

General notes provided as a service to clients and specifiers.

Please use experienced tradesmen and follow specific product specifications with care.

Sorting stone tiles before installation - Several important steps need to be taken before installing the stone flooring n/ walls: Divide the area of installation into separate flat areas and allocate enough material for each area including some waste. If the material to be installed is tiles, all the boxes should be open, and the tiles should be taken from all the boxes randomly. In this way the installation will be uniformed and the material will look homogenous. The direction of the vein should be considered before starting installation. The quarries don't pack in aesthetically pleasing sequence. An experienced stone mason should always inspect each lot and select a proper mix and arrangement of stone to afford the most attractive and natural result. If you have purchased travertine, the tiles may seem darker than what you have seen as sample, this is due to the tiles being packed while still wet. They retain moisture and will dry once they are laid and allowed to air. Once they have been laid and allowed to dry they will lighten up, this can take longer in cold climate areas, sometimes up to a month.

Types of installation - Stone tiles can be installed by adhesive (mortar or thin set installations) or they can be mechanically anchored depending on the size of the pieces and the application. A different method and different adhesives are used if the tiles are going to be installed indoors versus outdoors. The installation of slabs on fireplaces is recommended using mechanical anchors with adhesive for the vertical pieces.

Grouts and Joints - For complete information about adhesives and grouts, contact:

Laticrete P/L on Freecall 1800 331 012

Stone tile layout where stone tiles are not cut to minimal tolerances we recommend a 10 mm joint as the minimum space between each tile. This is the minimum joint that should be used when installing cobblestones.

Precautions before grouting - It is always a good idea to pre-seal all sides softer-than-granite stones with a recommended solution which will reduce (not eliminate) colour intrusion from the grout into the body of the stone. With the more absorbent stones, the grouting compound must be as light as the color of the material. One should pick a colored grout matching the general color of the stone itself. Consider the use of anti bacterial grout / epoxy based grouts especially in wet areas – as these grouts will keep clean and not attract dirt or bacteria.

Sealers – Please be aware sealing works as a protector and is not stain proof. It allows you to get to the problem and clean it easier than would be the case without it. .To help protect a stone surface from staining, it is necessary to use a sealer. A good sealer allows vapor to escape through the pores of the stone, allowing it to “breathe”. Furthermore, it becomes part of the stone in that it creates a layer of hardness that helps prohibit liquids, oils, grease and dirt from penetrating into the stone. Most sealant manufacturers will tell you how long to allow for adequate curing of the stone. Most sealant manufacturers carry suitable cleaner also. Avoid using bleaching agents or abrasive cleaners on natural stone surfaces even rough textured stones, additionally, a penetrating sealer will inhibit the formation of mould, mildew, and efflorescence, as well as aiding the surface to be less slippery. Regular applications are required in areas with heavy traffic. On a daily basis, stone surfaces should be mopped to remove dust and grime. For further information - Spirit Marble & Tile Care – 9734 6937

Care of Polished Stone - Polished stone surfaces, particularly floors, present certain maintenance problems. Repeated traffic over a polished stone floor will remove the polish finish. Additionally, acids such as citric juices, perfumes, liquor and a host of other liquids, dull the luster of marble surface. This dulling process is called “etching” and there are some basic techniques for re-polishing etched areas: polishing powders and compounds such as Oxalic Acid, Aluminum Oxide, Tin Oxide, Zinc Oxide, Ferric Oxide and other acid abrasives.

Stone is a natural product and simple care and maintenance will keep it looking beautiful.

Many common foods and drinks contain acids that will etch or dull the stone surface. Use trivets or mats under hot dishes and placemats under china, ceramics, silver or other objects that can scratch the surfaces. Sand dirt and grit do the most damage to natural stone surfaces (especially polished surfaces) due to their abrasiveness. Mats or area rugs inside and outside an entrance will help minimize the sand dirt and grit that will scratch the stone floor. Be sure that the underside of the mat or rug is a nonslip surface. Normally, it will take a person about eight steps on a floor surface to remove sand or dirt from the bottom of their shoes. Do not use vacuum cleaners that are worn. The metal or plastic attachments or the wheels may scratch the surface. Clean stone surfaces with a few drops of neutral cleaner, or a mild liquid dishwashing detergent and warm water. Use a clean mop on floors and a soft cloth for other surfaces. For best results, use microfibre mops and cloths. Too much cleaner or soap may leave a film and cause streaks. Do not use products that contain lemon, vinegar or other acids on marble or limestone. Rinse the surface thoroughly after washing with the soap solution and dry with a soft cloth. Change the rinse water frequently. Do not use scouring powders or creams; these products contain abrasives that may scratch the surface. Baths, wet areas in the bath or other wet areas, soap scum can be minimized by using a squeegee after each use. To remove soap scum, use a non-acidic scum remover or a weak solution of ammonia and water, Frequent or overuse of an ammonia solution may eventually dull the surface of the stone. Vanity tops should have a penetrating sealer applied. Check with your installer for recommendations.

In outdoor pool, patio or hot tub areas, flush with clean water and use a mild bleach solution to remove algae or moss.

Do's and Don'ts

- Do clean surfaces with mild detergents or stone soap regularly.
- Do use CLEAN microfiber mops, cloths etc.
- Do thoroughly rinse and dry the surface after washing.
- Do blot up spills immediately
- Do protect floor surfaces with non-slip mats or area rugs and countertop surfaces with coasters, trivets or placemats

- Don't use vinegar, lemon juice or other cleaners containing acids on marble, limestone or travertine.
- Don't use cleaners that contain acid such as bathroom cleaners, grout cleaners or tub and tile cleaners.
- Don't use abrasive cleaners such as dry cleansers or soft cleansers.
- Don't use mops that are not clean, after each wash, the floor mop must be washed thoroughly