



SEALING and MAINTAINING TERRACOTTA TILES

INFORMATION SHEET

NOTE: Colour and shade variation are inherent qualities in all ceramic products.

Pre-sealing

Except for Cobble Tiles, all Middle Earth Terracotta Tiles are Factory Treated with an aqueous solution of silicate. The tiles develop their water repellent properties by reaction with atmospheric carbon dioxide.; no further pre-sealing should be required.

What are the benefits of Pre-sealing?

- Very low water absorption. However in extreme conditions any cut edges should be sealed
- Safe from water marking "window framing" when they are grouted, or the ingress of salt from some bedding mixtures
- Salt safe—suitable for salt water swimming pools
- Frost resistant—can be used outside in cold conditions
- Easy to clean after grouting
- Low maintenance—make cleaning easy, using normal cleaning agents

What other sealing is required?

Outside Installation - Normally no further sealing is required, although it is suggested as with all tile installations, the grout joints are sealed with a penetrating sealer. If, however, the area to be tiled is subjected to extreme freezing, dirty conditions or spilling of oils, a further sealing of the tiles with a spirit based penetrating sealer may be required.

Internal Installation - A further sealer or wax may be applied depending on the final surface required (shiny or matt). However if the tiles are to be exposed to oils or oily foods we recommend the tiles be sealed with a spirit based penetrating sealer before applying a wax finish.

What is a penetrating sealer?

A good penetrating sealer does not alter the appearance of the tiles or grout, yet forms an invisible barrier that repels water and stains. It passes water vapor and will not trap moisture inside the body of the tile. Apply after the grout has damp-cured, a minimum of three days.

What are the other sealer options?

Traditional - The traditional method of sealing terracotta tiles is to apply a coat of boiled linseed oil; this darkens and seals the tiles. The tiles are then buffed using Beeswax or a good quality floor wax. This will give a "tone down" appearance and provides the look of a mature surface after buffing.

The Synthetic System - Once the adhesive and grout are cured, synthetic wax finishes can be applied providing a shiny or a matt finish depending on the final surface required.

Maintenance for Both Systems

As proven over hundreds of years, with wear, Terracotta tiles achieve a style, which improves their overall appearance. For outside installations normal cleaning methods can be used.

It is important to maintain sealed Terracotta tiles with pH neutral cleaners (cleaners that do not contain acid or bleach). Acidic cleaners may affect the sealant's capabilities and longevity.

Sealer recommendation

There are a number of proprietary sealers and waxes available. Middle Earth recommends Fila products. For further information on Fila Sealers see Middle Earth Product Sheets - Fila Treatment for Tiles

IMPORTANT

Always test a small area first before applying any sealers