

Cement tiles are made by hand, one at a time, using mineral pigments, cement, a mold, and a hydraulic press. This is an artisanal product made by craftsmen using traditional methods. For this reason, every tile will be unique. Even the metal mold is handmade following specific design drawings. Therefore, new molds for designs can take about 20 days to make depending on the intricacy of the design. Cement tiles being handmade will have irregularities in design which give them character and uniqueness. They will have a rich but handcrafted appearance. The setting process of cement, like heating of some Chinese or Japanese porcelain glazes, creates fine cracks known as crazing. This does not weaken the tile in any way, but gives the tile an antique look. Because of variations in shade of the colours and cement received by us, the tiles you receive may vary in colour from the display tiles viewed by you at the time of ordering. Replicating the exact shades is never possible, so we recommend that you order extra tiles and store them for future needs. They need little space to stack. Please order at least 10% extra to allow for wastage and breakage during transportation.

GUIDE TO PIGMENTS AND COLOUR SHADES:

We buy the best available pigments and blend these for hours in giant mixers. We would like to guide you on the selection of colours based on their characteristics as follows:

INORGANIC PIGMENTS

These include colours such as Terracotta and Deep Red, Jaisalmer Yellow, Chocolate Brown, Sicilia, Macao, Cream, Buttercup, Fawn, Nursery Pink, Dusky Rose, Peach. These are derived from oxides and are largely sunlight fast and can be used outdoors, but weather effects will make the colours look lighter and wear off the polish so that they will have a matt effect over time. Macao, Jaisalmer Yellow, Brown, Fawn, Terracotta and Deep Red are recommended for areas such as patios, lift lobbies, restaurants and areas where there is the likelihood of dirt coming onto the floor from footfalls. Light colours are best suited for living rooms, home passageways, bedrooms, and other areas with lighter footfall. For bathrooms and kitchens see recommendations below

ORGANIC PIGMENTS

These include Dark Green, Jade Green, Kotah Green, Mint Green, Blue Lagoon, Dark Blue and Turquoise Blue. These are pigments derived from organic sources, and tend to react unpredictably in direct sunlight. These pigments should be used indoors, away from direct sunlight.

GREYS

These are colours such as Light Silver Grey, Silver Grey, and Grey. These are made using natural variations of grey cement, and hence one can achieve only those tones supplied to us by the most reputed cement companies in India.

WHITE

This is also derived from the naturally available white cement so the tone may vary slightly depending on the whiteness of the cement supplied to us by the most reputed companies in India. Using white predominantly is like wearing a white shirt - a degree of care must be exercised.

BLACK

This is made out of carbon black or soot, which is a naturally occurring compound. Black is the most difficult colour to work with and is prone to stain other colours during the polishing process. It is recommended to use other dark colours along with black, for best results.

BLEEDING OF COLOURS

Dark colours such as Black, Dark Blue and the like may bleed onto White and Cream during the polishing process, causing discolouration of the lighter colour. You can use Solemn Grey as a substitute for Black, and Silver Grey as a substitute for white to minimise the appearance of bleeding.

GUIDELINES FOR CERTAIN TYPES OF USE:

USING CEMENT TILES IN THE BATHROOM:

Cement tiles tend to be slightly porous, so the use in bathrooms should be restricted to the walls (including shower walls) as well as dry areas. It is recommended to use dark colours in the bathroom, such as Fawn, Mushroom, Dark Blue, Turquoise Blue, Dark Green, Grey. We recommend a suitable sealer on the tiles to reduce the porosity.

USING CEMENT TILES ON A VERANDA:

One can safely use Heritage and Unitinta tiles on the veranda which is covered. Terracotta and Deep Red, Jaisalmer Yellow, Chocolate Brown, Sicilia, Macao, Fawn, Nursery Pink, Dusky Rose, Peach are all great colours for a veranda floor.

USING CEMENT TILES IN THE KITCHEN:

It is not recommended that the tiles be used for kitchen floors. Where the tiles are used for kitchen wall/backsplash, darker colours should be used and the tiles suitably sealed to reduce chances of stains from oil and masala. If you use the tiles, with sealer, for a kitchen floor, the kitchen help should be trained to immediately wipe off anything which falls on it.

USAGE IN AREAS WITH HARSH CHEMICALS:

As cement is a natural material, it is recommended that the tiles should not be used in areas where harsh chemicals will be spilled for example - hair dressing parlours, chemical labs, etc.

INSTALLATION ON WALLS AND SKIRTING:

Unitinta and Heritage tiles can be made thinner for use on walls and skirting. The reduced tile thickness would be 17mm instead of the normal 25mm. Tiles installed on walls and skirting are polished by hand, using a smaller machine, so the time taken is much longer, and the degree of shine will be less than that of the floor.

INSTALLATION:

This is a critical stage in ensuring the beauty of the floor. A well-made tile can be ruined by poor laying and polishing. Natural variations in the thickness of the tiles must be adjusted by the bedding material at the time of laying. The base consistency should be right to avoid cement water seeping in through the joints. Graded polishing stones need to be used and wax must never be used to give a shine, as it will cause staining and attract dirt. Use of the company supplied grout powder is recommended, and the grout should be done to match the colours of the design on the tiles. This will give the floor a seamless look. You are advised to use our recommended contractor and to give them enough, uninterrupted time to do the laying and polishing jobs properly. If carpentry work is to be done on the site after laying, postpone the tile polishing till just before the last coat of polish and paint. **ALWAYS ENSURE THERE IS NO SPILLAGE ON THE FLOOR OF FURNITURE POLISH, OIL OR PAINT AT ANY STAGE.**

FLOOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Initially, you may notice a whitish film forming over the tiles. This is formed due to the free lime of the tile floating to the surface and causing efflorescence. This whitish film will disappear over time (usually 2-3 months), with daily, vigorous swabbing with a damp cloth and our special cleaning solution.

Our tiles will shine beautifully as they age. Daily swabbing with plain water is all that is required. For the best effect and shine, use the special cleaning solution available from BFT. It will remove dirt while enhancing the shine of the tiles.

NEVER USE HARSH CHEMICALS SUCH AS ACID OR PHENYL AS THESE WILL CAUSE THE TILES TO LOSE SHINE, CAUSE MICRO-PITTING WHICH WILL ATTRACT DIRT AND EVEN CAUSE THEM TO BECOME DISCOLOURED. ONLY USE PLAIN WATER OR BFT SPECIAL CLEANING SOLUTION FOR CEMENT TILES.