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## How to Install Ceramic Floor Tile

This step by step guide is a handy tool when tiling a floor yourself. Your Tile Liquidator Sales Representative will be able to answer any additional questions you may have.

### Step #1- Prep the Subfloor

#### Tools needed for Step #1 and Step #2-



**Carpenters Square**  
Straight edge and squaring tool



**Chalk Line**  
Use for guideline when laying out the tile



**Fiberglass Tape**  
Tape joints of backerboard



**1 1/4" Backerboard Screws**  
To secure down the backerboard



**Level**  
Used for straight edge and working level line.



**Tape Measure**  
Use for accurate measurements.

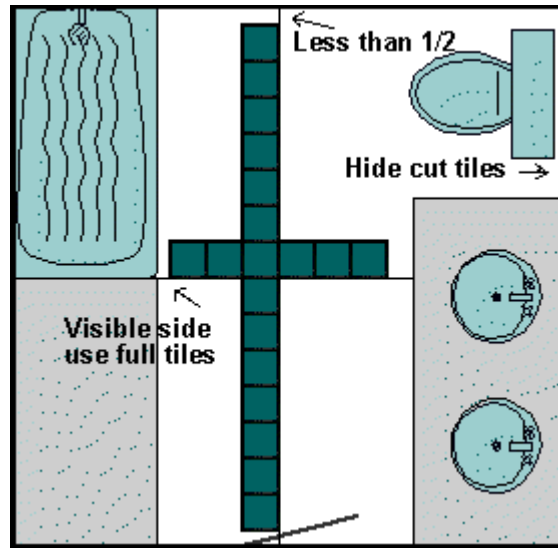


**Utility Knife**  
Cutting underlayment

Whether you are tiling over concrete or a plywood subfloor, you must have a structurally sound, completely flat and clean surface to tile over. The subfloor should be at least 3/4" thick. Any high edges should be sanded down before you begin to lay underlayment. All loose paint, oil, grease or concrete curing compound must be removed by scraping, sanding or using a neutral cleaner. If going over plywood you need to thinset and screw down the underlayment. When putting denshield into place do not leave more than a 1/4" gap between each piece. The underlayment should be thinset first and then step on it to ensure it is adhered to the subfloor, then screw it down every 6" inches. Cement floor can be tiled directly over using a latex modified thinset. See your Tile Liquidators salesperson about other methods of prepping the floor such as self leveling or in-floor heat.

## Step #2- Layout

This step you will begin by snapping two chalk lines at a 90 degree intersection. If possible you will want to do this in the center of the room. For any unusual shaped rooms please consult your Tile Liquidators sale representative. They will explain in detail the best way to lay out your room. Taking the time and care to lay out your room before you begin to set tile will help you to solve any problems before you begin with the adhesive.



### Step #3- Mixing the Adhesive

Tools needed:



#### **2 Buckets**

Use these for  
grout and adhesive



#### **Mixer Bar**

Use to mix mortar

To prepare for this step have the room which you are tiling and all the materials and adhesives at a 50 to 70 degree temperature 24 to 48 hours before you begin the project. You will begin by mixing your latex fortified thinset and clean water to a “peanut butter” consistency. Consult your Tile Liquidator Sales Representative on which type of thinset they would recommend for the type of tile you will be setting. It is important to only mix the amount that you think you will be able to set in 30 minutes. To keep the thinset at the correct consistency mix it occasionally, however, do not add more water to it as this will only weaken the mixture.

In the event that your surface has a residue that you cannot remove or you are tiling over existing tile, please consult your Tile Liquidator Sales Representative for the correct type of adhesive to use.

## Step #4- Setting the Tile- Tools needed-



**Rubber Gloves**



**Knee pads**

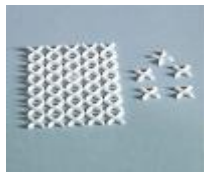


**Wet Saw**



**Tile Cutter:**

Used for straight cuts.



**Tile Spacers**



**Tile Nippers**

Used for notching tile or chipping away smaller pieces of the tile.



**Notched Trowel**



**Margin Trowel:**

Use to mix mortar or grout.

Now you will begin applying the thinset to your subfloor or concrete. To do this, use the flat side of the trowel to scoop out the thinset from the bucket. Then take the trowel at a 45 degree angle to spread out the thinset. Pull the trowel straight back towards you, do not put on the thinset in a circular motion, as this will create different heights in the mortar. Keep in mind to only spread out enough thinset to tile an area in about 15 minutes so the thinset will stay tacky enough to adhere to the tile. When setting the tiles slightly twist them into place and press lightly into the thinset. Use the tile spacers to insure proper spacing in between each tile. Avoid air bubbles or pockets under the tile by using a rubber mallet to lightly tap on the top of the tile to completely adhere the tile to the thinset. Before you set a tile into the thinset always check to make sure the thinset is still sticky enough to adhere.

## Step #5- Tiling is done-

**STAY OFF THE TILE FOR 24 HOURS.  
NO HEAVY TRAFFIC FOR 72 HOURS.**

## Step #6- Grouting the Floor- Tools Needed:



**Grout Float**  
Use to apply grout



**Grout Sponge**  
Will not leave excess  
liquid, is very absorbent



**Buckets**  
For mixing grout in  
and for clean water.

You will wait for the thinset to dry for **24 HOURS**. Then you are ready to begin grouting. First you will need to pull out all the spacers. In order to keep your grout color as consistent as possible throughout the whole project you must keep the amount of water, the room temperature, and the procedure for mixing and applying the grout the same. This will eliminate the possibility of the grout coming out different shades in different areas of the room.

### **Step #7- How to mix the grout-**

You will mix the grout with a latex flexible admixture to a “peanut butter” consistency. Do not mix more than you can use in about twenty minutes. Again, be very consistent on all your mixing procedures. Mix the grout well, making sure all the pigments are mixed in and wet. Allow 5 minutes for the grout to stand and mix again. Keep your timing for mixing each batch the same.

### **Step #8- Applying the Grout-**

Using the grout float work the grout into the tile joints, filling them completely. Take the edge of the grout float and skim off the excess grout. Next you will immediately follow with a damp grout sponge to wipe all the tile clean. Work in small sections at a time as to keep from having the grout dry on the top of the tile. Keep a bucket of clean water near by to frequently rinse the sponge out. Change the water often to keep it as clean as possible. Clean off as much of the grout as possible from the face of the tile. A slight film will be left which can easily be buffed off with a rag later. Be careful not step on or kneel on the grout lines for approximately 3 hours. Grout and tile may be washed with clean cool water after 12 hours. This should remove any grout haze left on the tile and help the grout to cure properly.



Working grout into grout joints.



Clean grout off tile with clean damp sponge.

## **Step #9- Final step- Sealing the grout-**

Grout must dry for 72 hours before putting on the sealer. The grout sealer is important to maintain the color and keep maintenance to minimum. Go down the grout lines with sealer and wipe any excess sealer that gets on to the tile off with a clean cloth or paper towel immediately.



## **Tool Checklist:**

1. Carpenter's Square
2. Fiber glass tape
3. Level
4. Tape measure
5. 2 Buckets
6. Backerboard Screws
7. Chalk Line
8. Tile Spacers
9. Scrub Pad
10. Grout Float
11. Rubber gloves
12. Mixer Bar
13. Grout Sponge
14. Rub Stone
15. Tile Nippers
16. Notched Trowel
17. Tile Cutter
18. Wet Saw
19. Notched Margin Trowel
20. Margin Float
21. Margin Trowel