

INFORMATION & GUIDELINES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF LIMESTONE TILE

Important: While limestone is suitable for exterior applications, special care regarding the use of waterproof membranes, grouting and sealing is required. As these installation recommendations speak to the basic method for installing limestone, SOLI recommends contacting a professional installer to discuss best practices for your specific project.

SUBSTRATES

All substrates should be firmly fixed, flat, clean, dry and free of contaminants such as dust, oil, paint, sealers etc. to ensure proper adhesion. Painted surfaces must be scuffed or sanded for the product and adhesive to bond correctly. Wet areas need special attention and require appropriate substrates, e.g. concrete, cement boards (compressed sheet), and/or treated plywood. The use of reinforced waterproof membranes is suggested, and in the case of floors, a fall to the drainage point of no less than two inches. The use of metal lathing is recommended for larger heavier stones to ensure maximum support of the structure.

WATERPROOF MEMBRANES

Waterproof membranes prevent leakage of water through to the sub-floor framing and/or habitable spaces below. Particular attention must be paid to: carrying the membrane up the wall, outside shower boxes, installation of bond breakers, and sealing around penetrations. It is strongly recommended that membrane systems be used in all wet areas. Some systems may involve the use of a primer.

CUTTING

Cuts can be made to the limestone tiles with a wet saw or hand grinder using a diamond or masonry blade.

ADHESIVE

Follow the adhesive manufacturer's instructions carefully. We do not recommend one brand of adhesive over another. Please check with your local tile supply store for alternative and comparable products.

Some tiles may be backed with a mesh backing made of resin, which reinforces the tile during transportation. This backing must be scored prior to the application of thinset so that the adhesive fully adheres to the stone.

The manufacturer's literature will explain if the adhesive product is suitable for interiors and/or exteriors, as well as walls and floors. Most thinset mortars (multi purpose and polymer modified thinsets) are adequate for installing natural stones. A cement-based adhesive is generally suitable on masonry substrates where no movement is anticipated. Where slight movement could occur through thermal or pedestrian loads, a modified cement adhesive should be used as a minimum. A bonding agent is recommended for larger heavier stones.

It is very important that each stone is embedded in the adhesive. To make sure there is 100% coverage, you can tap the stones into the adhesive with a rubber mallet.

GROUTING

Grout may not be necessary depending on the method of installation and the type of limestone you are using. If using a tile with a rectified edge, a non-sanded grout will be suitable, as typically those grout joints will be 1/8" or smaller. You also have the option of creating a butt-joint installation. It is important to wait the interval recommended by the adhesive manufacturer before grouting to minimize dirt ingress between the tiles and avoid the opportunity for dislodging of the tiles.

SEALANTS

To prevent possible staining and discoloration we recommend sealing all limestone tiles BEFORE installation and AFTER grouting. Due to the porosity of this product, multiple applications may be necessary.

BEFORE applying sealant, wash the tiles and let dry for 24-48 hours. This will ensure that moisture is not present under the surface of the tile. Failure to allow tiles to dry completely before application will result in permanent discolorations. We recommend testing all sealants on a single tile before application.

(continued on page 2)

SOLILANDSURFACES

There are various products available on the market, however, we recommend contacting your nearest tile supplier for the most appropriate sealer for your application.

You can change the look and color of the stones depending on the sealer you select ranging from color enhancement, to different levels of gloss finishes, or just leaving them natural. Whenever using sealants and acids, please ensure that you follow the manufacturer's recommended method of application.

CARE & CLEANING

Limestone tiles must be regularly cleaned and maintained to extend the life and beauty of the installation. The stones can be cleaned with a neutral mild detergent, or a PH neutral cleaner specifically for natural stones. All natural stones are porous and have different levels of water absorption and therefore staining may occur in different degrees if the stone is left unsealed.

Consequently, any spills should be cleaned quickly to lessen the degree of the stain. For tiles in high traffic areas, keep surfaces clean from abrasive dirt. Do not use abrasive cleaners, powders, scouring pads, steel wool or sandpaper. Do not let soap, bleach or other cleaning solutions set on the surface.