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# TILE CARE

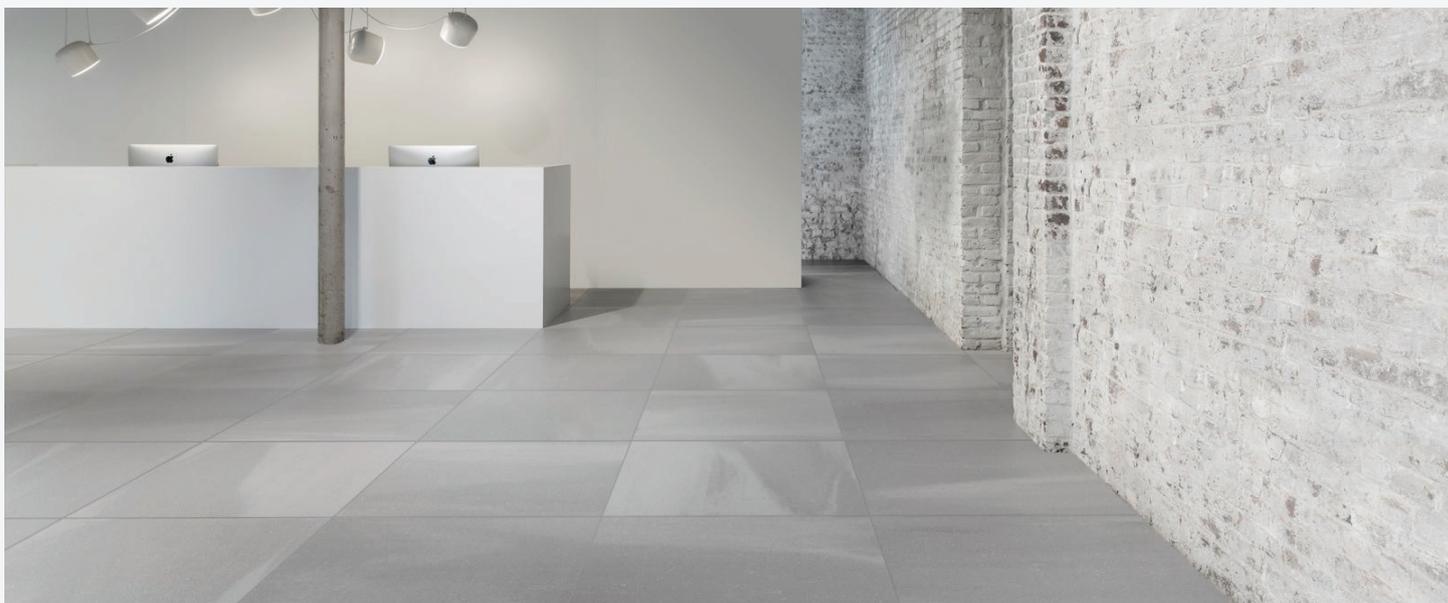
# GLAZED CERAMIC TILE

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## General Information

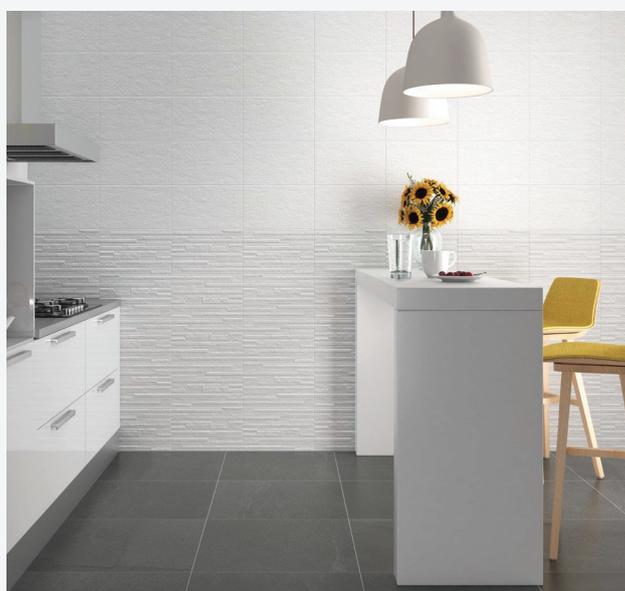
Ceramic tile is made of mixtures of clay, powders, earth, and water. As the ingredients are mixed, they are pressed into the shape of a tile. The tile is placed in a kiln, a high-temperature oven. After they are done baking in the kiln, most ceramic tiles are covered with a glaze and placed back in the oven. The glaze is glass material that melts on the surface of the tile during the heating process, and it sticks to the surface of the tile when it cools down. The purpose of the glaze is to make the tile water-resistant or for decoration. The glaze can also be designed to be certain colors or textures, enhancing the design of the tile. When the glaze is baked onto the ceramic tile, it will enhance the visual appearance and overall appeal of the tile. The type of glaze added to the tile can affect the density and hardness of the tile. Lighter glazes make tiles harder and more durable than darker glazes.

Glazed ceramic is one of the preferred tiles used in wet areas such as bathrooms, restrooms, and outdoor swimming pools. The benefits of glazed ceramic tile are that they are scratch-resistant, stain-resistant, fire-resistant, slip-resistant, and easy to clean. They come in many different colors and decors, so they are a perfect choice for indoor decorating. However, one downside is that the glaze also shows more scratches.



## Maintenance

Glazed ceramic tiles are so popular because they are easy to care for. Glazed ceramic tiles need to be properly maintained. When soil, residue, and soap detergents build up, they can ruin your tile. Gently scrub your tiles with a solution of warm water and pH neutral liquid to keep them clean and beautiful. Be careful as you are scrubbing; if the glaze on your tiles is poor quality, they may not be scratch-resistant.



## Removal of Floor Finishes, Waxes, and Sealers

If you need to remove floor finishes, floor waxes, or topical sealers from your tiles, use an Adhesive Remover and a Tile Sealer. Be careful when you are scrubbing your tiles. Make sure always to use rags and sponges without rough surfaces, as this may scratch the finish on your tile. You should always test the remover on a small area first before applying it to your whole tile. Apply the adhesive remover liberally until the residue softens and you can remove it with a sponge. Rinse with clean water.



# GLAZED PORCELAIN TILES

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## General Information

Glazed porcelain tiles are also made with ceramic material, and they are made the same way as glazed ceramic tiles. The only difference is that the glaze is heated when it is added to the tile, making it stronger and giving it a more polished look. Remember that glazed porcelain tiles are not made of authentic porcelain: they are ceramic tiles covered with a heated, colored glaze to make them sturdier and visually appealing than their glazed ceramic tile counterparts. These tiles are preferred for their beauty, but they are the best to be avoided in commercial establishments because they can be slippery.



## Maintenance

Glazed porcelain tiles resist bacteria, making it one of the easiest tiles to clean. A simple solution of  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup white vinegar and 2 gallons of water is the best option for basic cleaning. If you need a cleanser that is a little stronger, detergents that are safe for porcelain glaze are easy to find, and they are usually labeled. However, dry cleaning or steam cleaning your porcelain tiles without using detergents is always best so that you will not damage the glaze and that you will not slip and fall while cleaning. Always make sure to dry your tiles after cleaning: this will make sure that water spots will not develop and they will shine like they are brand-new.

# POLISHED PORCELAIN TILES

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## General Information

A polished porcelain tile is a regular ceramic tile that is polished, which can create the appearance of a glaze. Polished porcelain tiles are made of the same material as glazed porcelain tiles. They are more fragile because the heated glaze isn't added to the tile, giving it less strength and protection. They are perfect for many indoor and outdoor spaces, including balconies, patios, bathrooms, and wall decorations. Their perfectly polished appearance makes them preferred for many interior and exterior decorating schemes. Another reason polished porcelain tiles are so popular is that they are usually much more affordable than glazed porcelain tiles.



## Maintenance

Polished porcelain tiles are very easy to clean and require hardly any maintenance at all. Sweep your polished porcelain tile floors with a dry, clean dust mop to remove dirt. All you need is warm water to clean your polished porcelain tiles to make them shine again. You can prevent staining on your polished porcelain tiles by immediately wiping up anything that you spill on it that might stain it, such as red wine, tomato sauce, fruit juice, soda, etc. You may need to make sure that your tiles are safe against the haze of grout removal as well as exposure to acid-based products, maintenance-based products, construction chemicals, and dirt.

# UNGLAZED/MATTE PORCELAIN TILES

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## General Information

Unglazed or matte porcelain tiles are made of ceramic and they don't include any type of glaze. They are stronger than other porcelain tiles because they are thicker. They are heated up to a maximum of 2,600 degrees Fahrenheit when they are baked. Some are polished, but most are not, giving them a more rustic look. Many people prefer to use them as outdoor decoration or in walkways because they are rougher and thicker than most porcelain tiles. They are naturally beautiful and scratch-resistant, so they are mostly used outdoors, but they can also be used for indoor decoration, too. Their versatility makes them highly desirable as decoration: unglazed/matte porcelain tiles come in whole tiles or in mosaic patterns.



## Maintenance

### Tile

Since unglazed/matte tiles are rougher and thicker, they are also harder to clean. Since most unglazed/matte porcelain tiles are textured, they require a little extra work to get them clean. Sweep your tiles with a soft-bristle broom in multiple directions to remove all excess dirt and grime. Mix a cleanser with a neutral pH level with warm water and let it sit on your tile for at least five to ten minutes, depending on how soiled your tiles are. Using a soft-bristled brush, scrub your tiles in multiple directions to ensure that they are clean. Rinse your tiles with warm water. High traffic locations may require this process once a day and regular wet-mopping.

We highly recommend using grout release before grouting to ensure the removal of spots.



## Mosaic

### General cleaning

Mosaic tile should be cared for to prevent buildup of soap detergents, dirt, grease and more. They are easy to clean: you can rinse the dirt with clear water and a mild detergent. Usually, the milder the detergent, the better. Always rinse the solution with warm water and dry them after cleaning.

### Pre-Grout Sealing

You should use a non-sanded grout for installations because narrow grout joints are preferred. Once you have grouted your mosaic tiles, you should clean your tiles because the residue can ruin the appearance of your new installation. Each grout has its own cleanup instructions, but in general, you will need a grout stripper, which is a solution that you will wipe on top of your mosaic tiles. Wipe the solution away with a wet sponge after letting it soak for a few minutes.



# NATURAL STONE

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## General Information

Unlike porcelain and ceramic tiles, natural stone tiles are already existing stones that are shaped to fit the form of a tile. Different stone tiles have different characteristics based on the type of rock from which they are made. They are the strongest tiles available, and they will last a long time. Natural stone tile's strength makes them the perfect choice for flooring tiles or outdoor decoration. There is a wide selection of natural stone tiles that would be suited for indoor or outdoor flooring or walkways. It is perfectly suited for gardens, patios, and garages.

Natural stone tiles aren't just for outdoor use. Many contemporary homes use them as a decorative feature on an accent wall. They provide a different look that many decorators are utilizing in their homes.

One characteristic of natural stone is that it does not retain heat. Wherever you implement it, you can expect the space to be a bit cooler. It is used in many outdoor kitchens for this reason – to cool down the space easier.



## Maintenance

You need a proper maintenance plan to care for your natural stone tiles. You can only use certain cleansers on natural stone tiles. Many tile cleansers can damage and dull your tiles.

You can prevent scratching and damage to your natural stone flooring by using a dust mop daily to remove dirt and grime from your floors. Using an area rug or mat can help protect your floors as well. Make sure the bottom of your area rug is slip-resistant to prevent injury.

Even if your natural stone tiles are sealed, they can still stain if they are in contact with materials that can stain them for long periods of time. Wipe up spills that have the potential to stain your stone tiles. Always use coasters when placing your drinks down on stone surfaces. Spills involving acidic foods and drinks, such as sodas, coffee, tomato sauce, and tea should be cleaned immediately with gentle soap and water.

## Stone Cleaners

Only acid-free cleansers with concentrated neutral pH levels are safe to use on natural stone tile. If this is not available to you, a diluted mixture of dishwashing liquid and warm water will clean your natural stone tiles. Neither solution will strip the wax coating. Before cleaning, dampen your tiles with water. Carefully wipe up any excess cleaning solution when you are finished, as the excess cleaner will streak and leave a visible film on your natural stone tiles. Avoid using products that contain acidic properties such as lemon or vinegar. When you are cleaning your tiles, you should change your water often. Once you are finished, you can polish your stone tile with a wax spray buff.

## Heavy-Duty Stone Cleaning

For heavy-duty cleaning jobs, use non-hazardous stone cleansers to remove dirt and grime. Properly dilute the solution with water. Change your solution every 100 square feet so that you aren't using dirty water to clean your tiles. Mop up the solution well so that the stone will dry, avoiding slips and falls.



## Stone Mosaic



### Routine Care

Natural Stone products are porous, and many of the accepted cleaners will damage the surface. Be careful when choosing your cleanser and ensure that it is made for natural stone.

### Stone Cleaners

Only natural stone cleansers can be used on stone mosaic. Dampen the surface with water before applying the cleanser.

### Stain Removal

If you have stains on your natural stone mosaic, you can use a stone poultice to remove them. If this dulls the shine, you can use a marble polisher to restore it.

### Restoration

Use marble polish to restore the shine to your natural stone mosaic.

### Sealing

There are two types of sealers: water-based or solvent-based. Both can be used for indoor and outdoor applications. You should always test your sealer on a loose piece of natural stone first before applying it to your surfaces to see if it is appropriate for your space.

### Restoration

Finishing products should only be applied to the polished natural stone. They will enhance the shine of your natural stone tiles and make them more beautiful.

# UNGLAZED TILES

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## General Information

With the many different types of unglazed tiles available today, the type of unglazed tile you choose for your project will depend on several factors such as your budget and your personal preference. The cheapest ceramic tiles available on the market are unglazed ceramic tiles, which are ceramic tiles that do not undergo the glazing process after they are baked. They are rougher and thicker than glazed ceramic tiles, but they are appropriate for many different spaces, especially areas that deal with heavy foot traffic. They are particularly useful for places where you are looking to have flooring that is slip-resistant that could easily get wet: kitchens, laundry rooms, outdoor walkways, etc. Unglazed tiles will actually make your space safer than other tiles because of their slip-resistant characteristics.

Unglazed tiles are preferred by commercial establishments such as restaurants because they are flooring options that are easy to maintain and they are scratch-resistant. Even though unglazed tiles can be used as decoration, many people would prefer glazed tiles for this purpose because they are more aesthetically pleasing.

In general, tiles are the preferred method for flooring because they have many advantages, but one disadvantage that they have is that they are a little harder to keep clean and easier to stain than other tiles because they don't have the added protection of the glaze.



## Maintenance

Unglazed tiles have a rougher surface, so they will be harder to clean and will require a little more effort. Using the right cleanser is important. Make sure you don't ruin the grout is just as important because that could ruin the entire appeal of your flooring. To prevent staining on your tiles, use a wax sealant after you install your unglazed tile flooring.

## Grout Maintenance

### Impregnating Sealer

Many tile flooring installations use cementation grouts. After the installation, the grout must be properly sealed with a silicone-free impregnating sealer within 72 hours of installation. Make sure that you only seal the grout and not the tiles or the glazed floor.

## Maintenance

Neither sealing nor grouting is going to protect your surface from buildup forever. To properly maintain your space, the grout has to be regularly removed, and the space has to be cleaned with proper detergents before the grout is replaced.

## Grout Color restoration

To restore the color of your grout, you can use a grout stain. It is an epoxy-based product that is designed to penetrate the grout to reset the color and seal the surface.

## Clean up after the grout

After grouting, you will have "grout haze" over your flooring that will need to be removed. Use sulfamic acid to remove grout haze from your surfaces and make them beautiful again. Sulfamic acid can be purchased in powder form, which is then mixed with water so you can use different strengths depending on your surface.

