

# Tile and Grout Cleaning

## The TG's Report



**TG's**

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## Like A Rock... Cleaning Hard Surface Floors

*This guide is designed to provide you, with the basic introduction into the cleaning and restoration of floors. All Hard Surfaces Floor can be divided in two categories: SYNTHETIC FLOORS and NATURAL STONE*

*We will cover only the floors used commonly in today's market.*

### SYNTHETIC FLOORS

**CERAMIC TILE** – Ceramic Tile is clay fired man-made material. Surface in glazed ceramic not normally require any protective treatment. It is the glaze itself that gives the material its excellent protection against the absorption of dirt.

**VCT-TILE** – Vinyl Composition Tile contains vinyl resins and comes in a wide variety of colors. It is an extremely dense yet porous floor and has a good resistance to acid, alkaline and solvent base spots and spills. It is highly resilient and is most commonly found in commercial use.

**QUARRY TILE and PAVER BRICK** – Quarry Tiles are an unglazed ceramic material that are particularly suitable for exterior paving, due to their low adsorption and resistance to freezing (the high baking temperatures and high quality of the clay, with other raw materials make this type of floor, one of the most durable in the market today).

**PORCELAIN TILE** - Is a very hard material that is particularly resistant to chemical agents, scratches, freezing and to the absorption of water. It is ideal for paving floors in public places such as restaurants, airports, schools, hospitals and shopping centers. This produces the “polished” version with its mirror-like shine. However, unlike the “natural” or unpolished versions, it is subject to marking.



**TERRA-COTTA TILE (knows as “SALTILLO TILE”)** – One of the oldest ceramic materials made by man, this type of floor is obtained by mixing clay and water, leaving this to dry naturally, then baking it in a kiln. Saltillo Tile has particular characteristics of a physical (absorption), mechanical (special finish), and compositional (for the different types of clay) nature that demand special treatment.

(See *Natural Stone* on back)

## NATURALSTONE (from front page)

**MARBLE** – Is known as a calcium carbonate stone, and has been a metamorphic rock, marble reacts to acids and give a high gloss appearance - is acid sensitive and scratches easily; most Marble stone have veins, swirls and bands. For cleaning and restoration purposes, the most suitable method should be chosen according to the level of wear.

**SLATE** – Is classified as a “rough” material with a low absorption. Slate can be found both an interiors and exteriors, and rarely have a high polish unless a coating is placed on it. A good quality silicone impregnate or sealer can protect the stone and generated more durability.

**TERRAZZO** – Terrazzo is a mixture of Portland cement and Marble chips. These chips can range in size from a fraction of an inch to as large to several inches. The very good side about Terrazzo is it can be ground, honed and polish just like Marble and can be easily mistaken for Granite.

**GRANITE** – Granite is an extremely hard natural stone with low porosity, normally given a polished finish. Granite paving is not usually treated; in this case waterproofing the material is recommended, especially if is laid in places such kitchens or bathrooms.

**TRAVERTINE** – Is limestone that has been formed in hot springs. A polished travertine will have its holes filled with color-matched Portland cement filler. These fillers do not take a high polish thus the overall polish tends to look blotchy.

**FLAGSTONE** – Is the term given to almost all-stone material cut into thin, irregular shapes. Found extensively on sidewalks, foyer entrance, pool decks, flagstone can be almost any material but is commonly the SANDSTONE type. Flagstone should not be ground and should only be cleaned and sealed.



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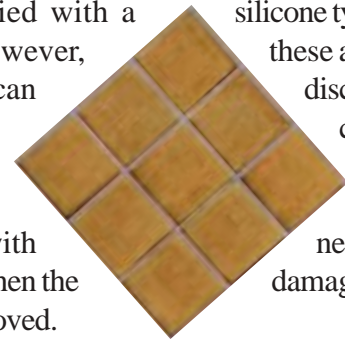
## **GROUT: To Seal or Not To Seal**

**G**ROUT is the (usually) thin line of mortar that separates each tile. Grout is basically a cement type of material mixed with water and

placed between each tile to keep them uniformly separated. Most builders do not seal the grout when first installing. (We don't know why). However, grout should be sealed to keep it stain and water resistant.

Grout sealing comes in a wide range of prices - and in this case, price and value do relate. The higher price the sealer, the longer it will last on the grout. Grout sealers can come in three finishes: 1) Flat - does not have any discernible appearance when dry. 2) Semigloss - there is a slight shine. 3) High gloss - grout will appear to shine when dry. The type of finish usually is chosen based on the type of finish of the tile. Ceramic tiles are usually shiny and thus the grout will follow that motif. All grouts will darken with age.

Some grouts are applied with a already mixed in. However, susceptible to soil and can order. When grout has been damaged by sharp object gouging it, replaced. New grout with color can be placed in when the been professionally removed.



silicone type sealant these are discolor in quick chipped or weight or it must be nearly the exact damaged grout has

Grout can be recolored. New technologies now makes it possible to recolor grout either to the exact original color, or another entirely different one. Like all decorations in one's home, tile and grout may not fit the present desired decor. So changing the grout color can actually make the floor look very different.

Grout should be cleaned with a forced steam extraction method.

If the tile is installed properly, dropping things on the tile should not chip it. If it is chipped, repair is in need for the protection that tile offers to the floor is quickly compromised.

Tile, of any kind, should offer many years or nearly trouble free maintenance. But the grout should be cleaned and sealed every 3-5 years, depending on the type of traffic. Call a certified professional cleaner who has experience in tile and grout cleaning for this service.