

Disclaimer: This document is a general reference guide for cleaning and maintaining ceramic tile. Always follow manufacturer recommendations for installing & maintaining products. If available, these are typically located in each box of tile and sometimes online.

[Recommended cleaners can be viewed & purchased here.](#)

Ceramic tile is a durable, practical and hygienic surface and can last a lifetime if cared for properly. With proper maintenance, tile and grout appearance are preserved, slip resistance can be maintained (where applicable), and hygienic benefits can be utilized. It is important to understand that not all ceramic tile is created equally. Technical and visual features such as porosity and surface finish plays a large role in scheduled maintenance and cleaning of ceramic tile. The following guide provides practical information on the care and maintenance of ceramic tile.

General Tips

- Regularly inspect tiles and have any damaged tiles professionally removed/replaced.
- Promptly wipe spills and clean with a damp cloth or sponge.
- Sweep and/or vacuum floors regularly to remove any dirt particles, dust or debris. Over time, buildup can be abrasive to the tile surface.
- Use good quality floor mats in high traffic bathrooms and areas that are susceptible to moisture (i.e. near entrance /exit ways).

Cleaning

- Use a damp mop or sponge with an all-purpose household cleaner that is not oil-based and has low VOC to clean glazed floor tiles on a regular basis.
- Wipe glazed wall tiles periodically using a dampened cloth or sponge and a non oil-based household cleaner.
- Do not combine ammonia and household bleaches and under any circumstances, do not use muriatic acid on any tiled surface.
- Thoroughly read & follow all manufacture warnings and instructions for all cleaning products before use and test all cleaning solutions and materials in a small inconspicuous area before full application.
- After using cleaning solutions, wipe down the entire area with a clean cloth or mop and clear water to remove any residue that may have been left behind.
- Do not use cleaning wax, oil based cleaners, ammonia, sealants or products containing acid or bleach as part of routine maintenance.
- Avoid abrasive cleaning products such as scouring pads or steel wool pads, as they can damage polished, shiny, or uneven surfaces
- Do not use vinegar to clean.

Grout

Routine grout cleaning can be done with an all-purpose household cleaner that is non-oil-based and has low VOC depending on the application. For periodic deep cleaning of grout, use a concentrated tile & grout cleaner. Always read and follow the instructions on the product label. Rinse the area with clear water and pat dry with a clean towel or sponge to remove any residue. As true for all tiled surfaces, do not use acidic solutions / cleaners as part of a regular maintenance routine.

- Do not use essential oils as it can penetrate the grout. These attract dust and airborne contaminants.
- Ensure the cleaning product selected is compatible with cleaning the grout joints.

Sealing

Most ceramic tile does not need to be sealed as the majority of ceramic tile on the market has a low water absorption rate. However, highly porous ceramics should be sealed with a penetrating sealer prior to installation to prevent grout from staining the tile during the grouting process. Some sealers act as a grout release, and will help facilitate the grout clean up process by preventing the formation of grout haze. If you are unsure if your tile should be sealed, check with your sales rep. Not all sealers are created equally, so make sure you have a penetrating sealer, and not a topical one. Architessa only carries top rated sealers.

Sealing the tile will also seal the grout and can prevent moisture absorption, staining & discolouration. If you choose to use a sealer, periodic re-sealing is required. Check with the sealer manufacturer to determine the sealer's lifespan, as it's based on application use and sealer type.

Tip: The primary purpose of a sealer is to provide greater stain resistance to porous tile – not to make it "stain-proof." A proper sealer should provide good to excellent stain resistance, keeping staining contaminants on or near the tile and grout surface where they can be easily removed with simple maintenance.

Crackle Finish

Crackle and special finishes have special installation, care, and maintenance. This type of finish is typically not compatible with dark colored grouts & must be sealed prior to installing. Sealing protects the crackle finish from moisture and grout that may penetrate the surface during the installation process.

Troubleshooting

Residual Coatings (Sealers/Waxes, etc.) - Use a tile sealer & adhesive remover to clear off a topical sealer or floor wax from a ceramic tile. Be sure to test a small area before full application and always follow the instructions on the product label. Working in small manageable areas, apply the sealer & adhesive remover as directed, allowing it to set without drying. Coating should begin to soften. If necessary, reapply the remover and lightly agitate the surface with a nylon scrub pad until the sealer softens and can be easily removed. Rinse the area with clear water and pat dry with a clean towel or sponge to remove any residue.

Grout Haze - After tile installation, grout residue can form a white haze like film on the surface of the tile. This can be buffed off the surface using a clean cloth once the grout has finished curing. If the residue is very stubborn or the tiles are unglazed a special grout haze remover solution may be used. Read and follow the instructions on the product label. The solution will break down the cement and allow the haze to be wiped away. Rinse the area with clear water and wipe dry with a clean towel or sponge to remove any residue. Do not use acidic solutions/cleaners as part of a regular maintenance routine. Many of the grout products on the market today are polymer modified, which means they have latex in them. Be sure to purchase a solution that is compatible with the type of grout you have used.

High Moisture Areas - Tiled surfaces in your bathroom may require a more thorough routine cleaning because of a build-up of soap scum, body oils or hard-water stains. Use a clean, damp cloth, or sponge with a neutral pH cleaner, allowing it to stand about five minutes before rinsing and drying. Specialty bathroom cleaners may also be used (always test first). Clean shower regularly in high moisture areas.