

Tiling Facts

The Australian Tile Council is, among other things, dedicated to providing consumers with the information necessary to make informed decisions about who measures, supplies and fixes the tiles for any tiling job.

The Australian Tile Council recommends consumers use only qualified and licensed tilers who will have the knowledge to accurately assess the needs of the project, quote appropriately and trouble shoot when necessary. This will ensure that certain requirements are met, the standards are adhered to and finished job looks good and will stand the test of time.

Your local Australian Council Tile member will be able to recommend tradespeople, however, it is up to you to decide on an appropriate tradesperson for the job.

Wall tiling:

To calculate your area in square meters, multiply the length by the height of each wall to be tiled. When ordering the tiles add an extra 10% for waste & cuts. You will require an even, flat surface to tile on. Preparing the walls is a vital part of the tiling process - failure to do so will result in an unsatisfactory finish.

Waterproof wet areas according to the manufacturer's specifications prior to tiling.

Cement render should be left to cure for at least 4 weeks and must be thoroughly dry before tiling. Old plaster is suitable, provided it is sound and well supported with the board being a minimum of 10mm thick and 12mm off the floor.

Planning your layout is essential. Choose your starting point to create a balanced visual appearance.

Trowelling should be done horizontally. Spread the adhesive onto the wall, working on small areas at a time. Tiles must be fixed before the surface of the adhesive forms a skin. The tile is then adjusted to its final position with an up & down movement so that full coverage is obtained to the back of the tile. The size of trowel used should be approximately as follows:

Tile Size	Trowel Size
152x152mm	6x6mm notch
200x200mm	8x8mm notch
250x250mm	10x10mm notch
300x300mm and over	12x12mm notch plus back buttering

Wall adhesives:

There are many different types of adhesives available in the market. As substrates and conditions of the projects vary, it is imperative that you follow the instructions and advice of the tile merchant and strictly adhere to the instructions of the manufacturer. The Australian Standards (3956.1) require that wall tiling in residential areas must have a minimum adhesive coverage of 65% for wet areas and external walls require a minimum of 90%.

Do not begin grouting for at least 16 hours after fixing unless you are using a fast set adhesive that allows grouting before this, and ensure that all joints are free of adhesive.

Use the correct grout for your application - ask your merchant for assistance if you are unsure. Fill the joints using a flexible spreader or grouter, forcing the grout into the clean joints. Use a sponge to remove excess grout from the face of the tiles, making sure to leave the grout joints as full as possible. Polish with a dry cloth.

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Floor tiling:

To calculate your area in square meters, multiply the length by the width of the room. When ordering tiles, add an extra 10% for waste & cuts (15% if laying diagonally)

The proper preparation of the surface will make the fixing easier and quicker ensuring a better finish. The surface should be flat with a tolerance of 4mm over a distance of 2 meters. It is essential that you waterproof wet areas prior to tiling.

New concrete is recommended to be 1 month old for every 25mm thickness and completely dried before tiling. It should also be a wood float finish, flat and free from dirt, dust and oils. Wooden floors must be rigid, stable and capable of the extra load without flexing. Generally an underlay will be required to tile on wooden floors.

Expansion joints should be used as per Australian Standards 3956.1.

Floor adhesives:

Generally, it is recommended to use normal or fast setting adhesives. However, always consult your tile merchant for detailed advice and always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Mix the adhesive as per manufacturer's instructions and spread with a notch trowel. Place each tile into the adhesive firmly with a backward and forward movement to ensure a solid bed and to prevent any voids under the tile. Be careful to remove any surplus adhesive from the surface of the tile and joints with a damp sponge/cloth.

Work in small areas of about 1 square metre at a time so that the tiles are fixed before the adhesive forms a skin. Occasionally use a spirit level or straight edge to check that the tiles are flat. If needed, remove and adjust the amount of adhesive, being careful not to leave it too long or the adhesive will set.

Note: Lippage is inherent in all installations and may be unavoidable due to tile tolerances.

To prevent the chance of disturbing the bonding process, do not walk on or grout floor tiles for at least 24 hour, unless a rapid set adhesive has been used. Force the grout into the joints using a grouter, removing all surplus grout from the surface with a sponge and water.

Shower bases:

Shower bases should have a gradient of 1:80. That is to say, an average shower base of 800mm x 800mm there should be a gradient of 10-14mm. This is to allow for complete drainage of water.

Cutting Tiles:

Generally, floor tiles are harder to cut than wall tiles. Modern tools make most cutting requirements simple. Ask your tile merchant to advise you on the best method for your application.