

# P O R C E L A I N T I L E S

## Installation Guide - Mosaic Tiles

Please ensure you have read all the information provided  
in this document prior to arranging delivery.

## Mosaic

Porcelain and glass mosaic tiles are available in a number of different chip sizes, from 16 mm to 60 mm, and typically come mounted on 300 x 300 x 9.5 mm fibreglass mesh-bound sheets. Part of the beauty of mosaic tiles is the fact that there is less cutting involved in comparison to using larger tiles. Cuts to the mosaic tile sheets may still need to be made and we recommend that you either cut from the back through the mesh with a utility knife or from the top with scissors.



Try to limit cutting the actual tiles where possible, but if you do need to cut porcelain or glass mosaic, use a manual rail cutter or high quality tile nibbler. Sharp or rough edges should be smoothed and finished with a diamond buffer or sanding pad.

Carefully clean the surface to be tiled. It must be totally flat and free from contamination including wax and oils and other impurities that might prevent adhesion. Holes and leaks in the substrate should be sealed. Floor drains etc. should be protected. If you are tiling over an existing concrete base, seal the base with an acrylic primer, to ensure a good bond between the thinset and the subfloor.

If you are tiling a shower tray or wet room ensure that your subfloor is primed with a waterproof membrane. This is usually painted on, but can also be installed using a lightweight tile backer board. Also do not forget to allow for adequate drainage. This will prevent problems with standing water while the shower is in use and reduce moisture levels when the shower is off. This will also help to prevent mould and mildew. The recommended minimum slope for a shower floor is about 4 percent, or a 12 mm drop every 30 cm, from the shower walls to the drain.

For tiling on more complex structures we recommend a universal substrate specifically for waterproof assemblies. Schlüter KERDI-BOARD can be used to tile on walls of any kind and has a grooved version (KERDI-BOARD-V) for creating rounded and curved structures and surfaces.

### Installing mosaic tiles

If installing over a large surface, plan how you will lay the mosaic tile sheets. Try to stagger the join of the sheets, avoiding continuous lines, so that the tiles appear to be individual mosaic, rather than part of a clearly discernible square backing sheet.

Use a thinset mortar to attach mosaic tiles. Take care to use the correct thickness of thinset as spreading it too thickly will risk it ooze through between the tiles. Build up and then use as little as will adhere the mosaic to the surface. You can test on a sample area to be sure. Use a 6 mm square notched trowel to apply the thinset mortar. Lay the mosaic sheet carefully into the desired position and with the thick rubber surface of a grout applicator or similar, apply even but gentle pressure across the surface of the tiles. Be careful not to allow the thinset to ooze above the surface of the tile. If you see areas where excess thinset has oozed through, clean this off with a thin pointed object while still wet.

Use tile spacers to ensure equal distance between tile chips and each tile sheet. Check your levels and ensure the tile surface is smooth and the sheets are embedded evenly in the thinset. Allow to dry for 24 hours.



Once the thinset is dry, you can begin to grout the tiled surface. Choose your grout colour carefully as this can have a dramatic impact on the overall look of the area.

Grout a small area at a time and apply sparingly. Clean the surface thoroughly with a lightly damp sponge to remove the excess grout. Do not saturate the tile surface as additional water will weaken the grout. After grouting do not walk on the floor for at least 24 hours.



**Never use mastic to fix mosaic tiles for shower or wet room projects.**

## Sealing

Porcelain tiles are UV, scratch, stain and thermal-shock resistant and 100% non-porous and therefore do not require sealing products. But while porcelain tiles are non-absorbent and stain resistant, the grout that surrounds the tile may not be. Cement based grout is a porous product that can absorb water and stain. We therefore advise that all cement based grout joints are protected using a dedicated grout sealer.

Spray the sealer directly onto the clean and dry surface at a distance of roughly 10-15 cm away from the application point. Rub into the grouting with a sponge to improve penetration. Fully remove any residues within 5 minutes, either manually using a clean cloth or absorbent paper towel. Treat a small area at a time (1m<sup>2</sup>). The floor can be walked on after 8 hours. Any remaining residues on the surface can be removed with a mild cleaning solution.

For most grouts, sealers will not affect its appearance, but we recommend testing the sealer on an inconspicuous area 24 hours before you do the rest of the grout to check for colour fastness. Carefully apply the sealer onto the grout following the manufacturers instructions.

Take care to only saturate the grout with the sealer, not the porcelain tiles. If some sealer does get on the porcelain, wipe it away immediately with a soft cloth. If this is the first time you have sealed the grout, apply a second coat of sealer at this time. Once the second coat has penetrated, wipe away the excess grout with a lint-free cloth. Continue buffing the grout and the tiles until they feel dry and not tacky to the touch. The sealer will be fully effective after 48 hours, protect the surface against water, oil, etc. during this time.

We recommend grout sealing products from Fila Solutions and Lithofin.  
For more information go to [www.porcelain-tiles.co.uk/support/grout/](http://www.porcelain-tiles.co.uk/support/grout/)



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## Cleaning

Porcelain tiles are manufactured from extremely pure clays and minerals that are fired at very high temperatures. They are harder, stronger and more durable than any natural stone and have superior chip resistance and an extremely low level of water absorption. A comprehensive cleaning routine will help to keep your tiles in tip-top condition and ensure their continued beauty for years to come.

Post-laying cleaning is critical after on-site works. Inadequate or delayed removal of the grouting used on the joints can leave marks that are difficult to remove and creates a cement film that can absorb all types of dirt, giving the impression that the tile surface has become dirty.

To remove cement based grouts, wash the floor with specialist cleaning detergent which is aimed at removing excess grout residue, post-application deposits and building grime. Always follow the manufacturers instructions. For stubborn stains or advice on specific detergents contact our After Sales department.

General cleaning of porcelain tiles is a relatively simple process. Regular cleaning (once or twice weekly) is the best way of preventing a build-up of dirt and unsightly stains. This can be accomplished with a simple sweep and vacuum to remove debris, followed by mopping sparingly with warm water. Dry with a microfibre cloth and if your surface is polished, buff to restore the brilliant finish.

Before using any new cleaning product or method, make sure to test it on a small, inconspicuous area of tiling first. Avoid using excessively acidic or basic products, and do not use abrasive sponges. We do not recommend the use of polishing machines or waxes.

Although porcelain tiles are stain resistant, care must be taken to immediately clean any stain, especially on polished bench tops. The best way to ensure stubborn marks do not occur is to wash away stains such as red wine, food and drinks, using warm water and a soft cloth. For stubborn stains use a non-abrasive cleaning product, sugar soap or normal house cleaning products. Do not use cleaners that have strong alkaline pH levels and thoroughly rinse the surface with clean water to remove residue. It is also important to note that hydrofluoric acid (HF) and its derivatives can irreparably damage porcelain stoneware.

We strongly advise against the use of waxes, oily soaps and impregnating products as their application is unnecessary. Please note that some off-the-shelf detergents contain waxes and additives which can deposit a shiny coating on the surface, affecting the slip resistance properties of the tile.

We recommend cleaning products from Fila Solutions and Lithofin.  
For more information go to [www.porcelain-tiles.co.uk/support/cleaning/](http://www.porcelain-tiles.co.uk/support/cleaning/)

## CONTACT

North London Showroom  
23 Temple Fortune Parade  
Finchley Road  
London NW11 0QS  
020 8731 6787

South London Showroom  
88 High Street Wimbledon  
London SW19 5EG  
020 3141 3337

[enquiry@porcelaintiles.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@porcelaintiles.co.uk)  
[porcelaintiles.co.uk](http://porcelaintiles.co.uk)

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