

ENCAUSTIC INSTALLATION GUIDE

Claybrook Encaustic tiles are hand-produced using natural pigments, therefore the tiles may have subtle variation in colour, pattern and size. When you first receive your order please check that you have the correct quantity, and that the tiles are in good condition. Do not store the tiles where they will be exposed to sun, rain, or excessive humidity as this may lead to the surface becoming permanently marked or stained.

Whilst our Encaustic tiles are coated with a sealer during production, this is only designed to protect the tile's surface during transport and storage. We therefore recommend the application of a sealer before and after grouting.

PRE-INSTALLATION PROCESS

Before installing the tiles, we recommend that you shuffle tiles from different boxes/crates and dry-lay them across the area to be tiled. This will ensure that any variation between tiles is blended across the floor. Installing Encaustic tiles is a more complex process than installing machine made tiles, so be sure to employ an experienced tiler that has installed Encaustic tiles before and follows the correct installation, sealing and finishing process.

INSTALLATION PROCESS

Your tiler will need to correctly prepare the tiling substrate to ensure it is flat, level, solid and clean before they start laying the tiles. If being used over underfloor heating, this should only be a floor warming system, not a sole source system.

We recommend sealing the tiles before installing as this helps prevent any staining from the adhesive during the installation process. If your tiler decides not to seal the tiles before starting the installation, then any scuffs, dirt or adhesive needs to be cleaned from the surface immediately. If these are not cleaned off, they may cause staining on the tile surface and any further cleaning will be difficult.

During installation the tiler will need to brush any loose grit or dust off the back of the tiles to ensure a good bond with the adhesive. For the best bond, apply Ardex MICROTEC Flexible Tile Adhesive to both the substrate and the back of the tiles.

After placing the tile on the adhesive, the tiler can use clips or level the tile surface by eye using a rubber mallet. To cut the tiles they should use a water-cooled tile cutter, with a good, clean and sharp blade and clean water. The minimum suggested grout joint between the tiles is 3-5mm. Your tiler will need to allow for this when planning the layout.

If your tiler has opted not to seal the tiles until this point, then they MUST be sealed before grouting, otherwise the tiles may become permanently stained.

Once the tiles have been laid and before grouting starts, the tiles need to be cleaned to remove any marks and surface residues. We do not recommend using generic cement removers, acidic or bleach-based products to clean the floor as these can attack the cement finish. Use EcoProTec Cement & Grout & Salt Residue at the correct dilution, as this is designed to clean the surface, without attacking the finish.

If you require any further assistance, or have any queries regarding the installation of Encaustic tiles, please contact us at enquiries@claybrookstudio.co.uk



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IMPORTANT NOTE - We recommend using ARDEX FL format grouts that are light in colour, not black or bright coloured grouts as these can cause permanent staining to the surface. If in doubt, please try your chosen grout on a test tile before applying the grout across the floor. We also recommend that you do not use grouts for small joints down to 1mm, such as Bal MicroMax, as these fine powdered grouts can cling to the surface and cause permanent staining.

SEALING AND FINISHING YOUR ENCAUSTIC TILES

FOR AN UNALTERED/MATT FINISH

Sealer – EcoProTec Natural Stone Sealer

Either before the tiles are laid, or before grouting, the tiles must be sealed with saturating coats of EcoProTec Natural Stone Sealer leaving 1 hour between coats. To ensure a good seal, completely saturate the surface on the first coat using a brush or small roller. Wait 1 hr before applying further coats to ensure saturation. Saturation is achieved once the surface will not take any more sealer. Make sure any excess sealer left on the surface is wiped away after approx. 20-30 minutes and then buff the surface with a lint-free cloth to prevent any sealer from drying on the surface and leaving a marked finish.

FOR AN ENHANCED/SATIN FINISH

Sealer - For an enhanced colour - EcoProTec Colour Enhancing Stone

OR

Sealer - For an enhanced colour and satin finish - EcoProTec Satin Finish Surface Wax

Either before the tiles are laid, or before grouting the tiles, the tiles must be sealed with saturating coats of EcoProTec Colour Enhancing Stone Sealer or EcoProTec Satin Finish Surface Wax with 1 hour between coats. To ensure a good seal, completely saturate the surface on the first coat using a brush or small roller. Wait 1 hr before applying further coats to ensure saturation. Saturation is achieved once the surface will not take any more sealer. In the case of the Satin Finish Surface Wax, apply the coats at 90degree angles to each other to minimise streaking. With both products ensure any excess sealer left on the surface is wiped away after 30 minutes and buffed with a lint-free cloth, to prevent them from drying on the surface and leaving a marked finish.

IMPORTANT NOTE – The application of the Satin Finish Surface Wax will give the tile a sheen, which will affect the slip-rating of the tile, so please take this into consideration before applying it. If you require further advice please contact the Technical department at technical@claybrookstudio.co.uk

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FINISHING

Once the Natural Finish sealer, Stone Colour Enhancing Stone sealer or Satin Finish Surface Wax has been allowed to fully cure (12 hours minimum), the tiler can start to apply the grout. If the tiler is not using the Ardex FL grout in a lighter colour as we recommend, then they need to test the grout on a sample tile before applying the grout across the floor. This is because some dark grouts or finer grouts down to 1mm joint (like Bal MicroMax) can cling to the surface, causing permanent staining. Ideally the tiler should not slurry grout, but compress or pipe the grout into the joints to minimise the amount of grout applied across the surface. Once the excess grout has been removed and the grout is fully dry, apply one final thin coat sealer across the tile and grout, buffing it immediately to avoid streaks

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

For everyday cleaning, use EcoProTec Stone & Tile Aftercare at the appropriate dilution stated on the bottle. For spills, stains and the occasional deep clean, you can use EcoProTec Intensive Cleaner, again checking you are using the correct dilution. After using the EcoProTec Intensive Cleaner, you will need to re-apply the Colour Enhancing Stone Sealer or Satin Finish Surface Wax, to ensure the floor is well protected again.

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