



## MAZINGIRA TILES

HANDMADE IN AFRICA

### Mazingira Encaustic Tiles Installation & Sealing Guidelines

- **Because Mazingira Tiles are handmade - there may slight be variations in colour. This is a beautiful feature & characteristic of a hand cast product & is not to be seen as a defect.**
- Before installing the tiles, select tiles randomly from at least 3 different boxes to minimise shade variations.
- Inspect your tiles for any defects prior to installation. No claims will be entertained after the tiles have been cut or installed.
- When ordering, allow an extra 10% for cutting.
- Protect the tiles from staining and damage during construction by covering the newly-installed tiles with plastic sheeting, or cardboard.
- DO NOT use acid-based chemicals or cleaners on the tiles, as these will damage the tiles.

#### 1. EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Angle grinder with diamond tip blade. Tile spacers. Builders line. Level. Hand trowel. Grout float rubber. Rubber hammer. Carpenters square. Containers to soak the tiles. Cardboard to protect the newly laid tiles. Tile glue. Grout.

#### 2. PREPARATION

- A new concrete slab should be allowed to cure for 14 days before tiling begins.
- Make sure the surface AND underside of the tiles are clean and free of any loose or flaky material.
- Only lay the tiles on a solid concrete or masonry substrate. Do not lay tiles on uneven, wood, steel or vinyl floors, or over existing tiles.
- Moisten the concrete area before laying the tiles – this helps with tile adhesion.
- Soak the tiles in water for 15-20 seconds prior to installation. Soaking the tiles replaces any air in the tile with water which allows the mortar or cement/adhesive underneath to form a strong bond.
- For feature areas, mark out the area to be tiled, ensuring it is “square”, and in the center of the room.
- Tile from the center of the area to be tiled, outwards.
- Allow a gap of 3-5 mm between tiles.
- Using a builder’s line, together with tile spacers to align the tiles, is recommended.

#### 3. WHAT GLUE TO USE

- Use a high-quality cement-based ceramic tile adhesive.
- The adhesive must be a conventional slow-setting adhesive.
- Do not use rapid-setting or porcelain tile adhesives.
- For best results, use bonding liquid when preparing the tile adhesive. (Helps the glue bond to the surfaces)
- If any adhesive gets on the surface of the tile, clean this off immediately or it will stain the tile.

#### 4. LAYING YOUR TILES

- Apply the tile adhesive with a notched trowel to BOTH surfaces – the back of the tile, & the floor/wall.

- Tile adhesive must cover the ENTIRE underside of the tile, leaving no air gaps.
- Bed the tiles by hand, or using a non-marking rubber mallet, ensuring the tile is level and of equal surface height to the surrounding tiles. If using a mallet, tap gently to avoid cracking tiles. Placing a piece of paper/plastic between the tile & the mallet will also help to avoid marks being left.
- Work in small sections at a time, to prevent the tile adhesive drying out.
- To cut the tiles, use an angle grinder with a diamond tip blade.
- When tiling large areas, allow for expansion joints. Expansion joints in the tiles must coincide with the expansion joints in the substrate, or the tiles may crack. Use a matching-coloured silicone to create the flexible joint.
- Leave the tiles to dry completely before grouting – usually 1 to 2 days

## 5. GROUTING

- Make sure the joints are clean and free of any loose material.
- Select a light grey grout, or colour that complements the colour of the tiles.
- Avoid the use of black or dark-coloured grout, as this may stain the tiles.
- The use of bonding liquid will help with adhesion & water resistance.
- When grouting, wipe off excess grout from the tiles immediately, using a sponge and clean water.
- As the grout dries, you will see a light residue on the tiles. Make sure to keep cleaning this off. Repeat this process until there is no residue left on the tiles. (a light film on the surface)
- If it is not cleaned off, this will dry & permanently stain your tile.
- Sometimes moisture is absorbed from the tile adhesive or grout, which may darken the tile. This will become lighter as the tile dries out. This will be minimized if the tiles are wet prior to installation and grouting.
- Allow the grout to dry completely before sealing your tiles (5-7 days)

## 6. SEALING

- Prior to sealing, clean the tiles with a neutral soap or cleaning agent (small amount of dish washing liquid & warm water) and allow to dry completely before sealing.
- Make sure all grout residue/other marks are cleaned off before sealing. If not, the marks will be sealed into the tile & they will become permanent.
- DO NOT use an acid or bleach to clean tiles. This will permanently damage the tile by eating into the surface of the tile.
- There must be no noticeable moisture being held in the tile (darker patches) when you start to seal.
- Use the supplied sealer to apply a 2<sup>nd</sup> coat of sealer. (The tiles get 1 coat of sealer in the factory before being delivered) Should you need more sealer, it is available from Mazingira Tiles, or your local hardware. The tiles are sealed to provide a protective coating which can minimize the risk of staining, and ease of cleaning.
- Use a lamb's wool roller or sponge to seal your tiles, spreading an even coat of sealer across the tiles. Make sure there is no 'pooling' of sealer on the surface.
- Sealants can be re-applied as required, generally more often in high-traffic areas - usually 1x per year, and less frequently in light traffic areas & walls.

## 7. MAINTENANCE

- For general cleaning, use mild neutral soap, or dishwashing liquid in warm water.
- Never use harsh abrasives or cleaning tools that can scratch the surface of your tiles and remove the sealer.
- Never use acid-based chemicals or cleaners as this will damage the surface of your concrete tile.
- Your tiles may need to be re-sealed after some time, depending on the amount of foot traffic they receive. If there is a lot of wear, re-sealing once a year, should be enough.



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