



SEALING

Manufacturer Recommendations for Arabesque, Rustic and Roman Tiles

WHY IS SEALING NECESSARY?

Cement tiles should be sealed to protect them from staining and preserve their color and original appearance. Unsealed tiles are more easily stained.

TYPES OF SEALER

There are two basic types of sealer:

1. Penetrating sealer also known as “invisible” sealer, penetrating sealers work below the surface for a minimal change of appearance.
2. Topical sealer—some times referred to as “film-forming” coat the surface of the tile to create a barrier against stains and water intrusion In general, penetrating sealers will provide a more natural look than topical sealers but will provide less protection against staining and wear.

LOCATION

The location of the installation is an important consideration when selecting a sealer. For exterior installations a penetrating sealer is strongly recommended because topical sealer does not generally hold up well to weathering. Also, surfaces sealed with topical sealer can be extremely slippery when wet. Because topical sealer coats the surface of the tile moisture, efflorescence, or stains may become trapped underneath.

For interior installations either a penetrating sealer or a topical sealer can be employed. In these areas, the key considerations are the desired appearance and stain protection. As previously noted, topical sealer will generally provide the most protection against stains and will usually have a glossy appearance. In general, penetrating sealer will provide a more natural, matte finish but will provide less stain protection than a topical sealer.

Other considerations to take into account include whether the installation is subject to light residential or heavy commercial traffic and if there are dogs, cats, or other pets scampering about. For areas like kitchens and driveways make sure to select a sealer designed to resist oil and grease penetration. A penetrating sealer that “breathes” must be used for concrete slabs poured on grade that are subject to excessive moisture.

Cement tiles are porous and over time will develop a unique patina that records the life around them. The patina effect will develop sooner and be more pronounced in material sealed with a penetrating sealer. With either type of sealer, however, the extent of the patina effect will vary depending on the quality of the initial seal and maintenance in addition to the amount of traffic and weathering experienced.



SEALER APPLICATION

Carefully follow the sealer manufacturer's directions. Generally sealer is applied with a mop or sponge, with excess sealer that pools on the surface removed with a mop, sponge, or towel. Make sure to take note of the recommended cure time before applying additional coats.

The surface of the tile must be clean and dry prior to sealing. Any discoloration, residue or grout haze on the tile's surface must be removed or will be locked in the sealed surface.

HOW TO EVALUATE IF MATERIAL IS FULLY SEALED

Pour a small amount of water on the surface. Water will bead up and not darken the surface if the surface is sealed. If the water is absorbed and darkens the surface additional coat(s) of sealer are required to properly seal a new installation or reseal an existing installation.

SEALER MANUFACTURERS

The list of manufacturers below is not comprehensive and is provided solely as a courtesy; inclusion or omission of a specific manufacturer should not be construed as an endorsement.

[Aqua Mix](#)

[Dupont Stonetech](#)

[Duroshine](#)

[Miracle Sealants](#)

[Prosoco](#)