

Installation Guide

**TERRACOTTA/RAW UNGLAZED, BEJMAT/RAW THICK,  
BEJMAT/RAW MOSAIC ZELLIGE TILES**

---

**BERT  
& MAY**

---

Installation Guides  
**TERRACOTTA/RAW UNGLAZED  
BEJMAT/RAW THICK  
BEJMAT/RAW MOSAIC ZELLIGE TILES**

# BERT & MAY

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.

It is important the tiles are sealed with the products we recommend.

**Recommended Products:**  
***PRW200 PRE-GROUTING PROTECTIVE AGENT***  
***DETERDEK PRO-END OF WORK 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 totally recyclable.

Any products which 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 terracotta 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](mailto:help@bertandmay.com) if you would like us to send you a list of our recommended installers.

1. **Prepare the surface/ tiles:** this is a product with tonal variation, so the tiles must be mixed randomly prior to installation to create a uniform tonal variation across the entire tiled surface. ensure the tiles are clean and free from dust, and lightly sand any rough edges/burrs using 180-200 grit sandpaper.
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.

# BERT & MAY

3. **Treat the tiles with pre-grouting agent:** with 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 Deterdek Pro, & with non-scratch white pad or clean nylon floor brush for larger areas (diluted 1 part product/5 parts water) – work product into tiles with pad in circular movements – leave to activate for 4-5 minutes & then remove residue with damp sponge. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.
7. **Test the tiles:** after 24 hrs, carry out a bead test by placing a few drops of water onto the tiles, the droplets of water should sit on top and should not be absorbed into the tile for at least 2 hours. If the tiles are absorbing the water, apply another coat of the MP90 and repeat 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 spillages are wiped up immediately to prevent staining, and the tiles are cleaned 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.

8. **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

# BERT & MAY

*\* 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, that 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.

Terracotta and unglazed 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 Terracotta and unglazed 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.

## **Cutting**

We recommend that either a high-quality diamond cutter or an angle grinder is used to cut the 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.

## **Pre-Installation Preparation**

Bert & May recommends that the tiles are the last material to be installed during a building project. The tiles are very delicate and should be handled with care. Clean the tiles by wiping with a damp cloth to remove any dust gathered on the tiles and improve adherence. Before installing terracotta 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.

Please bear in mind that this is a product with tonal variation, so tiles from different boxes must be mixed randomly prior to installation to create a uniform variation across the entire tiled surface. In terms of aesthetics, terracotta tiles are known for their non-uniform, earthen-coloured body and their irregular texture with grains, pores and pits in the surface that give them a natural, rustic, and original appearance.

## **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

[www.bertandmay.com](http://www.bertandmay.com) | Tel: 020 3744 0776

# BERT & MAY

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 – we recommend Fila Cleaner Pro (diluted 1 part product/30 parts water). Should you need to remove any stubborn building residues from the tiles, we recommend using **DETERDEK 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. 1-2m<sup>2</sup> 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 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 a Terracotta 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 **Deterdek Pro** 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

# BERT & MAY

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 from the first application (i.e., apply wet on wet). Leave for 10 minutes and then promptly remove any excess sealant, 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. \**

## 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.

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 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, that 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.

## Optional Surface Finish

Please note – **THIS CAN CHANGE THE 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 makes the tiles more wipeable. This is an optional, additional process and does not replace the MP90 sealant.

# BERT & MAY

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

## **Underfloor Heating**

Our Terracotta 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.