

Ceramic & Porcelain Tile Care

Care instructions for ceramic & porcelain tile by location and by spill.

Sealing Ceramic and Porcelain Tile & Grout

Ceramic and porcelain tile is a kiln-fired product. Available in glazed or unglazed and baked under high heat making it very hard and often highly resistant or impervious to liquid stains. Ceramic and porcelain tile is available in a multitude of colors, textures and shapes and is often designed to mirror natural stone surfaces and generally is easier to take care of than most natural stone surfaces.

The surface of most ceramic and porcelain tile does not need to be sealed, although some require a light application of a penetrating sealer to fill the micro pores on the surface of the tile. However, the grout joint between the tiles is usually very porous and generally made of a cement-based material.

Therefore, grout joints typically will need to be sealed and maintained properly to prevent stains and discoloration. There are a wide variety of sealers available, so you need to select one for your specific needs. Impregnating sealers go into the grout joint and protect against water and oil-based stains. Industry professionals now recognize that grout is best protected with a fluorochemical-based sealer.

Cleaning Ceramic and Porcelain Tile & Grout

Keeping your ceramic, porcelain tile & grout free of dust and dry, sandy soil will minimize scratches, wear patterns and grout soiling that can develop from everyday use and traffic. Sweep, dust or vacuum surfaces regularly to remove loose soil and dust.

Clean your tile & grout using warm water and a clean nonabrasive cloth sponge or mop. Use a neutral cleaner that is specially formulated for ceramic, porcelain tile & grout to help remove soils that sweeping, dusting, vacuuming or damp mopping leave behind.

Do not use ordinary household cleaners, as you may degrade the sealer that was applied to the grout to protect against stains. This includes not using acidic or alkaline cleaners, bleach, abrasives or ammoniated cleaners.

Countertops and Vanities

Use a ph-balanced cleaner to keep surfaces clean from everyday soils and stains. Cleaning products with protector are also available, which not only clean but also reinforce sealer on grout.

Floor Surfaces

Vacuum or dust frequently using a clean non-treated dry dust mop. Sand, dirt, and grit may scratch your tile or build-up on your grout joint leading to discoloration. Mats or area rugs inside and outside an entrance will help minimize the potential damage from these particles.

Damp mop your tile floor with a diluted solution of neutral cleaner. Try to stay off the floor until it is completely dry, as wet tile floors may be slippery.

Bath and Other Wet Areas

For daily maintenance cleaning, use a neutral, ph-balanced cleaner to clean everyday soils and stains. In the bath, or other wet areas, using a squeegee after each use can help minimize this build-up.

Restoring Ceramic and Porcelain Tile & Grout

For cleaning and restoring old ceramic, porcelain tile & grout to like new condition, we recommend using an acidic cleaner designed for this surface. This will remove tough soap scum, hard water deposits, grout haze, and efflorescence. If you have heavy grease and oil stains, pre-clean using an alkaline cleaner formulated for ceramic and porcelain tile. This will cut through tough grease and soil stains.

After restoring your tile and grout, remember to seal with an impregnating sealer to guard against future stains.

What To Do When Spills Occur

Grout Etching

Ceramic and porcelain tile is usually impervious or highly resistant to staining. However, grout may be a different story. Substances that are highly acidic, such as orange juice, coffee, vinegar, wine, tomato-based products, mustard and many soft drinks will most likely leave an "etch," a chemical reaction that may leave a dull area or mark. Properly sealing the grout will give you time to wipe up a spill to avoid staining, but it cannot prevent etching. In addition, ordinary household cleaners with colored dyes or those containing bleach, ammonia or abrasives are not recommended for ceramic, porcelain tile & grout. They may damage the surface and likely degrade the sealer that is applied to the grout, which provides stain protection.

Food Spills

Scoop up food with a plastic spoon. Blot with a dry white cloth. Spray the area with a neutral cleaner and wipe off excess with a clean cloth.

Liquid Spills

Blot up the excess with a clean, dry cloth. Then clean the area with a ph-balanced cleaner and wipe off excess with a clean cloth.

Let the mud stain dry completely. Remove dried mud with a soft plastic nylon brush. Spray affected area with a neutral cleaner and wipe off excess with a clean cloth.

Care Guide by Stonetechpro.com