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FORMELLA INSTALLATION GUIDE

The Formella tiles are made of reconstituted stone, which is comprised of 60% recycled material from the Italian marble industry. The recycled and waste stone is crushed into several different grades of aggregates from small chips through to fine powder which are then blended together with water, cement and tinted with natural pigments. The mixed material is then formed into moulds and compressed under intense pressure, which means they do not need to be fired and can just be air-cured.

Whilst most of the water is extracted during the pressing and air-drying process there tends to be some residual moisture when they are packed, which can still be present when they arrive on site. Ideally, they should be kept in the room they are being installed in for 24-48 hours prior to being laid to help remove any moisture.
Alternatively, the tiles can be laid directly from the box, but in either eventuality, they must be allowed a minimum 24 hours for the tile adhesive and tile to dry before being sealed and then grouted.
The advantage in choosing a product like the Formella tiles/mosaics is that they are a solid-colour product with a textured surface similar to tumbled stone, so they are what we refer to as a 'living floor' that will age with wear and even if chipped will still show the same colour and serve you for many, many years when installed and maintained correctly.

CHECKS PRE-INSTALLATION

The most important thing is to show your tiler a sample of the product before installing them, as this is a specialist product that needs a similar installation process to textured stone or textured terracotta, so requires more technical expertise than laying a porcelain or ceramic tile.

Also, whilst these tiles are 15mm thick and strong in compression, any movement in the substrate could eventually transfer through to the tiles and/or grout, so the substrate must be correctly prepared before the tiles are installed, otherwise your tiled floor could eventually crack and fail.

Please refer to our Tile Installation Guide for details on how to correctly prepare different substrates.

INSTALLING YOUR FORMELLA TILES

Once your tiler has a good base to work with, they can start to think about installing the tiles.

The first thing to check is that you have had the correct product delivered and have opened a few boxes to check you are happy with the colours and the naturally occurring variation. If for any reason you are not happy with your product, please contact our enquiries team before fitting them, so we can discuss your options as fitted product are deemed as accepted and cannot be returned.

For fixing the tiles to walls or floors, we always recommend using the Ardex adhesives we sell (not pre-mixed adhesive) and in particular the Ardex X77 which is great for this tile as it forms a strong bond and is very stable.

Your tiler will need to use a 10mm half-moon notched trowel to apply the adhesive, as these tiles can vary in thickness (see image over page) especially between colours, so will need to be tapped level.

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

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When taking the tiles out of the box, to help identify the front/back, the back of each tile has a white mark on it like this -



Back of tile



Front of tile



Tiles stacked above show varying thickness between colours

As they fix the tiles, we recommend the tiler takes sheets/tiles from different boxes, as this will help to blend any naturally occurring variation. To cut the tiles, we recommend the use of a flat-bed, water-cooled tile cutter fitted with an unslotted, smooth profile diamond-edged cutting blade. Cut the tile face-side up and where possible avoid cuts of less than 15mm. If this is unavoidable, cut slightly wider and then remove the excess with a tile file, rubbing block and or wet and dry paper. These can also be used to tidy up any slight exit chipping. Once the tiles have been initially fixed, remove any excess adhesive from the grout joint/tile surface, using EcoProTec Stone & Tile Intensive Cleaner if necessary.

SEALING AND GROUTING YOUR FORMELLA TILES

Sealer - Ceramatt (minimum 2 coats)

Grout - Ardex FS/FL flexible grout

Cleaner - EcoProTec Stone & Tile Aftercare

SEALING

The Formella tiles must be sealed at least 8-12 hours before the grouting process starts, to avoid being stained by the grout. We recommend applying 2-3 coats of the supplied Ceramatt, allowing 2-3 hours between coats.

The Ceramatt sealer is the sealer product recommended by the manufacturer and is fine for most residential and domestic projects. The Ceramatt can be applied using a brush or fleece pad, ensuring the entire surface is evenly covered and can be applied 2-3 hours between applications, buffing away any excess left on the surface after 30 mins.

The sealer must then be left to fully cure (ideally overnight), before starting the grouting process.

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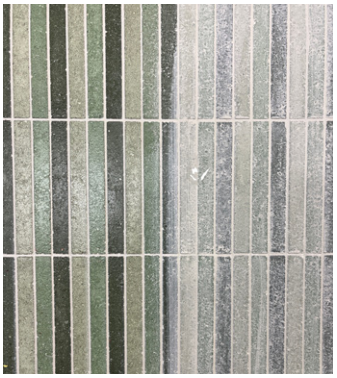
FORMELLA INSTALLATION GUIDE

GROUTING

We recommend the Ardex range of grouts, particularly in similar shades to our Formella, as the tiles are designed to hold some of the grout in the pitted surface. This is especially important with lighter tile colours and whilst the Ardex FL is great for floors, the Ardex FS grout is recommended for mosaics/tiles being installed on the wall. For advice on which colours to use, please contact our sales team.

Apply the grout with a soft rubber float, ensuring to cover the entire surface. Once applied, the tiler will need to immediately start removing the excess grout with an emulsifying pad, regularly changing the water to minimise grout haze and then wiping with a clean sponge.

The grouted surface should look something like this at that point (right side freshly applied with grout - left side cleaned back)



Once the grout has dried, any remaining fine grout residue can be removed with EcoProTec Grout Haze and Limescale Remover. If the grout haze is thicker, then the tiler can use a dilution of EcoProTec Cement Residue Remover, but the tiler must take care not to use too strong a dilution otherwise the Cement Residue Remover dilution will break down the Ceramatt coating and start to attack the cement in the actual tile. They should start out with a 5:1 ratio of water to remover and then increase if the haze remains, using a non-abrasive emulsifying pad.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

For everyday cleaning, we recommend you use a ph-neutral detergent, such as our EcoProTec Stone & Tile Aftercare, as this cleans the tiles and grout without affecting the finish. For spills, hard-water stains and the occasional deep clean (3-6 months) you can use EcoProTec Stone & Tile Intensive Cleaner, but after each deep clean, we would recommend the re-application of Ceramatt coating, wiping away any excess Ceramatt remaining on the surface after 30 mins.

In summary, we are here to help and want both you and your tiler to get it right first time.

Taking time to discuss your expectations with your tiler and for them to establish the best way to achieve that expectation will help you both avoid difficult conversations, costly mistakes and unnecessary delays to your project.

If you or your tiler have any questions regarding our products and their application/installation, then before they start work, please ask them to contact our team.

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