

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

CERAMIC TILE

CERAMIC TILE - ROUTINE CARE

Contaminants and spills on a glazed ceramic tile are, generally, easier to clean than other surfaces. Glazed tile products should be cleaned routinely with an all-purpose, low VOC household or commercial cleaner. The product chosen should also be grout joint cleaning compatible. The type of product may vary depending on the tile application and use. A multipurpose spray cleaner, which removes soap scum, hard water deposits, and mildew designed for every day use, can be used on wall tile areas in residential baths and showers.

The entire area should be cleaned and scrubbed with cleaner solution through the use of a cotton mop, cloth, sponge, or non-metallic brush. The entire area should be rinsed with clean water to remove any cleaning solution residue. Remember that you should sweep or vacuum floor areas prior to cleaning to remove any dust or debris. Routine cleaners should never contain hazardous or polluting products including, but not limited to acids or ammonia. Acids can damage the grout and the glazed surface of the tile, and ammonia can discolor the grout.

Unglazed tile should be cleaned routinely with concentrated tile cleaners that have a neutral pH for safe regular use. These cleaners are better suited at removing grease, oils and normal spills from unglazed products. Again these products will vary depending on the application, amount of traffic and the use. The product chosen should also be compatible with cleaning the grout joints at the same time.

Removal of Sealers/Waxes/Floor Finishes:

If you need to remove a topical sealer or floor wax from a ceramic tile you should use a Tile Sealer & Adhesive remover. Always test a small area first. Apply a liberal amount of undiluted sealer & adhesive remover to a manageable area. Allow setting without drying until coating or residue softens. Reapply if necessary until sealer softens and can be removed. If necessary, agitate with white nylon scrub pad. Wipe up the residue with a cotton towel or sponge. Rinse thoroughly with clean water. Do not use on natural stone products.

Glass Tiles:

For routine cleaning, use any non-abrasive cleaning compound recommended for either glass or tile

Metal Signatures/Metal Ages/Urban Metals:

- To clean, use a liquid non-abrasive household cleaner.

- DO NOT use scouring pads, steel wool, sandpaper or other abrasive products.
- Avoid cleaners containing ammonia, bleach, abrasives, or other hazardous/polluting compounds.
- Always test in small inconspicuous area while using a new cleaner to ensure compatibility.

CERAMIC TILE - GROUT CARE

Grout is the material used to fill the spaces between the individual tiles. Grout comes in many colors. While color is important to the final finished look of the tile installation, it has little effect on the functionality of the grout. The purpose of grout is, simply, to fill the joint between the tiles and becomes a permanent, integral component of the finished installation.

Penetrating/Impregnating Sealer:

Most tile installations use cementitious grouts. This type of grout should be sealed after installation to prevent the color from staining. The grout should be sealed with a penetrating/impregnating sealer (often called grout sealers) which does not contain silicone, as silicone can shorten the useful life of the sealer. Epoxy grouts, conversely, are chemically cured and acid resistant and, as a result, do not require a sealer. The application of a good quality penetrating/impregnating sealer into the grout joints of a cementitious grout will not change the natural color of the grout, but will prevent the penetration of moisture, simplify maintenance, and help prevent staining or discoloration. Only the grout needs to be sealed, not glazed floor or wall tiles. Grout can be sealed seventy-two hours after installation.

There are different grades of penetrating/impregnating sealers, therefore the useful life and price will differ between a low quality and high quality sealer. You may need to reapply the sealer on an annual basis depending on the sealer quality, traffic patterns, and maintenance routine. Some sealers have multiple year warranties for useful life. Refer to the manufacturer warranty, technical & product information for specific details on product installation, useful life, and product applications (including any warnings) before use.

Grout Maintenance:

Neither sealing the grout nor using a 100% Epoxy Grout will guarantee against surface build-up or discoloration of the grout. Grout needs to be cleaned on a periodic basis to remove any surface build-up. Routine grout cleaning can be done with a daily concentrated household or commercial cleaner depending on the application. When heavy duty grout cleaning is required, you will need to use a professional strength Tile & Grout Cleaner that is capable of removing grease, soap scum, body oil, mildew stains, algae, and synthetic or acrylic waxes from the grout joints. However, such a product should contain non-polluting chemicals and low

VOC levels. This type of product can be purchased from most Home Centers, or through your local professional Floor Covering Dealer

Grout Color Restoration:

When grout has been stained to the point that it cannot be maintained or returned to its natural color, you can return the grout back to its original color or any other color through the use of a "grout stain". Grout Stains are epoxy-based products that are specifically designed to penetrate into the grout and seal the surface with a permanent color. Once the grout has been stained there is no need to seal it any further with a penetrating/impregnating sealer. Prior to staining, the grout joint should be cleaned thoroughly to remove any dirt, oils, grease or sealers with a professional strength Tile & Grout Cleaner. This can be purchased from most Home Centers or through your local Professional Floor Covering Dealer.

Post-Grout Clean-Up:

Grout haze is a film that has been left behind on the surface of the tile as part of the final grouting process. Usually this is buffed off the surface after the grout has achieved its initial 12 to 24 hour cure. The removal of the haze is often difficult when buffing with a clean rag or floor machine. Cementitious grout haze can be successfully removed with "Sulfamic" acid, which is a mild acid that attacks and breaks down cement smears. There are several products on the market called grout haze removers, which usually contain Sulfamic acid. Sulfamic acid can also be purchased in powder form and mixed with water to different strengths by qualified professionals. Similarly, 100% Solids Epoxy Grout haze can be removed with an Epoxy Haze Remover. These removers are formulated to safely and quickly remove cured epoxy haze from new tile installations. Their unique formulation will soften most epoxy hazes for easy removal without damaging the grout or tile, usually in one application. Sulfamic acid or grout removers should never be used on Natural Stone products.

NATURAL STONE

NATURAL STONE - ROUTINE CARE

To ensure your natural stone products will provide you with a lifetime of aesthetics and utility, a proper maintenance program is crucial. Natural Stone products are porous by nature and require a different maintenance program than traditional ceramic tile.

Natural stone requires a different maintenance routine than traditional, man-made ceramic tile. Many of the cleaners acceptable for use on ceramic tile can stain, damage or dull stone. Dirt and dust will scratch the surface of stone. Therefore, stone floors should be vacuumed or dust mopped frequently to remove abrasive agents from the stone surface. Natural stone should be cleaned with neutral cleaners. Stone cleaners should never contain acid or bleach. Acids, even a light solution of vinegar and water, will etch and eventually damage natural stone.

Stone Cleaners:

Only use cleaners specifically designed for cleaning stone. These cleaners contain no acids and are concentrated neutral pH cleaners that will not affect existing sealers or wax-type coatings. The surface of the stone should be dampened with clear water. This will keep the cleaning solution on the surface so it can be effective. A solution of the cleaner and water missed to manufacturer instructions should be applied to the stone surface with a sponge or mop. On walls, kitchen counters or vanity tops, a spray bottle can be used to apply the cleaning solution. Allow sitting for manufacturers specified amount of time (usually 3 to 5 minutes). Agitate with a sponge, synthetic mop, soft bristle brush or through the use of a floor-scrubbing machine. Mop up dirty solution and buff dry.

Once the stone has been cleaned, you can periodically apply a Spray-Buff wax-type floor finish to enhance the beauty and luster of polished stone (including countertops). Apply the finish with a spray applicator and buff immediately with a white nylon pad. Reapply as often as needed, depending on volume of surface traffic and consistency of routine maintenance program. This product is not designed to restore the original shine, but is intended to maintain and protect the original shine. This can be purchased from most Home Centers or through your local Professional Floor Covering Dealer.

Heavy-Duty Stone Cleaning:

When some areas have been neglected, you will need to use a heavy-duty non-hazardous and non-polluting stone cleaner and degreaser to effectively remove dirt, grease, grime, waxes and floor finishes. An optimal heavy-duty cleaner should contain low percentages of volatile organic compounds. These cleaning products are concentrated and designed to deep clean the stone without damaging it. Apply the solution of the cleaner and water mixed to manufacturer instructions to the stone surface with a sponge or mop. Allow setting for manufacturer-specified amount of time. Agitate with a sponge, synthetic mop, and soft bristle brush or through the use of a floor-scrubbing machine. Mop up dirty solution and buff dry. Be sure to change out the cleaning solution every 100 square feet to avoid reintroducing dirty water during the cleaning process. Rinse thoroughly with clean water when finished. After cleaning you may apply the Spray-Buff wax-type floor finish to enhance the natural shine.

Stain Removal:

Stone poultice will remove stains and grout haze from stone. Poultice is a fine, nonacidic, absorptive clay cleaning powder that removes deep-set oil stains, grease and light cementitious grout haze from polished and unpolished natural stone.

CAUTION: *Poultice may dull the shine of the polished stone. If this occurs you will need to use a marble polish to restore the natural shine.*

Restoration:

If a marble finish has become dull, scratched or etched, you can restore the natural shine through the use of a marble polish. Some marble polishes are available in kits. The process can be enhanced with the use of floor buffing machines. The process is generally a re-crystallization process to remove fine scratches and restore the original shine and polish to the stone. This is not an application of a topical sealer or wax to cover-up damaged or worn surfaces.

NATURAL STONE - NEW INSTALLATIONS

Sealing is strongly recommended for newly installed marble and other natural stone to provide maximum below surface stain protection. Consult your Professional Floor Covering Dealer or Home Center Store to ensure that you select a high quality sealer to protect your natural stone. Immediately after natural stone has been installed and grouted, the new installation should be covered with brown paper to protect it from debris during the remaining construction process. The protective brown paper should remain in place until construction is completed and the area is opened to intended (post-construction) use.

Pre-grout Sealing:

A non-sanded grout is strongly recommended for natural stone installations due to the narrow grout joints customarily preferred. This type of grout has very fine particles of cement, polymers and color pigments that can penetrate the microscopic pores of the stone surface where they become trapped and appear as a stain in the stone. Therefore, all travertine, slate, tumbled stone and honed/flamed/unpolished granite should be sealed prior to the grouting process to protect them from staining. The application of a good quality sealer should be used as a grout sealer and applied again as the final sealing process once the installation is finished.

Sealing:

A premium natural look penetrating/impregnating sealer is the normal choice on polished or honed marble, limestone, granite, or where the natural color of a slate is desired. A stone enhancer sealer is often used on tumbled, antique stones or on slate where a darker, enriched or highlighted character is desired. When choosing either one of these types of sealers, make sure the brand you have chosen is formulated to provide maximum stain protection for stone products. Stone products should be tested periodically per manufacturer's instructions to insure that the sealer is working effectively.

Penetrating/impregnating stone sealers are a no-sheen, natural look sealer that can be water-based or solvent-based, good for interior and exterior applications. Most quality sealers of this type are rated to protect the stone for several years.

Stone enhancer sealers are also a no-sheen, penetrating/impregnating sealer that is formulated to darken, enrich and highlight the natural color and beauty of stone products. They will rejuvenate and improve the appearance of worn and weathered stone. Always test loose pieces of stone to ensure desired effect with enhancing sealers. However, they will also darken the color of grout joints. They are, generally, suitable for interior and exterior use, and rated to protect the stone for several years.

Always reference manufacturer's literature for specific information on the duration of the sealer's protection and make sure that the sealer is applied in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Finishing:

A stone floor finish should be applied to a polished natural stone floor only. This type of product will help enhance the shine and provide a protective coating for "soft" or polished marbles. Verify the finish is a wax-type finish designed to add luster and enhance the beauty of sealed and polished natural stone only. A topical finish may change the appearance and performance of your stone, so always test a small area first. **Application of topical sealer or wax should never be done as an attempt to add a shine to a honed, scratched or non-polished stone product. This will only create maintenance and/or slip resistance problem.**

SALTILLO

SALTILLO TILE - ROUTINE CARE

Soft clay tiles are categorized as specialty use products, and as such they are generally not governed by the same requirements as glazed or unglazed ceramic tile. These products will require some type of

topical sealer protection. These sealers are designed to provide stain resistance and a durable finish to protect clay tile against wear. Pre-sealing the tile prior to grouting will act as a pre-grout sealer, provided it is applied over a clean tile surface. An additional final coat over the grouted floor will complete the sealing process along with providing the final grout stain protection.

There are two common types of sealers used today for sealing specialty tiles. The first is a water-based blend of acrylic polymers. This product allows for moisture vapor transmission, and it can be reapplied over itself, without stripping or removing the old sealer when the original application has become worn. The second type is a solvent-based sealer. Solvent-based sealers are not as forgiving after they have become worn, they must be stripped and removed prior to reapplication. Both types should be UV stable, which means the ultra violet rays from the sun should not break them down. You should always follow the manufacturer's instructions for use, maintenance and precautions.

The expected wear of the topical sealer will vary depending on the hardness, surface texture, type or area, usage, and type of maintenance products used. However, the average expected use life of the sealer, when properly prepared, is a maximum of 3 years. Harsh cleaning methods, high-alkaline or solvent-based cleaners can significantly lower the expected life of the sealer. Concentrated tile cleaners are recommended for routine cleaning.

Maintenance Cleaning:

Highly alkaline, acidic, ammoniated, abrasive cleaners and/or bleach may break down the sealer, adversely affecting repellency and may not be good for the tile or grout. Use neutral cleaners specially formulated for tile and grout that are low VOC, non-hazardous and non-polluting.

For routine cleaning:

We recommend DuPont™ StoneTech® Professional Stone & Tile Cleaner.

- Mix 2 ounces of Stone & Tile Cleaner concentrate in 1 gallon of warm or hot water. (Note: One gallon of concentrate makes 64 gallons of cleaning solution.)
- Apply mixed solution with a damp mop, sponge or appropriate professional cleaning equipment.

- Clean entire area with mop, changing mop water often to ensure that soil is not re-deposited. Wipe or rinse cleaned area.
- Let area dry completely before using.

You may also use DuPont™ StoneTech® Professional Stone & Tile Cleaner in the ready-to-use spray bottle or wipes.

Re-Sealing and Protecting:

For interior surfaces, resealing should be performed every 3-5 years. For exterior surfaces, resealing should be performed every 1-3 years. Terrazzo surfaces must be sealed to prevent or minimize staining. Leaving terrazzo untreated may greatly hinder the complete removal of stains in the future. We recommend the use of a heavy-duty sealant that is low in VOC content and does not contain any hazardous materials.

ONE QUARTZ SURFACES

ONE QUARTZ SURFACES - ROUTINE CARE

- One Quartz Surfaces are virtually maintenance free and can be cleaned with extreme ease.
- Common household spills – such as, tea, coffee, lemon juice, soda, fruit, vegetable juice, olive oil or grease spills – are easily removed and the surface restored to its original appearance.
- Some One Quartz Surface colors and finishes liked honed, matt, etc., are more sensitive to grease or finger-prints and may require extra care during routine cleaning.
- Quartz is one of the hardest materials in nature, which is your assurance that your One Quartz Surfaces will not easily scratch or chip. The use of a cutting board is nevertheless recommended.
- To maintain the natural beauty of One Quartz Surfaces, do not place hot skillets or roasting pans directly onto the surface but use a trivet instead.
- For routine cleaning, use a damp cloth or paper towel and, if necessary, a small amount of mild soap. Once clean, rinse and dry surface thoroughly.
- For stubborn or dried spills, use a nonabrasive cleaning pad such as a white 3M Scotch-Brite® scrub pad combined with a small amount of mild soap or specialized stone cleaner. One Quartz Surfaces floors in high traffic areas should be cleaned daily with a clean, dry dust mop or soft bristle broom.
- One Quartz Surfaces floors in low traffic areas can be cleaned less frequently using the same method. Spills should be spot treated with the use of a damp mop or

cloth towel and, if necessary, a small amount of mild soap or specialized stone cleaner.

- A floor machine such as a slow speed buffer or walk behind scrubber can be used for larger commercial environments. Be sure to rinse thoroughly to remove any haze residue that may diminish the shine and beauty of the floor.
- For Heavily soiled floors, as with any floor, it makes sense to clean up spills as soon as possible.
- Avoid exposing One Quartz Surfaces to chemicals and solvents, especially paint removers or furniture strippers containing trichlorethane or methylene chloride. Keep nail polish remover, bleach or cleansers that contain bleach, bluing, permanent markers or inks. While casual exposure to alkaline materials will not damage One Quartz Surfaces, highly alkaline (high-pH) cleansers are not recommended when cleaning One Quartz Surfaces. If any of the substances listed above come into contact with One Quartz Surfaces, rinse the exposed surface immediately and thoroughly with plenty of clean water.
- Do not use strong abrasive and/or alkaline cleaning products. Always follow the manufacturers' dilution instructions and recommendations.

MANUFACTURED STONE

Manufactured Stone – Routine Care

Care should be taken to avoid smearing mortar on the surface of the veneers. Accidental smears should be removed using a dry whisk broom only after mortar has dried completely. Never use a wet brush or wire brush. Do not power-wash, sandblast, use acid or acid-based products. Dirt or other materials may be removed with a strong solution of granulated soap or detergent and water with a bristle brush. Do not use a wire brush as it will cause damage to the surface. Rinse immediately with fresh water. Regular maintenance only requires to rinse the wall with water occasionally to remove dirt.

Sealing:

Seal with a breathable, non-film forming masonry sealer, to prevent staining from rusty downspouts, splattered mud, etc. Sealing is strongly recommended for dry-stacked applications and/or for harsh environments.

POLISHED PORCELAIN

Recommended Sealers Pre-Grout sold through Dal Tile stores may include ...

- DuPont Stone Tech Professional Bullet Proof (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).
- Aqua Mix Ultra-Solv (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).

Recommended Sealers Post-Grout sold through Dal Tile stores may include ...

- DuPont Stone Tech Professional Impregnator Pro (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).
- Aqua Mix Sealers Choice Gold (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).

IMPORTANT: Always use the same sealer when applying both before and after grouting. Never mix water-based sealers with solvent-based sealers on the same tiles.

Fully polished impervious porcelain tile is achieved by mechanically changing the surface from matte | natural to a honed or high polished finish. Polished Colorbody® porcelain is achieved by mechanically changing the glaze surface from matte to light, honed or high polish finish. This process creates a microporosity on the face of the tile. The tile itself is still technically sound porcelain with the same characteristics expected of high quality impervious tile.

The surface, however, may possibly require added protection to assure clean-ability and ease of ongoing maintenance under a range of conditions including but not limited to:

- grout haze removal
- construction chemicals and dirt
- maintenance | solvent based cleaning materials
- exposure to rubber containing solvent based materials
- acid based materials

All of the above can result in hazing, spotting, etching or general staining of the polished tile surface.

We recommend the use of a sealer on fully polished, impervious porcelain and polished glaze porcelain tile prior to grouting. We strongly caution against the use of acid based or solvent based chemicals for cleaning or construction maintenance on fully polished impervious or polished glaze porcelain tile. The use of such products may damage the floor.

With proper installation techniques, preventative care and effective maintenance procedures, fully polished impervious porcelain and polished glaze porcelain tile is a durable, high value, long lasting flooring option for most commercial and residential spaces.

Recommended Stain Remover sold through Dal Tile stores may include:

- DuPont Stone Tech KlenzAll (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).
- Aqua Mix Sealer and Coating Remover (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).

Polished tile can be slippery when wet. Please refer to our usage and maintenance recommendation on our website and catalog for all porcelain products. www.daltile.com.

UNGLAZED/MATTE/TEXTURED PORCELAIN

Porcelain tiles with a matte or textured surface may contain structure or micro texture for slip resistance and visual enhancement. We recommend the use of a grout release prior to grouting for these products to enhance the efficacy of removal of the various types of grout, latex modified grout, epoxy grout used in the market today.

Recommended Grout Release products sold through Dal-Tile stores may include ...

- DuPont Stone Tech Professional Impregnator Pro (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).
- Aqua Mix Grout Release (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).

Recommended Sealer products sold through Dal-Tile stores may include ...

- DuPont Stone Tech Professional Impregnator Pro (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).
- Aqua Mix Ultra-Solv (Follow manufacturer instructions for application process).

Additional Installation Tips

- Sealers may require more than one application depending on the tile and grout utilized. (Apply on a test area to validate prior to grouting).
- Penetrating sealers usually require only one application and should not be left to dry on the tile surface. (Remove excess as material is being applied).

- Remove excess sealer from the tile surface by buffing with a clean dry towel. (Follow manufacturer instructions).
- Allow the sealers and /or grout release products to cure on the tile before grouting. (Follow manufacturer instructions).

Please contact your local Dal-Tile Representative, NA Manager or the National Account Support team at the contact numbers or email below:

Phone: 214.309.3408 | 877.556.5728
Email: national.accounts@daltile.com

DISCLAIMER

Dal-Tile does not manufacture installation products or tile cleaning/maintenance products. Dal-Tile provides the information contained herein to its customers as an information source only. The products identified in this website may have chemicals that cause reactions in certain individuals. Dal-Tile strongly recommends the use of safety glasses, respirators (masks) and gloves in handling any materials that contain chemicals.

Dal-Tile, in keeping with its Healthy Planet objectives, recommends the proper disposal of any scrap tile/stone, installation and/or maintenance products discussed herein.

Please contact the manufacturer directly, PRIOR to usage, to obtain proper handling instructions, application instructions and warnings concerning potential health hazards for any product contemplated for use. Dal-Tile also strongly recommends that you ALWAYS test a small area PRIOR to usage of any installation/tile/cleaning/maintenance product to determine whether the product you are about to apply serves its intended purpose.

Natural stone has its own unique qualities that not only distinguish it from man-made materials, but also should be considered in selecting it for a particular project. Stone is not manufactured; it is a product of nature. Blocks are removed from the quarry, slabs are cut from these blocks, and the slabs are further fabricated into the final stone to be installed. Each block is different; each slab is different. Skillful blending or matching of the dimension stone blocks, veneer panels, tops, etc., results in a beautiful blending of nature's variety and man's design. "Uniformity of material," when applied to natural stone, is a term of relative value that needs to be understood when making a selection.

To ensure your natural stone products will provide you with a lifetime of aesthetics and utility, proper maintenance is crucial. Natural stone products are porous by nature and require a different maintenance program than traditional ceramic tile.