

MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES FOR CERAMIC/PORCELAIN FLOORING

GROUT CARE

- Grout is the mortar type material used to fill the spaces between the individual tiles. Its purpose is simply to fill the joint between the tiles and become a permanent, integral part of the floor.
- Neither sealing the grout nor using a 100% Epoxy Grout will guarantee against surface build up or discoloration of the grout.
- Grout needs to be cleaned on a periodic basis to remove any surface residue build up.
- This routine cleaning can be performed with a neutral pH hard surface cleaner.
- When deep cleaning of the grout is required, use a professional strength tile and grout cleaner to restore the color of the grout lines. Follow instructions from the chemical manufacturer.

POST GROUTING INSTALLATION CLEAN-UP

- Grout haze is a film left behind on the surface of the tile as part of the final grouting process. It is normally buffed off the surface after the grout has cured for 12-24 hours using a cheese cloth material. If after 48 hours the grout haze is still visible, then use a "grout haze remove" which usually contains Sulfamic Acid. Sulfamic Acid should only be used on porcelain or ceramic tile.
- In cases where Epoxy Grout is used, use an "Epoxy Haze Remover". These cleaners are formulated to quickly and safely remove Epoxy grout haze.

PREVENTION

- Maintain a clean exterior (sidewalks, parking lots) where dirt enters the building.
- Use walk-off mats at entrances, transition areas and special areas such as food service/restrooms to confine soil, oil, grease and high moisture areas. Additional matting may be necessary during periods of inclement weather. Always keep mats clean.
- Use appropriate floor protectors on furniture, we recommend heavy duty felt protection. Metal protectors can rust and stain the surface of the flooring.
- Protect floor when moving heavy objects to prevent damage to the surface.

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Allow the new porcelain tile and grout to dry for at least 72 hours before any type of maintenance occurs.
- Sweep, dust mop or vacuum the floors to remove soil particles that can scratch the surface. **Do not** use vacuums with rotating beater bars on hard surfaces. Dust mop treatments are **not** recommended.
- All spills should be addressed quickly to avoid staining and slip/fall hazards.
- Absorb wet spills and if necessary, use a neutral pH cleaner and rinse with water. Always blot dry.
- Make sure the cleaner used is a neutral pH cleaner and will **not** stain the grout.
- Never use a detergent or soap as this will cause a residue build up that will dull the surface.
- **Do not** use cleaners with acids, chlorine, vinegar or ammonia as these chemicals can damage the grout and/or the surface of the floor.
- Wet mop using a neutral pH cleaner on a schedule based on traffic level. Always rinse with water after wet cleaning. **Use two buckets when mopping- One bucket with cleaner, one bucket for straining the mop. Shaw recommends using a flat microfiber mop.**
- **Restaurant installations: Use a higher pH (8.5-9.5) cleaner to cut through airborne grease or grease from the kitchen. (Diversey-GP Forward, Ecolab- Maxx Dual Action are two examples).**

DEEP CLEANING

- Periodically, the floor will need to be deep cleaned using a cylindrical brush scrubber and neutral pH cleaner. Always rinse with water after scrubbing the floor to remove any remaining residue.
- Use safety signs when wet cleaning the floor to prevent safety hazards.