

INFORMATION & GUIDELINES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF MARBLE

Important: While marble 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

All cuts to marble tiles can be made with a wet saw using a diamond 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.

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. If using these tiles in a wet application and the back of the tile has nylon mesh glued to it, it is recommended that you lightly score the back of the tiles diagonally in a grid pattern with a masonry grinder. Stay 1/4" away from the perimeter edge of the tile when doing this. In addition, it will be necessary to back-butter the product with the flat edge of a trowel. This process will ensure that each individual tile will adhere to the surface and guarantee longevity of the product in a wet application.

GROUTING

If you are doing a butt-joint installation, grout may not be necessary. Grout should be designed for external or internal conditions whichever may be the case. If you are leaving a grout joint 1/8" or smaller, non-sanded grout is recommended.

SEALANTS

To prevent possible staining and discoloration, we recommend sealing all marble tiles BEFORE installation, and if using grout, AFTER the grouting process.

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

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CARE & CLEANING

Marble tiles must be regularly cleaned and maintained to extend the life and beauty of the tile. The tiles can be cleaned with a neutral mild detergent, or a PH neutral cleaner. Staining may occur if the tile 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.