

Handpainted Tile Installation Guide

Note to Installer: This is a general guideline containing tips on how to install and care for your tile. Prior to making your order, make sure your application suits the tile body or glaze for wet or outdoor areas. For wet areas such as pools, kitchens, or bathrooms, be sure the glaze is suitable and acid resistant.

All lava stone tiles may have a thickness difference of +/- 1-2 mm. Some sizes of lava stone tiles may curve upward slightly in the kiln +/- 1-2mm. All hand painted products including ceramic, lava stone or terracotta can vary in color, finish and size.

INSTALLATION PREP

You are responsible for determining the acceptability of the product prior to installation. As these tiles are handmade there is variation in color, size, and thickness. Be sure to do a dry lay out of tiles before installation. Pull from different boxes to achieve the best overall blend of color. Once installed, claims regarding color and size variation will not be accepted. Tiles are handmade to order and unique. Additional pieces ordered at a different time may vary in color from your original order.

CUTTING

Recommended Tools: Diamond blade wet tile saw for cutting (new blade will make better cuts)

If any tiles have imperfections, set them aside for cuts. Sand edges after cutting. Use cut edges against the outside walls. Dip tiles in clean water before cutting. Dry tiles after cutting.

SETTING & MATERIALS

The appropriate substrate and setting materials should be determined on a case-by-case basis. Consult with your installer, contractor, or architect. We recommend using the Installation Handbook from the Tile Council of North America, TCNA. • We recommend using a modified thinset mortar meeting at minimum ANSI A118.4.

SPACING

Typical grout spacing is 3/16" but you can do a tighter joint on the lavastone tile such as and 1/8". Carefully consider grout spacing prior to installation based on the tiles you are using. Tiles which are handmolded will tend to have more irregular edges and need a larger grout joint. Tighter grout joints will require a professional. If the grout line is too tight the tile could chip at stress points while the grout dries.

GROUT

Dark grouts with pigments can stain the tile and should be pretested for staining. Please refer to the grout manufacturer's guidelines for specific details on the grout.

We recommend a grout release to ease cleaning after installation and to prevent staining from a dark colored grout. Tile with crazing/crackle must have a grout release/wax sealer applied and allowed to dry before grouting. Try grout release in an inconspicuous spot first. National Tile Contractors Association (NTCA) recommends

cleaning any grout haze the next day with clean water and a white nylon scrub pad or a neutral grout haze remover.

CARE

Recommended Tools: Non-abrasive sponge and everyday cleaning: mild dishwashing soap with water and a clean rag or mop OR any neutral pH cleaner specified for tile

- For any cleaning product, test a small amount on your tile to make sure it doesn't affect the glaze.
- Use cleaning products that don't contain phosphoric acid. Avoid cleansers that contain acids such as vinegar or lemon juice.
- Immediately clean up spills or stains

Pool Tile Care & Maintenance

After installation be sure to completely remove excess grout and dirt after your tile has been installed. To help prevent staining and algae growth, we recommended cleaning the waterline tiles before the opening of every swim season. Reducing the water in the pool to below the tiles and thoroughly brush them. For mild dirt, you can use mild dishwashing soap with water and a clean rag OR any neutral pH cleaner specified for tile. If you find you must use something stronger, you may use a mildly alkaline detergent (i.e., Mr. Clean, Spic, and Span).

- For any cleaning product, test a small amount on your tile to make sure it doesn't affect the glaze (an area that is hidden or out of site is best).
- Use cleaning products that don't contain phosphoric acid. Avoid cleansers that contain acids such as vinegar or lemon juice.
- Stay away from using harsh cleaners on a regular basis. The effect of using cleaners with a high pH (bleach – alkaline) or low pH (vinegar – acidic) over and over is that they may break down some sealers which are there to help prevent soap scum, oils, and dirt from penetrating into the grout.

If pool scum, algae, or grime does not come off after cleaning, you can try pressure washing your pool tiles. You will have better results by choosing a steam pressure washer with a PSI of 2000 to 2600 that can reach a temperature of at least 300 degrees Fahrenheit. Stand at least 3 feet away and spray the area for 30 seconds as a test.