KAREN PEARSE
Stone and Architectural Surfaces

Tile Maintenance Guidelines

Disclaimer

Karen Pearse provides the information contained herein to its customers as an information source only. Karen Pearse does not manufacture or market installation products or tile cleaning/maintenance products, nor are we cleaning experts. We strongly recommend reviewing Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) and using the specified personal protective equipment prior to handling any chemicals.

It is best practice to contact the chemical manufacturer directly, PRIOR to usage, to obtain proper handling instructions, application instructions and warnings concerning potential health hazards for any product contemplated for use.

Karen Pearse also strongly recommends that you ALWAYS test a small area PRIOR to usage of any installation/tile/ cleaning/maintenance product to determine whether the product you are about to apply serves its intended purpose.

Porcelain and Glazed Tile Installation Cleanup and Routine Care
Ceramic (and thus porcelain) surfaces are easier to keep clean than most alternative products and are resistant to many chemicals. However, cleaners used need to be specified as safe for use on ceramic tile installations. The grout is part of the installation and may have different chemical resistive properties.

- Dry clean via sweeping or vacuuming prior to mopping. For mopping, we recommend using a microfiber mop with a non-hazardous, low VOC, cleaning chemical. Many cleaning products will require specific dilution rates and dwell time on the floor for maximum effectiveness. Always follow the cleaning product manufacturer's recommendations.

- Not all floor cleaning products are suitable for tile. In particular, avoid chemicals that contain fluorine compounds. These compounds may damage ceramic, porcelain, or glass surfaces through etching.

- The use of oil based and "no rinse" cleaners need to be avoided as they tend to leave a residue that lowers the dynamic coefficient of friction (DCOF) and thus slip resistance of the installation.

- It is imperative that grout is fully removed from the tile surface during the installation process. If not removed, coordinating or matching grouts can leave a haze that is initially invisible, but will attract dirt and soil over time.

- For dried and set up grout haze issues, contact the grout supplier for instructions to best resolve the issue.

- Polished tiles need to have the grout haze removed before it sets up. Polished surfaces do not react well with many chemicals. It may not be possible to remove a set up grout haze from a polished tile without damaging the polished surface.

Ceramic and Porcelain Tile Installation

Installation applications, technical difficulty, and materials can vary. Consult installation experts where needed. We recommend following the most up to date applicable installation instructions available in the TCNA Installation Handbook:

https://www.tcnatile.com/products-and-services/publications/218-english-publications.html

Mock Ups
Constructing a mock up panel is recommended prior to installation. This allows the installer and specifier to review the proposed product, grout, layout, and grout joint size in advance. This is especially true for higher aesthetic class tiles (V3 or V4).

Cutting
We recommend using tile specific wet saws or the score and snap method to cut tiles during the installation process. Do not dry our products. Dry cutting can lead to harmful, airborne, dust.

Polished Tiles
Polished surfaces require special care during installation, cleanup, and end use. The polishing process changes ceramic surfaces on a microscopic level, making them more susceptible to chemical attack and staining. While this provides a unique visual, there are some extra installation and maintenance steps that need to be considered.

Only use neutral pH chemicals (no acids or bases) during the installation or installation clean up. Any installation materials utilized shall state they are suitable for polished products.
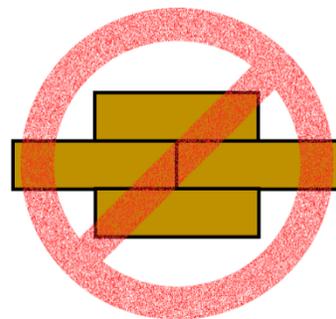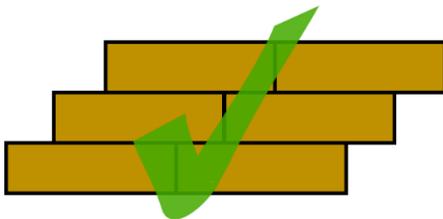
Fully polished tile surfaces are not recommended for areas likely to be walked on when wet.

Sealers and Grout Release Agents
Select products may require a grout release agent (or a penetrating sealer) prior to grouting. Sealers can wear with time and shall be considered to be part of routine maintenance.

Offset Patterns—Running Bond
Although the 50% offset, or 'brickwork' pattern is popular, it violates standard installation criteria in ANSI A108 Section 4.3.8.2. Karen Pearse does not recommend installations that utilize a 50% offset with large format porcelain. The maximum acceptable overlap in this type pattern is 33% of the tile edge length. Use of a 50% offset can highlight natural tile variations that would otherwise be acceptable. In the event the user elects to utilize an offset greater than 33%, they shall assume all risks.

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Porcelain Tile Installation (Cont.)

Grout Joint Width

We manufacture our products to conform to ANSI recommended grout joints.

- Our calibrated products are designed to work with a 3/16-inch (4.763 mm) grout joints
- Our rectified products are designed to work with 1/8– inch (3.175 mm) grout joints

These specifications are in accordance with industry standards specified in ANSI A108 Section 4.3.8.

The installer and designer shall assume the risks associated with the use of alternate grout joint widths. The use of non-standard grout joints voids any warranties and no claims will be accepted from installations where narrower joints are utilized.

Critical Lighting

The use of wall wash, low angle, or cove lighting is not recommended. This type of illumination exaggerates otherwise normal and acceptable natural tile variations. We recommend that light sources be placed at least 24-inches away from vertical tile installations. Karen Pearse shall not accept any lippage/warpage claims where the a light source is closer than 24-inches.

Combining critical lighting with narrower than recommended joints and non-recommended 50% offsets will most likely result in an objectionable installation (see photo).
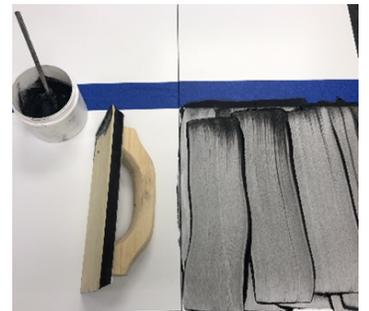
Grout Haze Clean Up

It is very important to clean up all grout haze as part of the installation process. This will most often require several rounds of cleaning with fresh rinse water. When guidance is not provided by the grout manufacturer, we recommend changing to clean water, and cleaning any utilized mops, approximately every 150 square feet.

Not all grout formulations react in the same way. Verify the grout type used correlates with the type of tile being installed. We recommend that grout compatibility with the tile surface be checked on loose pieces prior to installation.

A short and simple test to determine compatibility would be:

1. Mask off part of the tile

2. Mix grout according to grout manufacturer's instructions

3. Apply grout for the maximum recommended time

4. Attempt to remove the grout according to the grout manufacturer's instructions

5. Remove tape and allow tile to dry

6. View tile to determine the acceptability

Cleaning Matrix for Porcelain and Ceramic Tile

Category	Stain	Common Products	StoneTech®	Aqua Mix®
Routine Cleaning	Most foot traffic soil	Neutral pH tile cleaner	Stone & Tile Cleaner	Concentrated Stone & Tile Cleaner
Grout Haze	Cementitious	Consult grout manufacturer (may not be applicable to polished products)	Restore Acidic Cleaner	Grout Haze Cleanup
	Single Component		Restore Acidic Cleaner	Heavy Duty Tile & Grout Cleaner
	Epoxy		Epoxy Grout Haze Remover	Sealer & Coating Remover
Sealers	Tile/Grout Sealer	Consult sealer manufacturer	Heavy Duty Coating Stripper	Sealer & Coating Remover
Food Products	BBQ Sauce	Scouring Powder (without bleach)	Stone & Tile Cleaner	AquaKleen (Spray & Wipe) or Heavy Duty Tile & Grout Cleaner or Stone Deep Clean
	Coffee	Mild soap and water or Vinegar		
	Cranberry Juice	Borax or Hydrogen Peroxide		
	Food Coloring			
	Grape Juice/Wine			
	Jelly	Borax or Hydrogen Peroxide		
	Ketchup/Mustard	Scouring Powder (without bleach)		
	Peanut Butter	d-Limonene based products	Oil Stain Remover	
	Pizza Sauce	Scouring Powder (without bleach)	Stone & Tile Cleaner	
	Tea	Baking soda and water		
Writing Implements	Ball Point Pen	Alcohol Based Cleaner	Oil Stain Remover	Sealer & Coating Remover
	Crayon	d-Limonene based cleaners		
	Paint Marker	Acetone		
	Pencil Marks	Mild Soap and Water	Stone & Tile Cleaner	Concentrated Stone & Tile Cleaner
	Permanent Marker	Rubbing Alcohol/Acetone	KlenzAll	Sealer & Coating Remover
Paints	Latex Paint	Latex Paint Remover	Heavy Duty Coating Stripper	Sealer & Coating Remover
	Oil Paint	Mineral Spirits		
	Spray Paint	Acetone or Graffiti Remover		
Automotive & Oils	Gear Oil	d-Limonene and/or Naphtha based cleaner	Oil Stain Remover	Poultice Stain Remover mixed with Sealer & Coating Remover
	Vegetable Oil			
	Motor Oil			
	Tire Dressing			
	Tire Marks	Scouring Powder (without bleach)		
Biological	Mold/Mildew	Bleach based cleaner	Mold & Mildew Stain Remover	Heavy Duty Tile & Grout Cleaner
Mineral Deposits	Hard Water Stains	Vinegar to Hydrochloric acid	Restore Acidic Cleaner	Sulfamic Acid or Phosphoric Acid Substitute or Ex Treme
	Efflorescence			
	Rust	Phosphoric Acid/Naval Jelly		
Miscellaneous	Chair Marks	Scouring Powder (without bleach)	KlenzAll	Nanoscrub
	Foot Traffic Soil	Daily Tile Safe Cleaner		Heavy Duty Tile & Grout Cleaner
	Loose Dirt	Sweep or vacuum		
	Shoe Scuffs	Scouring Powder (without bleach)	KlenzAll	Nanoscrub
	Soap Residue	Borax or Ammonia based cleaners	Soap Scum Remover	Heavy Duty Tile & Grout Cleaner

*Polished products require neutral pH chemicals (no acids or bases)

Additional information on Aqua Mix® products: https://www.custombuildingproducts.com/product_categories/aqua-mix

Additional information on StoneTech® products: https://laticrete.com/en/tile-and-stone-care-and-maintenance

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