages/Installation-video>

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Ongoing Maintenance

Important: for general maintenance & day to day cleaning we recommend only pH neutral products are used. We recommend Fila Cleaner Pro.

Important: if general domestic cleaners are used, these will remove any sealant that has been applied very quickly. You must not use anything acidic/ any bleach/limescale remover, or anything abrasive on the tiles as these products will damage the tiles irreparably.

we recommend you carry out regular bead tests on your tiles to check the sealing properties are still active, and if not, we recommend you carry out a deep clean and reseal by following steps 5-7 above.

It is also important to note that you need to take good care of your beautiful tiles. There are many domestic products i.e. bathing/hair products/cleaning products on the market, which are very harsh, and therefore it is important to clean these areas daily with the pH neutral products to avoid damage to your tiles, especially for shower/wet-room areas.

For outdoor tiles - as the tiles are exposed to the environment and subject to foliage and inclement weather conditions, they will naturally patina over time, which we feel adds to their beauty, but it is important to regularly clean outdoor installations with the pH neutral product to limit any staining.

Encaustic tiles installed outdoors will naturally patina over time due to being exposed to the elements, which we feel adds to their beauty. You should always take advice from your installer about the best time for you to install your outdoor tiles, as some ancillary products such as adhesive, can sometimes only be used during certain ambient temperatures. Bert & May would recommend installations be carried out during spring/summer when a few dry days are more achievable, as the Encaustic tiles need to dry out properly between each stage of installation. Installations during wintertime, can cause moisture to be absorbed and if frost then gets into the tiles, it can cause the tiles to crack/split.

Optional Surface Finish

Although this is not needed, to enhance regular maintenance, you may choose to add a wax finish to your tiles, you can use FILAMATT Natural Effect protective wax, but this is not suitable and **MUST NOT** be used in bathroom/wet room/outdoor applications. This can be beneficial in a kitchen as it makes the tiles more wipeable. This is an optional, additional process and does not replace the MP90 sealant.

Please note *this can change the surface finish.*

Bert & May recommend professional advice is sought from a certified trade professional.

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Underfloor Heating

Our Cement Encaustic tiles can be used for underfloor heating. The heating should be correctly commissioned prior to tiling and switched off or lowered to a maximum of 15°C during tiling and for a minimum of 14 days after installation.

After 14 days increase the temperature at a rate of 5°C per day to the maximum temperature then reduce by 5°C per day to the required working temperature. Fleximat should be used as an anti-fracture membrane over underfloor heating.

Hearths and Fireplaces

Care should be taken when tiling into hearths or fire surrounds. Ensure that the tiles are kept a minimum of 300mm away from direct contact with the flames or the main heat source.

Test the tiles – after 24hrs, carry out a bead test by placing a few drops of water on the tiles. The droplets of water should sit on top and not be absorbed, for at least 2 hours. If the tiles are absorbing water, apply another coat of MP90 and repeat the bead test.

Please note

The sealant is fully breathable and over time, any spillages will be absorbed into the tiles, therefore it is important that any spills are wiped up immediately to prevent staining. Clean the tiles regularly.

Important: for general maintenance we recommend only pH neutral products are used. we recommend fila cleaner pro.

Important: if general domestic cleaners are used, these will remove any sealant that has been applied very quickly. You must not use anything acidic/ any bleach/limescale remover, or anything abrasive on the tiles as these products can damage the tiles irreparably.

Maintain Your Tiles

We recommend you carry out regular bead tests on your tiles to confirm sealing properties are still active, and if not, we recommend you carry out a deep clean and reseal by following steps 5-7.

It is also important to note that you need to take good care of your beautiful tiles. there are many bathing/hair products on the market, which can be very harsh, and therefore for shower/wet-room areas, it is important to clean these areas daily with the pH neutral products to avoid damage to your tiles.

For outdoor tiles, as the tiles are exposed to the environment and subject to foliage and inclement weather conditions, they will naturally patina over time, which we feel adds to their beauty, but it is important to regularly clean outdoor installations with the pH neutral product to limit any staining.