

# BERT & MAY ENCAUSTIC TILES INSTALLATION GUIDE

This document is designed as a guidance note for certified trade professionals. Please note that it is essential to wear suitable protective eyewear and clothing when cutting or drying tiles.

## CUTTING

We recommend that either a diamond cutter or an angle grinder is used to cut encaustic tiles. Whilst cutting or drilling tiles, the surface of the tile may become wet and/or dirty. Wipe the tile clean immediately after cutting.

## PRE-INSTALLATION PREPARATION

Bert & May recommends that the tiles are the last material to be installed during a building project. The top layer of encaustic tiles is very delicate and should be handled with care. Please handle tiles in pairs facing each other, to protect the design. Should you need to smooth the edge of your tiles before installation, please use a 180 – 200 grit sanding pad. Clean the back of the tiles by submerging them briefly in water (in pairs facing each other), this will remove any dust gathered on the tiles and improve adherence. Before installing encaustic tiles, the floor must be clean, free from dust and moisture. Please ensure new floor screeds are dry.

## INSTALLATION

Apply adhesive to the floor using a notched trowel, working in small areas in parallel lines, spread only enough adhesive (we recommend Mapei Keraflex) that remains workable. Then, apply the adhesive in the same method to the back of the tile. We recommend using grout spacers with minimum 1mm between tiles, although the tiles can be butt jointed if required. However, if the tiles are being installed outside, we would recommend a minimum spacing of 2mm between tiles. Ensure the tiles are level by using a spirit level and do not step on the tiles for a least 6hrs (if using rapid set adhesive) or preferably overnight.

After this, all moisture must be released from the body and surface of the tile prior to sealing. The longer you can leave the tiles, the greater assurance you have that they have dried out, that the adhesive liquid has evaporated out through them and they are acclimatized to your home. Please remember to protect your tiles from liquids and heavy foot traffic.

## PRE-GROUT TREATING

It is important to protect the tiles before grouting. Ensure your tiles are clean and dust free before moving on to the next step. Should you need to wash the tiles, use PH neutral soap and water or PH neutral floor cleaner. Should you need to remove any building residues from the tiles, we recommend using FILAPS87 PRO, which should be diluted with water as per the instructions on the bottle.

Ensure the tiles are dry and impregnate with Pre grout protector FILAPRW200, according to the instructions on the bottle x 1-2 coats. The first coat should be applied using very little product at a time but really working it into the surface of the tile using a clean dry paintbrush or foam roller. Use a brush to apply the product to the edges of the tiles. Wipe off any excess on the surface of the tiles with a clean cloth. This prevents streaks being left on the surface of the tile once the coat is dry. Apply a second coat 2-3 hours after first application. Once finished, leave the tiles to cure for at least 24 hours. The pre-grout treatment creates a waxy barrier on the surface of the tiles which allows any excess grout to be easily wiped off and stop grout from staining the tiles.

## GROUTING

Remember to treat before grouting. We recommend using light coloured grout on light coloured tiles. If you do choose to use a dark grout, we recommend taking extra care to clean the surface of the tile throughout the grouting process. Ensure the surface of the tiles are free from dust and adhesive before you begin the grouting process.

We recommend point grouting as spread grouting is likely to sit in the porous surface of an encaustic tile, or a grouting gun can be used. Sponge the area to be grouted with clean water before applying the grout, working in small areas. Replace the water when needed, it is essential that the water and sponge is always clean. The tiles should be kept clean throughout the process, wiping off any excess grout before it has time to dry. Allow the grout to dry for 24 hours.

## POST GROUT CLEANING

To remove the pre-grout protector and clean the tiles before sealing, degrease with Fila PS87PRO. Dilute in water (1:5) and apply on the surface with a cloth. Leave to act for 10 minutes before brushing with a nylon brush or an abrasive sponge (avoiding any metal based cleaning tools). Use a cloth or "aqua vac" to remove residues and then wash the surface thoroughly again with clean water.

## SEALING

Once happy with the look of your installed tiles, tiles should be sealed with Fila MP90 ECO XTREME. Start by ensuring the tiles are clean and dried. Apply MP90 ECOXTREME evenly, using a paintbrush or fleece pad, also soaking the grout lines well. We would recommend two coats with a 20 minute interval. Being a natural stone, the sealer will absorb into the tiles differently in different areas, any excess sealant must be absorbed off the surface using a clean cloth to avoid any mottling on the surface. For shower rooms or high traffic areas, a third coat of sealer is advised.

The tiles can be walked on after 4 hours and fully cured in 24 hours. An easy test to see if the floor is fully dry after sealing is to place a few drops of water on the tiles, if it forms a bead then it has worked, if the tiles absorb the water then the sealing process needs to be repeated. If you choose to add a satin finish to your tiles, you can use FILAMATT Natural – Effect protective wax, this should not be used in bathroom settings. This can be beneficial in a kitchen as it makes the tiles more wipeable.

Bert & May recommend professional advice is sought from a certified trade professional.

## ONGOING MAINTENANCE

We recommend for day to day cleaning of your tiles to use Fila CLEANER PRO, or PH neutral floor cleaners, avoiding anything too abrasive, acidic or bleach which can affect the sealer on the tiles.

For a deep clean, FILAPS87 degreaser can be used and a reseal of the tiles with FILAMP90 required.

Resealing every 2-3 years may be required in wetrooms, bathrooms, showers or high traffic areas.