



NATALIE
BLAKE
STUDIOS

Grouting Instructions



- 1) **Pre-installation care:** Prior to installation, keep bubble wrap, non-lint cloth, or 12” pieces of foam roll, between the tile to keep them from chipping the carved details, or marring matte glazes.
- 2) **Sealing:** Tiles with matte and/or porous textured surfaces need to be sealed thoroughly before grouting. Tiles with semi-sheen to gloss surfaces do not need sealing. We use 511 Porous Plus Natural Look Penetrating Sealer.
- 3) **Mortar:** We use Full Flex Thin Set for interior installations. For large format and/or exterior installations we use Laticrete 254 Platinum or the equivalent.
- 4) **Sawing and Cutting:** A standard tile wet saw is used to cut the tile. The carving details can chip off if one moves too fast through the blade, so take it easy. Matte finishes will need to be sealed thoroughly before cutting as the cutting residue can permeate the porous surface and then become difficult to clean. Should cutting residue get on the tile before it has a chance to be sealed, use a clean toothbrush and mild detergent with warm water, to gently remove the cutting dust. Do NOT use rags or sponges that might leave lint.
- 5) **Back buttering:** One of the best features of our tile is its undulation. To install the tile properly, we recommend you butter the tile only where the tile will touch the wall. The tiles should have at least 50% of the surface area buttered, which will provide sufficient hold for the weight of the tile (approximately 4 - 4.5 pounds each). **Use top grade full flex mortar.** For larger tile, fill the undulation with some mortar and let it set up until fully dry, creating more surface area for buttering, should there be some concern about adhesion.
- 6) **Trowel Size:** ¼ inch V-notch trowel.
- 7) **Grouting:** Glazes with an obvious sheen surface can be grouted and wiped with an ordinary grouting sponge and will not risk damage. Glazes with an obvious matte texture that may be slightly rough to the touch should be grouted with extreme care. This is to avoid getting grout embedded in the more porous, matte glazes. A grout bag

with a round tip can be used to fill grout lines between tiles. Mask off the tile with masking tape or blue painter's tape, pressing the tape into the crevices of the carving as best you can. Apply grout with the grout bag. Use a gentle thumb pressure to smooth the grout bead, but do not smear it into the porous surface of the tile.

8) **Cleaning:** Tiles with semi-sheen to gloss surfaces can be washed with a soft rag or sponge and mild detergent. A green 3-M scrub pad can be used gently to remove scuffmarks on most glazes. Mild soap and water can be used. Clean grout staining away with sulfuric acid crystals in water. Use a small foam brush, squeeze out excess water & rub it on the tile over grout stains.

9) **Sealing:** Our tile is extremely versatile and can be installed indoors and outdoors, in bathrooms, kitchens, pools and saunas. Be sure when grouting for an outside cold weather application not to CREATE pockets in the grouting process where water can pool and freeze and therefore expand and crack the glazed surface. Seal grout with grout sealer. Tiles will not be harmed by use of grout sealer.



Rev. 6/6/2016