

# Marrakech Design

www.marrakechdesign.se

## Installation & Maintenance recommendations

The beauty of the hand-made process results in subtle color variations. A chalky residue appears on the raw, uninstalled tiles and is a result of the time-honored production process. Some light shadowing will remain after installation and cleaning, and is an inherent part of the tile. Tiles retain moisture from the manufacture process and will dry to their correct color a few days after installation. The final installed patina differs from the raw state of the tiles, and it is important to follow the steps below to ensure this result is achieved. Exterior applications may experience some fading over time due to UV exposure and this is more obvious in the colorful tiles that has blue, green or red.

Please note that this is by no means a complete guide to installation and maintenance but some advice on aspects which we from our experience have found to be particularly important.

### **Step 1 – Fixing / Setting the tiles**

Since the tiles are hand-made and therefore subject to color variations we recommend that you batch mix them randomly from different boxes when laying them out in order to balance color and tone variation to achieve the best overall aesthetic appearance.

Make sure that the surface that is to be tiled is prepared correctly regarding level, cleanliness, appropriate priming and perfectly dry.

Before laying the tiles ensure they are free of dust and any loose particles by wiping with a damp sponge. The biscuit / rear of the tile should be pre-wet prior to fixing / setting. This can be easily achieved using a spray bottle set to mist or spray.

Installation of cement tiles requires back buttering / a double spread of adhesive. Use adhesive / thin-set mortar and a notched trowel and apply the adhesive / thin-set both to the substrate and to the back of the tile ensuring a 100% even coverage. **(Under no circumstances attempt a "Dot & Dab Method")**

The pattern of the tiles looks best with small grout joints (1-3 mm); In some countries building regulations / insurance company policies require wider joints e.g. in wet areas – please check local regulation before installation. Wider joints may also be necessary when using under floor heating mats or cables. The underfloor heat can't be turned on until 10-12 weeks after the installation done. After this period turn on the heat gradually.

When installing press the tiles down firmly into place and set level by hand only – do NOT use a hammer or rubber mallet since this may crack the tiles.

Work in small areas at a time, working clean and avoid getting the adhesive / thin-set on to the surface of the tile as this will result in staining the unsealed tiles – wipe off any excess adhesive / thin-set or other dirt immediately so as to avoid it curing / setting on the porous surface.

Once the tiles are fixed / set allow to stand until the surface of the tiles is dry. Wipe off any dust or dirt before proceeding to Step 2. The tiles need to be **clean and dry before** sealing.

### **Step 2 – Sealing.**

It is essential that the surface of the tile is level, clean, and perfectly dry. Please note that the first coat of sealer **must be applied before grouting.** otherwise grout can penetrate the porous surface of these tiles. The tiles have to be sealed in order to protect them from water and dirt and to give a reaction time. You have an option to either maintain the original look or to enhance the appearance to produce a wet look.

**Be aware that sealing itself does not prevent excess grout (see step 3 – grouting) from sticking to the surface.** It is thus of paramount importance that any excess grout on the surface of the tile is wiped off immediately and meticulously after grouting.

### **Natural Finish Stone Sealer, EcoProtec**

This product is suitable for interior and exterior use and provides a minimal change to surface character. *This product is suitable for wet rooms, including shower areas.* Please follow the instructions on the container.

For tiles that are installed in other than wet rooms (*kitchens, hallways etc.*) a satin surface finish can be achieved by applying **EcoProtec Satin Finish Surface Wax.** This offers more surface protection (please note that Satin Finish Surface Wax should be applied after grouting). Not for exterior use.

In areas with heavy foot traffic such as commercial spaces, can **LTP Glaze Protector** be applicable instead of the EcoProtec Satin Finish Wax. This offers maximum surface protection and leaves a glossy finish. Not for exterior use.

For aftercare we recommend **EcoProtec Natural stone and Porcelain aftercare cleaner.** As it contains a trace of sealer it cleans and maintains the seal at the same time.

However, a capful of EcoProtec Satin Finish Surface Wax can be used as aftercare when floors have been finished with this wax.

For more information please visit: <https://ecoprotec.co.uk/>

### **Miracle 511 H2O, Miracle sealants**

This sealer is suitable for interior/exterior use including shower areas and maintains the original look of the tile. Please follow the instructions on the container.

If you desire a darker wet look finish we instead recommend you to use Miracle 511 Seal and Enhance. Please note that the tiles need re-sealing once/twice a year depending on wear of the tiles. For information regarding cleaning please see step 5 below.

For more information please visit: <https://miraclesealants.com/>

### **FILA PRW200 and FILA MR90 ECO PLUS**

This sealer is suitable for interior and exterior use and provides a minimal change to surface character. It is suitable for all areas (*including wet rooms and shower areas*). Please follow the instructions on the container.

This sealer is also ideal to protect tables and kitchen counters as it is approved for use in contact with food.

In heavy traffic areas such as commercial applications a protective finishing wax can be used. For a natural look use FILA Matt and for a satin effect we recommend FILA Satin. Both offer maximum surface protection. FILA Satin and FILA Matt is not for exterior or wet room use.

For cleaning we recommend FILA Cleaner. It is a concentrated, neutral detergent. Please follow the instructions on the container.

For more information please visit: <https://www.filasolutions.com/eng/solutions/clean-protect-and-care-for>

### **Step 3 – Grouting.**

Before grouting, tiles should be allowed to dry for at least 24 hours.

We recommend light grey coloured grout. Mix the grout strictly according to the manufacturer's instructions in order to facilitate applying to small grout joints (1-3 mm), if underfloor heating is used wider joints (3-5mm) need to be utilized. Apply the grout to small areas at a time so that any excess grout on the face of the tiles can be wiped off immediately. Use a Micro fibre cloth / sponge or soft Scotch-Brite pad if necessary.

**Be aware that sealing itself does not prevent excess grout from sticking to the surface.** It is thus of paramount importance that any excess grout on the surface of the tile is wiped off immediately and meticulously after grouting.

**We advise against using very dark or colored grout.**

#### **Step 4 - After Grouting**

Once the grout has dried further coats of sealer should be applied to offer maximum protection. The tiles should be sealed until they are fully saturated however a maximum of 6 coats can be applied.

In wet rooms should Natural Finish Stone Sealer be applied after grouting as well.

#### **Added Protection**

For high traffic areas (excluding wet rooms) you may consider adding a top coat sealer. All brands we've recommended above have their own top coats to be used with their respective products. Please note that top coats should be applied as the last step after grouting.

EcoProtec Satin Finish Surface Wax and LTP Glaze Protector hardens after about an hour but will take a further three days to achieve full hardness and become fully water resistant.

#### **Step 5 - Ongoing Maintenance & Cleaning**

One of the attributes of cement tiles is that they improve with age and wear and cleaning. The tiles should be regularly washed with mild soap and water. Again, never use bleach or acidic products to clean the tiles. Depending on the level of luster you desire, additional coats of sealant can be applied as the tiles' finish become duller. When the sealants are rubbed into the tiles and polished, a lovely lustrous patina can be achieved. The type of sealant, as well as the number of coats, will impact the look of the tiles, which naturally have a matte finish. The tiles need to be re-sealed once a year or when needed, please read the instructions on the container.

**Never use acidic cleaners or other acids on cement tiles.**

#### **Complaints and claims**

Inspect your tiles prior to installation. No returns or claims will be accepted once the tiles have been fixed / installed. Please note that Marrakech Design will never assume any responsibility for faulty workmanship.

These instructions/guide to installation are intended to provide helpful advice and guidance only. Any advice, opinion or recommendations given in this report are given on the understanding that Marrakech Design shall not be liable either in law or in tort, for any damage or problem arising out of the use or misuse of such advice, opinion or recommendations. In all cases, local building regulations should be checked prior to installation.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL TILE INSTALLER**