

Tile Care and Maintenance

Contaminants and spills on a glazed ceramic tile are, generally, easier to clean than other, more impervious surfaces. **Glazed tile products should be cleaned routinely with an all-purpose, non oil-based 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 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.

Ceramic Tile - New Installation

Immediately after tile has been properly installed and grouted, the new installation should be covered with brown paper to protect it from debris during the remaining construction process. The grout joints should be dampened daily with clear water using a clean sponge or mop during the first 7 days. This procedure facilitates the grout cure and color lock. The paper will allow for two important things: (1) to protect the newly installed tile grout and (2) to allow moisture to escape from the grout as it cures further protecting the look and utility of the floor. This is an important step in achieving color consistency. Never use plastic or non-absorbent materials to protect freshly installed tile. These types of non-absorbent products will trap moisture causing the grout to discolor during the curing period. The protective brown paper should remain until construction is complete and the floor is opened for intended (post-construction) use.

Pre-Grout Treatments:

Some unglazed tile products have rough or open pores in the surface that can trap grout particles during the grouting process. These grout particles become difficult to remove and can leave a stained appearance on the surface of the tile. For these products it is necessary to seal them with a pre-grout sealer to protect them from trapping the microscopic grout particles. This will also ease the grout clean-up process. Industry guidelines recommend that, prior to grouting you seal terra cotta, saltillo, porcelain, and brick or quarry pavers with a high quality penetrating/impregnating sealer or with a temporary grout release sealer. Always test an area first to obtain best results. Glazed wall or floor tile products do not need to be sealed prior to grouting.

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 ran 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.

CERAMIC TILE - GROUT CARE

Grout Maintenance:

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. 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.

Tile Maintenance Program for Unglazed Porcelain Ceramics Mosaics

The following procedures are recommended for the proper care and maintenance of UNGLAZED POCELIAN CERAMICS MOSIACS.

Commercial Applications:

1. Daily/Weekly Maintenance

For general cleaning, use a solution of water and soapless detergent instead of an all-purpose water-based cleaner. Wash walls as needed. Damp mop or auto scrub floors daily. Dust mop daily.

2. Deep Cleaning and or Renovation

To remove hard water deposits, mildew, soap film, etc., use an extra strength cleaner or a tile and grout cleaner/renovator.

Heavy Duty Floor Scrubbing (Weekly)

At least once a week, and more often if necessary, the floor should be scrubbed with a scrub brush and a general purpose cleaner. For renovating extremely dirty floors and periodically, on an "as-needed" basis, a single brush floor machine equipped with a scrubbing brush is recommended.

1. Sweep entire of floor to be scrubbed with a broom. Use a dust pan to pick up dirt and debris.
2. Fill a utility bucket to the gallon mark with hot water and add four ounces of a water-based cleaning solution to the utility bucket.
3. Place wet floor signs around the area to be scrubbed.
4. Pour approximately one quart of the cleaning solution onto the floor.
5. Scrub a 10ft. area with the swivel scrub brush by applying download pressure in a back-and-forth motion. Pay particular attention to the grout joints.
6. After the section has been scrubbed in both directions, push the cleaning solution with the water wand (squeegee) to the nearest drain floor. NOTE: For the faster results, pick up scrubbing solution with wet vac.
7. Fill a clean mop bucket with a clean water and damp mop rinse the section which has just been scrubbed. Be sure to change rinse water frequently to help ensure all residue is removed.
8. Following the procedures outlined above, continue until the entire floor has been scrubbed and rinsed.

ABOVE ALL ELSE, REMEMBER YOU CAN'T CLAEEN A FLOOR WITH DIRTY EQUIPMENT. Rinse mop head thoroughly by running clean, hot water through mop head at the mop sink. Twist the mop in the wringer and wring out as much water as possible. Hang mop upside down to air dry. Always rinse out mop bucket and wringer with clean water. A floor mat

should be placed at eternal entrance/exits to help to help trap abrasive soil and dirt as well as water before it is tracked throughout the facility.

Maintenance Recommendations for Restaurant/ Cafeteria Service and Dining Areas

For unglazed semi-vitreous quarry tile installed in restaurants/cafeteria service and dining areas, refer to the procedures listed below:

Equipment:

1. Broom
2. Dust Pan
3. Clean Synthetic Mop and Mop Handle
4. Wet Floor Signs
5. Clean Mop Bucket and Wringer
6. General Purpose Cleaner
7. Measuring Cup
8. Swivel Scrub Brush
9. Wood Handle for Scrub Brush
10. Utility Bucket
11. Water Wand and Handle

Daily Cleaning:

1. Sweep entire area of floor to be cleaned with a broom. Use dust pan to pick up dirt and debris.
2. Fill clean mop bucket with 4 gallons of clean, hot water and add eight ounces of general purpose cleaner to the mop bucket.
3. Place wet floor signs on area to be cleaned.
4. Dip a clean synthetic mop into the cleaning solution. Wring out the mop to the point it's well saturated, but not dripping. **IMPORTANT: Do not use the kitchen mop to clean the dining area.**
5. Mop a 10ft. by 10ft. area in a figure 8 motion. Turn mop over as one side becomes soiled.
6. Place mop back into mop bucket, moving it up and down in the cleaning solution. Wring out excess.
7. Mop the next 10ft. by 10ft. area
8. Continue this same procedure until the entire floor is clean. Remember to change the cleaning solution as it becomes dirty.
9. Be sure to clean all comers and door jams.
10. When finished, thoroughly rinse mop, bucket and wringer with clean water. Returned cleaned equipment to the proper storage area.

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