



a primer on
Ceramic & Stone

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People have long used a variety of tile and stone finishes for their homes, and one of the reasons it continues to grow as a mainstay is the number of variations to choose from.

Ceramics

In ceramics, we include quarry tiles, porcelains and mosaics. Ceramic is made of clay and blended with a variety of products used to strengthen it and reduce cracking. Prior to being fired, it is cut and can be either glazed or left unglazed; the glaze chosen, and the temperature and firing time, determine the ultimate intended use.

Quarry tile is typically an unglazed clay tile that is fired at a very high flame and is often rated as a vitreous or semi-vitreous tile, which makes it stable as an outdoor tile. It resists staining and provides good traction when wet and it should be sealed with a protective sealant.

Porcelain is a very popular choice due to its versatility and sturdiness. It can be made in most sizes and shapes and can mimic the more costly products made of marble, stone or slate. Porcelain starts out as white clay and can be shaded to achieve almost any color; it is then fired at very high temperatures, creating a tile rated as waterproof, stain resistant and frost proof. Porcelain without a protective glaze needs to be sealed to resist staining. Porcelain tiles are extremely hard and installation cost can be more in line with that of stone products.

Mosaic tiles are made of a variety of materials, are typically 2"x2" or smaller, can be used on floors and walls, and are normally pre-netted in various shapes—squares,

hexagons, octagons, circles and tiny offset rectangles. These tiles would most often be used in bathroom or shower floors, and for decorative inserts in kitchen backsplashes and tub and shower areas. They can also be used to create borders and designs in flooring areas.

Tile Ratings

Tile is rated for porosity and hardness, as well as abrasion. It is rated as non-vitreous, semi-vitreous, vitreous and impervious, with the most porous being non-vitreous, and the least absorbent being impervious, which is suitable for use in commercial installations like hospitals and restaurants where strict cleanliness is mandated. Porcelain and glass are considered impervious. Tile manufacturers provide these ratings to their suppliers and a tile consultant can help you determine the best tile for your particular project.

Tile is also rated for abrasiveness on a scale of 1-5, with the highest rating (5) suitable for commercial high-traffic areas. You would not want to use a glossier, more slippery tile on a bath or entry floor. Again, your tile consultant will guide you as to the appropriate type of tile for your intended usage.

Ceramic Care Tips

Ceramic and porcelain tiles are easily maintained by regular vacuuming and cleaning with a damp cloth with water or another neutral PH solution. Grout sealing is recommended for long term ease of maintenance.

Stone

Stone is a natural product and as diverse as the regions of the earth where it is excavated. From tiny mosaics to giant slabs, the material ranges from granite, to marble, to travertine, to slate and limestone. All have their own unique characteristics and uses, and today's technology is now allowing these truly beautiful and timeless materials to be used in many



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Tileology was founded seven years ago, and is now owned by the owners of Snavely's (a 130 year old locally-owned and operated building supply company), and managed by Dawn Shultz, a 25 year Snavely's team member. Tileology includes products from over 70 manufacturers of premium floor and wall tiles in ceramic, porcelain, stone, glass and metal tiles, including murals and mosaics, as well as unique hand-crafted glass and stone sinks, plumbing fixtures, and hardware.

Their amazing two-story showroom will dazzle you with choices and will make you say *"I didn't know something like that was available in this area!"* It's open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday from 10-6, Wednesday from 10-8, and Saturday from 10-4. Stop by the showroom or call to schedule an appointment with one of their design team members today.

Customer care is their primary focus, and they are happy to tour the showroom with you and explain the various products, or leave you on your own to browse and develop your own list of questions and favorites. (Watch for their newly updated website available mid-January 2008 at the above web address.)

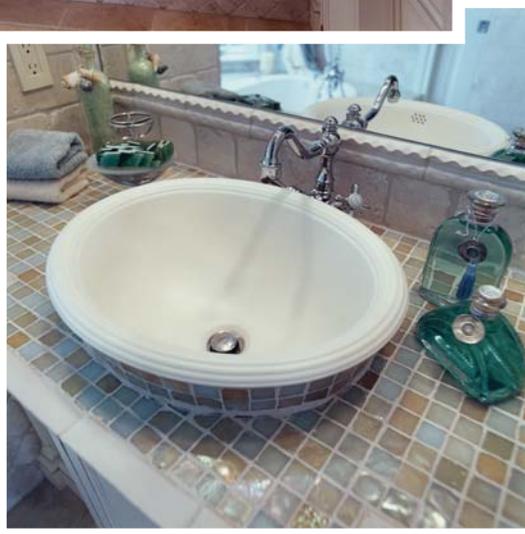
more homes than in the past. Their richness and durability will provide years of enjoyment and satisfaction.

Granite comes in a wealth of colors covering every spectrum between light and dark, and is most commonly used in either slabs, or laid as larger tiles with thin grout joints to create a more expansive look. Granite is the most dense of the stone products and depending on the color, has the least potential to stain. The choice to seal it or allow it to breathe so any stains can naturally evaporate over time, is up to the individual purchaser, and depends on their lifestyle and maintenance of the product in their home. Some consider granite also to be resistant to heat and cutting, though a normal note of caution from most experts is to protect the surface from both. Once damaged, it

is almost impossible to repair. Typical granite finishes are available in polished, honed or flamed, and each has a unique appearance.

Marble is a smooth and reflective surface that we have all seen on many elegant historical buildings, and indeed has been used on many memorable





pieces of art. It comes in many colors, from earthy naturals, through greens, grays, browns and reds. It is extremely porous and very prone to staining, and though sealing will help, acidic substances like red wine or other food stains can etch the surface.

Travertine comes in more pale and muted earth tones and almost always has a variety of colors and tones within each piece. It comes in many tile sizes and patterns, and also includes a variety of finishes including honed, brushed, wavy, saw-cut, chiseled and pillowed, and is ideal for floors, walls and countertops. When using travertine on a countertop, it does have tendencies, such as etching and staining, and it also has tiny holes or pores which can be a concern in meal preparation areas. Travertine can be filled and sealed at the factory with a stone dust resin which can eliminate some of those issues. This method may not match quite as well as on-site sealing with a matching grout or clear epoxy. There are advantages and disadvantages to both methods so ask your tile consultant about the pros and cons, as both are acceptable methods.

Slate is one of the most affordable natural stones and can look either modern or rustic depending on how it is cut, and ranges from tiny mosaics to large 2' square blocks. Slate is very dense and strong, and acidic substances do not harm its surface, and once sealed is almost maintenance free. Sealing should always be tested as it can change the subtleties of the various textures and characteristics to ensure the desired outcome.

Limestone is a beautifully soft, smooth stone, and may include tiny fossils and forms created from its sedimentary underground forming. Limestone comes in paler colors of whites, yellows, beiges and grays and can etch with acidic substances so should be sealed, but limestone available from certain areas around the world can be much harder and more durable.

Your Stone Choices and Their Care

All stone products have their own beautiful characteristics and it is always recommended to do your research and talk with your tile consultant about the unique eccentricities of each, and whether it will fulfill your requirements. Size, shape, style and long-term care will be important in your choices. Most stones are fairly easy to maintain whether they come with a factory sealer or one

that you must reapply on a regular basis, but most sellers will inform you of the unique characteristics of the product you are purchasing when you order them. These can be sizeable purchases depending on the area you are covering, and you always want to be knowledgeable and aware of the types of maintenance care these beautiful materials require in order to provide the years of durability they are known for.

R&A

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