

# Dal-Tile Corporation TILE CARE & MAINTENANCE

Prologue Delicate Gray Mosaic tile shown in grid pattern and Superior White 12 in. x 18 in. tile shown in brick pattern

## CERAMIC TILE

### Routine Care

Tile, whether glazed ceramic or porcelain, should be maintained on a regular and frequent basis to prevent build-up of soil, grease, residue, soap detergents, sealers, dampness, liquids, etc., to keep the surface clean and lessen slippery conditions.

Glazed ceramic and porcelain tiles require minimal maintenance. Either can be cleaned with clear water and/or a pH neutral liquid cleaner (soapless). Follow with a clear water rinse and wipe dry to prevent film formation. As with most porcelains, spilled liquids may stain light-colored products if not promptly removed. Neither sealing nor acid cleaning is recommended for any of Daltile's glazed ceramic or porcelain tile.

### Removal of Sealers/Waxes/Floor Finishes

If you need to remove a topical sealer or floor wax from a ceramic tile you should use a Tile Sealer & Adhesive Remover. Always test a small area first. Apply a liberal amount of undiluted sealer & adhesive remover to a manageable area.

Allow setting without drying until coating or residue softens. Reapply if necessary until sealer softens and can be removed. If necessary, agitate with white nylon scrub pad. Wipe up the residue with a cotton towel or sponge. Rinse thoroughly with clean water.

NOTE: Do not use on Natural Stone products.

## CERAMIC TILE GROUT CARE

### Penetrating/Impregnating Sealer

Most tile installations use cementitious grouts. This type of grout should be sealed after installation to prevent the color from staining. The grout should be sealed with a penetrating/impregnating sealer (often called grout sealers) which does not contain silicone, as silicone can shorten the useful life of the sealer.

Epoxy grouts, conversely, are chemically cured and acid resistant and, as a result, do not require a sealer. The application of a good quality penetrating/impregnating sealer into the grout joints of a cementitious grout will not change the natural color of the grout, but will prevent the penetration of moisture, simplify maintenance, and help prevent staining or discoloration.

Only the grout needs to be sealed, not glazed floor or wall tiles. Grout can be sealed 72 hours after installation. There are different grades of penetrating/impregnating sealers, therefore the useful life and price will differ between a low quality and high quality sealer. You may need to reapply the sealer on an annual basis depending on the sealer quality,

traffic patterns, and maintenance routine. Some sealers have multiple year warranties for useful life. Refer to the manufacturer's warranty, technical & product information for specific details on product installation, useful life, and product applications (including any warnings) before use.

### Grout Maintenance

Neither sealing the grout nor using a 100% Epoxy Grout will guarantee against surface buildup or discoloration of the grout. Grout needs to be cleaned on a periodic basis to remove any surface buildup. Routine grout cleaning can be done with a daily concentrated household or commercial cleaner depending on the application.

When heavy duty grout cleaning is required, you will need to use a professional strength Tile & Grout Cleaner that is capable of removing grease, soap scum, body oil, mildew stains, algae, and synthetic or acrylic waxes from the grout joints. However, such a product should contain non-polluting chemicals and low volatile organic compound (VOC) levels.



Where Great Floors Begin

## Ceramic Tile Flooring Care and Maintenance

### Grout Care

1. Grout is the mortar type material used to fill the spaces between the individual tiles, or stone. Its purpose is simply to fill the joint between the tiles and become a permanent, integral part of the floor.
2. Neither sealing the grout nor using a 100% Epoxy Grout will guarantee against surface build up or discoloration of the grout.
3. Grout needs to be cleaned on a periodic basis to remove any surface residue build up.
4. This routine cleaning can be done with a neutral PH balanced daily-use household or commercial cleaner depending on the application.
5. When heavy-duty grout cleaning is required, you can use a professional strength tile and grout cleaner that is capable of removing grease, soap scum, body oil, mildew stains algae, and synthetic or acrylic waxes from the grout joints.

### Post Grouting Installation Clean-Up

1. Grout haze is a film left behind on the surface of the tile as part of the final grouting process; it is usually buffed off the surface after the grout has achieved its initial 12 to 24 hour cure, with the use of a cheese cloth material. If after 48 hrs a grout haze still exists, then use a "grout haze remover" which usually contains Sulfamic Acid. Sulfamic acid cleaners should ONLY be used on Ceramic and/or Porcelain tiles. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Never use Acids on natural stone tiles;** this could lead to permanent etching. Instead use a Natural Stone Cleaner and a cheese cloth for grout haze removal.
2. In cases where you have used Epoxy Grouts, you may need to use an "Epoxy Haze Remover". These cleaners are formulated to quickly and safely remove Epoxy grout haze, without damaging the grout or the tile face of your newly installed ceramic floor.

### Routine Maintenance

1. You should allow your new ceramic tile and grout to dry for at least 72 hours after installation, before any type of maintenance occurs.
2. Cleaning your new floor with a damp mop once a week is the best thing you can do to maintain your ceramic floor.
3. A simple sweeping or vacuuming of your tile floor prior to mopping will remove any dust or debris.
4. Make sure that any cleanser you have chosen is compatible with grout cleaning, (neutral pH), and will not stain the grout. We recommend Shaw's **R2X Hard Surface Cleaner**.
5. Heavy traffic areas should be mopped more often than once a week.
6. Never use a detergent or soap because it may dull the surface.
7. When cleaning, the entire area should be cleaned or scrubbed with the cleansing solution, through the use of a cotton mop, cloth, sponge, or non-metallic brush.
8. The entire flooring area should then be rinsed with clean water to remove any cleaning solution residue.
9. Cleaning unglazed tiles should be done on a regular basis using cleansers that have a neutral pH for safe regular use; these cleaners are better suited at removing grease, oils, and normal spills from unglazed products.
10. Remember: Routine cleaners should never contain acids, vinegar, chlorines or ammonia as these chemicals can damage and discolor the grout or the surface of the stone or tile.
11. Always thoroughly rinse the flooring surface after cleaning, using clean clear water, to avoid any periodic residue build up or mold and mildew growth.

### Protecting Your Ceramic Floor

1. Protect you ceramic tile by affixing felt or similar pads to the legs of any metal, iron, wood or plastic furniture that could scratch and dull the surface.
2. Exterior metal furniture which rests on tile floors or patios may rust and cause staining.
3. Good quality entry mats will help protect your ceramic tile from wear by collecting dirt, sand, grit and other substances such as oil, asphalt, or driveway sealer that might otherwise be tracked onto your floor.
4. You can also place these mats at heavy pivot locations such as in front of the kitchen sink or stove.

Watch this YouTube Video  
Just click on the picture . . .

