

# marrakech

DESIGN

## 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".

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.

### **STEP 2 – clean the tiles prior to sealing**

Allow the adhesives to dry at least 12H before proceeding to step 3. The tiles need to be clean and dry before sealing. This is best done by either cleaning the tiles with water or Stone & Tile intensive cleaner. If using [Stone & Tile intensive cleaner](#) leave this to dry for 2H.

### **STEP 3 – Sealing with [Natural Finish Stone Sealer](#) (prior grouting)**

It is essential that the surface of the tile is level, clean, and perfectly dry. Please note that the first coats 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.

Be aware that sealing itself does not prevent excess grout (see step 4 – 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 have a minimum change to the surface of the tiles and are suitable for both interior and exterior use. Full product description can be found on our website or on the backside of the product.

Apply the first coat of Natural Finish Stone Sealer generously and evenly over the surface of the tiles, leave to dry for 12H before additional coats are applied. Apply further coats every 2H until the tiles are saturated. The tiles are fully dried 2H after the last coat have been applied.

### **STEP 4 – Grouting the tiles**

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

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.

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 (3-5mm) 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 (3-5mm). The underfloor heat can be turned on 10-12 weeks after the installation is done. After this period turn on the heat gradually.

Mix the grout strictly according to the manufacturer's instructions in order to facilitate applying. 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.

We recommend light grey coloured grout suitable for cement tiles. We advise against using black/white or colored grout.

When cleaning off the grout residues please use a sponge and water and leave the surface to dry for 1H.

### **STEP 5 – After grouting**

For tiles that are installed in bathrooms (including shower areas and saunas) the tiles should only be sealed with Natural Finish Stone Sealer. We recommend further coats with this product to be applied after grouting.

For tiles that are installed in other than wet rooms (*kitchens, hallways commercial spaces etc.*) we recommend to apply a top coat. [Satin Finish Surface Wax](#) or [LTP Glaze Protector](#). Top coat should be applied after the tiles have been sealed with Natural Finish Stone Sealer. For more information regarding top coat please visit our [website](#).

#### **STEP 6. - Maintenance**

For tiles that have been sealed with Natural Finish Stone Sealer additional coats should be applied once a year or when needed.

For tiles that have been sealed with Natural Finish Stone Sealer + top coat additional coats of the top coat should be applied once a year or when needed.

#### **STEP 7. 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 or [EcoProtec Natural stone & Porcelain aftercare cleaner](#).

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.

If the tiles have been stained it is possible to sand the surface of the tiles carefully.

#### **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.