



avente llc.

Hand Painted Tiles

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## CLASSIC CEMENT TILE INSTALLATION GUIDELINES

### INSTALLATION EQUIPMENT & 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 (such as Desert Brand Penetrating Sealer #1)
- ✓ Topical Sealer (such as Desert Brand Paver Tile Sealer #2) if required
- ✓ Top Finish Polish (such as Desert Brand Top Finish #3) if required
- ✓ A 17" Floor Polisher, with green and white pads

### FLOOR PREPARATION:

1. Prepare a perfectly level surface in concrete 3/4" below the desired finished floor height (5/8" for the tiles and 1/8" for mortar).
2. 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).

**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. The tiles delivered by are fully dried.

### TILE SETTING:

3. 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.

4. Clean and lightly dampen the bottom of the tile.



5. Evenly apply the adhesive mixture to the floor subsurface, using a wide comb. Also apply adhesive to the back of the tile.

⤴ Always brush the adhesive in the same direction, otherwise air will be trapped and the tiles may lift up.

6. 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.

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

8. Let the thinset mortar dry completely, usually 2 - 4 days, before grouting.



### GROUTING:

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



10. Immediately remove any excess grout with a clean damp cloth or sponge.

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

CLEANING:

11. Clean the tiles thoroughly using the floor polisher with green pad, a neutral soap and plentiful water.

☞ Never use acidic products, detergents or bleach to clean the tile.

12. Rinse thoroughly to remove all residue.

13. Remove all rinse water with a mop or wet vacuum.

14. Let tiles dry completely before sealing.

☞ Allow all humidity in cement tiles to evaporate or dark damp patches may appear on the tiles after they are sealed.

15. The evaporation of water through the cement tiles may leave a whitish mineral deposit (efflorescence) on the surface. This can be eliminated by gentle rubbing a clean, moist cloth. SEALING:

16. Apply a high quality penetrating sealer (such as [Desert Brand Penetrating Sealer #1](#)) following the sealer manufacturer's instructions.

17. If desired, apply a high quality topical sealer (such as [Desert Brand Paver Tile Sealer #2](#)) following the manufacturer's instructions. (Alternatively, clear liquid wax like that sold for marble may also be used in lieu of a topical sealer.)

18. For added protection against staining and scuffing, a top finish polish (such as [Desert Brand Top Finish #3](#)) may be applied following the manufacturer's instructions.

19. If desired, buff the tiles with the floor polisher and white pad.

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.