

Tiling Guide - the road to success

Introduction

You have become the proud owner of our newly made Delft tiles. To achieve the best look & feel and to make sure the tiles will last for a long time, we hereby present to you our installation guide. We always recommend to work with a professional tiler, preferably someone who is experienced with natural stones, zelliges and other type of tiles that vary in size and thickness.

Technical specifications

The basis technical details of our newly made Delft tiles.

- Tile size (approximately): 13 by 13 cm's / 5.1" by 5.1"
- Tile thickness (approximately): 7 to 8 mm's / 0.3"
- Quantity per m² / SF: 60 tiles per m² / 5.5 tiles per SF

Where can these tiles be used?

Our Delft wall tiles are suitable to use for most indoor wall installations, such as:

- Walls
- Fireplace surrounds and interior
- Ceilings
- Kitchens
- Bathrooms, incl. wet rooms

Important – the tiles can be used in the interior of a fireplace, as long as they are not exposed to open fire. The tiles will survive, but might become completely covered in sooth. Therefore we only recommend to this when there is no open fire.

Where not to use these tiles?

Our Delft tiles are not meant to be used in the following or similar installations:

- Floors
- Swimming pools
- Outdoors
- In an area where they are directly exposed to open fire

What do you need to get started?

Preparation is key! We always recommend to work with a skilled tiler, as the circumstance of each installation can be different and requires specific knowledge. In addition most tile work requires the following materials:

- Primer
- Mortar or glue
- Diamond saw
- Laser
- Glass cleaner and sponge

Tile preparation

Easy to do, but essential for the best result:

- Before installing the tiles, make sure they have been stored at room temperature where they have not been exposed to moisture. Preferably the tiles are stored in the room where they are going to be installed.
- Depending on the type of order, we have packed the tiles mixed (plain white) or separated. An installation of mixed plain white tiles can be installed directly from the box. If there are decorated tiles involved or if the shades of white of the mix have been packed separately, we recommend to create the desired layout on the floor first. It allows you to puzzle with the tiles and to be completely in control of the look and feel of the installation.

Surface preparation

The surface on which the tiles are going to be installed determines the materials used and the preparations the tiler needs to take before he or she can get started.

•Humidity level

Checking the humidity level is a crucial step. This helps prevent problems such as mold formation and poor adhesion of materials. The humidity of the wall must be below 8%.

• Plaster substrate

A primer is used on plaster substrates to reduce the absorbency of the plaster and promote better adhesion.

• Smooth surfaces like plexiglass

For smooth surfaces, a bonding primer is important to ensure proper adhesion. For example, the brand Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 or KILZ Adhesion.

• Stone or plastered wall

Ensure that the wall is flat and dry. Once the humidity drops below 8%, a primer can be applied.

In the Netherlands most of the tilers use Eurocol 099 as a primer.

Adhesives

Tiles can be placed by the use of an adhesive such as mortar or glue. Glue or similar adhesives are primarily used on smooth, sleek walls and are also suitable for smaller-sized tiles. Mortar is mainly used on walls with a coarser texture. So, both are possible, depending on the surface and on the preference of the tiler. The type of adhesive used therefore depends on the type of surface the tiles are going to be placed. The tiles themselves do not require specific adhesives.

There is no specific brand that we recommend, but brands our tilers often use are:

- COBA (EU) : a flexible paste adhesive
- Sakrete, Schönox, Knauff, Unilit (EU) : well-functioning mortars

Every situation is different, and the tiler will ultimately need to make the right decision regarding the materials that are used.

Installing the tiles

Our tilers use the following basic principles to accomplish the iconic ‘Delft tile’ look.

- Start tiling from the center of an installation
- Wedges or spacers are not required; using them restricts the flexibility for corrections.
- Install by eye; most adhesives allow you to make minor adjustments within a 10 to 20 minute time frame after placing it.

Cutting

Delft tiles may be cut on site with a tile cutter. Use a wet saw with a diamond blade for a cleaner finish and allow to dry fully.

Grouting the tiles

If the tiles have been set with an adhesive such as glue, grouting can be done after approximately 1 hour. If mortar has been used, grouting can only be done after 48 hours. The preferred size for the grout lines is 1 to 2 mm (0.04” to 0.08”). For the best visual effect, we recommend choosing a silver-grey colour with a sanded structure, avoiding too dark or too bright tones. After grouting, clean the wall with a glass cleaner and a damp sponge.

Sealer

The tiles do not require a sealer from a functionality perspective. In wet rooms one may decide to use a sealer to prevent natural crazing



Figure 1 - Natural crazing in a wet room (disappears again after a while)

Tips and tricks – do's and don'ts

Install all delivered tiles at once, avoid working with cutouts to insert a portion of the tiles between the already placed ones at a later stage.

- Avoid using large grout lines in contrasting tones;
- Once grouted, sponge once after placement. Do not repeat this. This prevents pigment loss in the grout.
- Grout in a timely manner to allow for some adjustment.
- Always set tiles dry, do not moisten the tiles or the surface beforehand.

Contact us for more information:

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