

# PORCELAIN TILE

PRODUCT CARE GUIDE

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Porcelain Stoneware is inherently one of the most durable products on the market due to its non-porous nature, density, and low water absorption rate. Porcelain stoneware is resistant to cracks, scratches and stains, however like most materials, excessive force and/or pressure from objects can damage the surface. It is these durable features which make it extremely easy to maintain and should provide many years of enjoyment, however like anything it is not indestructible.

## II. PRE-INSTALLATION

Porcelain stoneware products are classified as a finish material. As such they should not be installed until after any heavy construction work has been completed. In instances where the porcelain stoneware products are installed prior to the completion of construction, special care must be taken to protect the tile until it is put into normal service. The general build up of dirt and debris present on any construction site may negatively affect the performance of the tile if it is left unprotected. The best way to protect the tile surface is to cover it with a protective layer of Kraft paper, carpeting, cardboard, plywood, or any other material that will not adversely affect the tile surface.

### III. POST-INSTALLATION

#### A. GENERAL

The most important cleaning operation is performed immediately after the tile has been set. This involves the complete removal of grout residue and construction dirt from the newly installed porcelain stoneware products. Grout manufacturers provide directions for the clean up of their products after installation has been completed. These directions should be followed. In many cases, porcelain stoneware products can be successfully cleaned by scrubbing with a mild detergent, combined with a thorough rinsing. It is critical that all rinse water be removed through wet vacuuming or dry toweling. Should any grout residue remain this process can be repeated several times as necessary. For highly textured products, or when using a dark colored grout with a light colored tile, a grout release may be used prior to grouting to assist in the removal of the grout from the surface of the tile. Before grouting, the contractor should test a small area of the tile to determine if the chosen color grout will discolor the surface of the tile, in which case a grout release should be utilized. Please follow the specific manufacturer's instructions for the use of any grout release product.

#### B. EPOXY-BASED GROUTS

When dealing with epoxy-based grouts, removal must be done immediately with a sponge and water in abundance. The day after grouting, wash flooring with an alkaline-base solution, diluted in water following the manufacturer's indications, using a single-brush machine or sorghum broom and rub vigorously. Rinse abundantly with clean water, completely removing the liquid with a rubber spreader and cloths or a wet vacuum cleaner. Repeat washing and rinsing twice then let dry thoroughly. Wash flooring with a slightly acid or mild detergent solution, diluted in water following the manufacturer's indications, using a single brush machine or a sorghum broom, and rub vigorously. Rinse abundantly with clean water, completely removing the liquid with a rubber spreader and cloths or a wet vacuum cleaner. Repeat washing and rinsing twice then let dry thoroughly.

### C. CEMENT-BASED GROUTS

When dealing with cement-based grouts with resins or latex additives, removal must be carried out immediately with a sponge and water in abundance. Once grout has hardened, not more than 7 days after grouting, use a post laying acid detergent diluted in water following the method indicated by the manufacturer using a single-brush machine or sorghum broom and rub vigorously. Rinse abundantly with clean water, completely removing the liquid with a rubber spreader and cloth wet vacuum cleaner. Repeat washing and rinsing twice and then let dry thoroughly.

### D. CLEANING ADVISED PRIOR FURNISHING PREMISES

Wash flooring with slightly acid or mild detergent solution, diluted in water following the manufacturer's indications, using a single brush machine or a sorghum broom, and rub vigorously. Rinse abundantly with clean water, completely removing the liquid with a rubber spreader and cloths or wet vacuum cleaner. Repeat washing and rinsing twice and then let dry thoroughly.

## IV. ROUTINE CARE

### A. GENERAL

The inherent technical characteristics of porcelain stoneware products ensures that they will be relatively easy to maintain and should provide years of enjoyment. Many general purpose cleaners that are readily available are acceptable for use on porcelain stoneware products. It is important that the cleaner has a non-oil, non-animal fat, non-soap base. The components can leave behind an invisible residue which can trap dirt. It is also important that the tile receives a thorough rinsing with clean water after the cleaning process has been completed.

The general cleaning steps for porcelain stoneware products can be summarized as follows:

- Remove all loose debris from the tile by sweeping with soft bristle broom or vacuuming.
- Any spills should be wiped up as quickly as possible.
- Apply the recommended amount and dilution of the appropriate cleaner to the tile. Allow the cleaner to remain on the tile for a short period of the time.
- For unpolished tile, scrub with a nylon pad or soft bristle brush. For more heavily soiled floors a floor machine equipped with a nylon pad or bristle brush may be used. For polished, wipe or mop with a nonabrasive mop or cloth.
- Remove the dirty cleaning solution and the water with a wet vacuum or mop.

Thoroughly rinse the tile with clean water and remove with a wet vacuum, mop or towel. It is absolutely essential for all detergent residues to be completely removed from the tile. Any remaining detergent residue can dry on the tile and form a coating which can trap dirt and be very difficult to remove. The tile should be rinsed several times necessary to remove all detergent residue. The frequency and timing of any maintenance program is dependent on the specific characteristics of each tile application. Factors such as foot traffic, environmental conditions and product color should be considered when planning your maintenance schedule. In high traffic areas, or in areas subject to excessive exposure to dirt, a more frequent cleaning schedule may be necessary.

## B. WHAT NOT TO USE

Porcelain stoneware products do not require the use of sealers or waxes. These surface coatings may actually negatively impact the performance of the tile. In some instances where unglazed, polished porcelain product is used in an area subject to excessive exposure to dirt, a penetrating type sealer may be used. A penetrating sealer is designed to fill the microscopic pores created during the polishing process. It is not designed to coat the surface of the tile. We recommend that all sealers be tested on a small inconspicuous area before general use on the floor.

Please ensure you follow the manufacturer's instructions when using a penetrating sealer and do not allow the sealer to dry on the surface of the tile. We recommend using cleaning products between pH 5-8, as products outside this range may damage the surface. Avoid exposing porcelain stoneware to chemicals with pH levels outside this range, such as bleach, floor strippers, paint removers/strippers, toilet bowl cleaners, oil soaps, tarnish removers, furniture cleaners, drain products, battery acid, dishwasher detergent, etc. Should your surface accidentally be exposed to any potentially damaging products, rinse immediately with water to neutralize effect.

## V. SUGGESTED PRODUCTS

### A. GENERAL

There are many many excellent cleaners on the market today which should provide you with satisfactory results. All purpose household cleaners such as Soft Scrub, Mr. Clean, Ajax Liquid, Dow bathroom Cleaner, Liquid Comet, and Fantastik are all suitable for general purpose cleaning of porcelain stoneware products. Soapless detergents such as Spic & Span and 409 may also be used. For the removal of stains on unpolished tile, scouring powders such as Comet, Bon Ami or Ajax may be used. These may be used in conjunction with a nylon pad or soft bristle brush. Steel wool is not recommended. For heavier cleaning requirements, the below products manufactured by Fila may be used. In all cases, please ensure you follow the manufacturer's instructions. We also strongly recommend that all cleaners be tested first in a small inconspicuous area prior to general use on the floor.

### B. SOLUTIONS MATRIX

FILA CLEANER X X

FILA DETERDEK X

FILA PS/87 X X X

FILA CR10 X

FILA MP90 X



## C. PRODUCT PROFILE

### 1. FILA CLEANER

#### Description:

All purpose floor cleaner for terra-cotta, porcelain stoneware, glazed ceramic tile, quarry tiles, concrete, natural stone, granite, agglomerates, tumbled marble, pebbles, and cobblestones.

#### Purpose:

- A gentle detergent for all floors
- Safe for pretreated and sensitive surfaces
- Essential for after installation cleaning of acid sensitive material such as polish natural stone or polish agglomerates

Compatible Material: Wood, Linoleum, Porcelain Stone, Terracotta, Concrete, Glazed, Ceramic Rubber and PVC

#### Benefits:

- Cleans without damaging the surface
- When highly diluted (1: 200) it leaves no residues and does not require rinsing
- Highly concentrated: can be diluted according to use
- Highly biodegradable
- Ideal for the maintenance of waxed surfaces
- Diluted min. 1:200 can be used with a floor cleaning machine
- Ideal for laminated surfaces

## 2. FILA DETERDEK

### Description:

Descaler for terra-cotta, porcelain stoneware, glazed ceramic tiles, acid resistant stone and quarry tiles.

### Purpose:

- Removes all grout residues and building site dirt
- Eliminates any saline efflorescences from terra-cotta
- Removes lime deposits from floors, walls tiles (showers), and bathroom fixtures
- Penetrating cleaner for outdoor paving
- All-in-one descaler and detergent: contains high concentrations of surfactants
- Removes rust stains

Compatible Materials: Terracotta, Clinker, Porcelain Stoneware, Acid resistant, natural stones, Glazed Ceramic

### Benefits:

- Does not emit fumes that are harmful to users or the environment: a welcome substitute to muriatic acid.
- Does not alter color or appearances of the surfaces
- Cleans without damaging surfaces
- Does not harm aluminum or steel rims
- Multi-purpose: terra-cotta, porcelain stoneware, acid-resistant stone
- Dual use: according to dilution, can be used as either a detergent or descaler.

### 3. FILA PS/87

Description: Floor cleaner, stain remover and wax stripper for terra-cotta, porcelain stoneware, glazed ceramic tiles, marble, unpolished stone, concrete, linoleum, PVC and quarry tiles.

Purpose:

- Diluted: cleans and removes grease from dirty porcelain stoneware, ceramic, natural stone, terra-cotta and concrete floors.
- Undiluted: removes stubborn stains from porcelain stoneware.
- It is excellent for basic cleaning of acid sensitive stone.
- Ideal for basic cleaning of concrete.
- Wax remover for water based, metal or polishing wax.

Compatible Materials: Linoleum, Terracotta, Clinker, Porcelain Stoneware, Concrete, Matte Stones and Agglomerates, Glazed Ceramic

Benefits:

- A 3-in-one solution: Stain remover, detergent and wax remover.
- The only product that removes stubborn stains from porcelain stoneware.

#### 4. FILA CRIO

Description: Cleaner for epoxy residues.

Purpose:

- High viscosity liquid detergent for cleaning off residues, stains and streaks of epoxy plaster.
- Ideal for non-absorbent materials such as porcelain stoneware, glazed ceramic tiles and glass mosaics.

Compatible Materials: Terracotta Clinker, Porcelain Stoneware

Benefits:

- Its viscosity makes it easy to apply evenly to vertical surfaces.
- It also gives good results with seasoned larger residues.
- It respects the material
- It is a water-based cleaner
- Easy to apply
- Pleasant almond fragrance

## 5. FILA MP90

Description: Clear stain protection for natural stone, marble, granite, agglomerates and polished Porcelain stoneware.

### Purposes:

- The best stain protection for polished marble, granite, and porcelain stoneware.
- Anti-graffiti treatment for vertical walls in natural stone.
- Ideal for protecting tables, bathroom tops and kitchen counters.

Compatible Materials: Glossy Finish Stones, Porcelain Stoneware, Matte Stones and Agglomerates, Glazed Ceramic

### Benefits:

- Does not alter the natural color of surfaces.
- No film forming
- Certified as suitable for use on food contact surfaces.
- Excellent for tables and windowsills
- Ready to use: do not dilute
- Ready to use: do not dilute
- Seals, protects, makes maintenance easier